

Purpose

The Children's Family Trust believes it is essential that a positive identity for children in foster care is promoted. In fulfilling this, it is a requirement that children are given pocket money on a weekly basis by their foster carers and a bank account is opened for the child to make savings. It is also a requirement that long term savings are made for the child throughout their placement.

This policy is designed to help children and young people and their carers understand the aspect of pocket money and saving they will receive whilst children are placed with The Children's Family Trust.

In the case of Parent and Child Placements Foster Carers are not expected to pay pocket money or make savings for the Parent once they have reached the age of 18. Fostering Network recommend that within the basic weekly maintenance allowance that foster carers receive, there is a 'personal allowances' element. This is intended to cover both pocket money and other personal expenses for children and young people which could cover such items as landline and mobile telephone calls and comics. It is important, particularly with older children, to be clear from the start about who pays for what. There needs to be discussion at the outset of the placement. This discussion should take place at the Placement Planning Meeting in the presence of the child/young person, Local Authority Social worker and The Children's Family Trust Supervising Social Worker.

It is understood that pocket money paid, and savings made, need to be in line with any specific requirements of tenders or contracts that The Children's Family Trust has with the child's Placing Authority. Foster Carers will need to record pocket money amounts provided to the child and any money saved during placements.

Principles Underpinning Pocket Money and Savings for Children and Young People

Having pocket money is good for the child/young person. It gives a sense of independence and a measure of choice in making decisions about how the money is spent.

- Receiving pocket money helps children understand the value of money and is the start of developing budgeting skills.
- Carers must encourage children/young people to open a personal savings account. This should be part of the Placement Planning Meeting. This should be separate to the long-term savings that carers are required to make for the child.
- The amount of pocket money and other personal allowances to be paid **must** be clarified at the outset of a placement and detailed clearly within the **Placement Plan**. The rate of pocket money paid should be kept under review by all concerned. The records made regarding this will be monitored by The Children's Family Trust Supervising Social Worker on a monthly basis. Setting the appropriate level is dependent on close communication between the carer, child/young person and their social worker and Supervising Social Worker. If a child/young person is not happy with the amount paid, it should be clear how they can raise their dissatisfaction. Each child will receive a Children's guide when they are placed with The Children's Family Trust which will help them with contacting someone independent of their foster carer if they are not happy with the care that they are receiving.

Pocket Money and Savings Policy and Guidance



- The withholding of pocket money as a punishment is not permissible and alternative acceptable sanctions should be used instead.

Pocket Money

The interpretation of “pocket money” is money that children can spend on items of their own choice. Pocket money for children is not optional and should not be withheld as a form of behaviour management. Foster carers should advise children about what is good value for money and some children may need guidance on how to spend their money.

Children and young people need to receive a regular amount of pocket money to enable them to learn to be responsible for, and to manage money. This will help to prepare them for independent living and enable them to make personal choices. Foster carers have a key role when it comes to helping young people to develop budgeting and other life skills.

How Much Pocket Money Do I Give?

Pocket money will reflect the age of the child and also be agreed with the respective Local Authority. Respite Carers are expected to provide pocket money.

The following rates are The Children’s Family Trust’s expectations and should be used as a starting point when discussing the plan for each child that is placed in foster care. The amounts identified have been taken from placing Local Authority recommended rates.

The rates below are a weekly amount payable to the child’s weekly pocket money

0 - 4	5 - 10	11 - 15	16 +
£5.00	£8.00	£11.00	£18.00

Should Pocket Money be Saved?

Foster children should be encouraged to save some pocket money, in order to purchase or contribute towards special treats or spending money for a holiday.

Looked after children and young people should also learn to be responsible for money, as this will prepare them for when they become care leavers. Learning how to save and budget is a very important skill for adulthood. This is especially the case as care leavers often have to live on very tight budgets.

Foster carers can open a bank, building society or post office account in the child’s name for the purpose of saving money. This account should be separate to the long-term savings that foster carers should be making for the child placed.

Long Term Savings

Pocket Money and Savings Policy and Guidance



Every foster child for whom there is a planned placement of 3 months or more, or who remains in placement for longer than 3 months, must have a savings account set up by their foster carer and the money saved should be backdated to the date of placement. For those children who are in placement for a matter of days or weeks, a cash sum equivalent to £10 a week should go with them when they leave placement.

All carers should save a minimum of £50.00 per month until the child reaches the age of 18. These savings should move with the child if the child's placement ends. It is part of the role of your Supporting Social Worker to regularly check child savings accounts. Foster carers should report the amount to date saved on the monthly report.

Foster carers must continue to save money for their foster child whilst he or she is on respite.

The table below gives the **minimum monthly amount** to be set aside in long term savings.

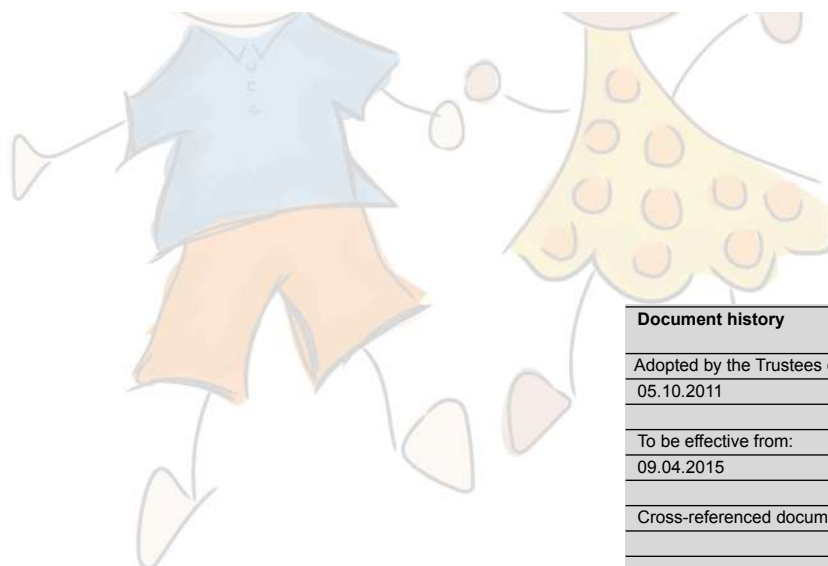
Age Range:	Weekly Savings
0- 4 years	10.00
5-10 years	10.00
11-15 years	10.00
16-18 years	10.00

Please note that savings and pocket money rates may be part of a specific tender or contract that The Children's Family Trust has with the respective Local Authority. You will be notified if Pocket Money or Savings rates are different from those listed in this policy guidance.

Disability Living Allowance

- The Foster Carer is responsible for any Disability Living Allowance received in respect of children placed with them. DLA should be spent in the manner in which it was intended not saved. The full DLA policy should be read by both the SSW and the Foster Carer, a copy is accessible on trix .

- DLA is paid to the child not the carer. Normally if the child is under 16 the carer acts as an appointee. Otherwise, the young person, providing they are capable, can have the benefits paid to them direct.
- Foster carers will be expected to set up a separate bank account, in the foster carer's own name, into which the DLA will be paid.
- If a child is in receipt of DLA on placing this should be discussed within, the placement plan and agreement made in regard to how the DLA is to be used.
- If DLA is gained after placing discussions need to be undertaken with the SSW and LASW to agree on the use of the DLA.
- SSW will review how the DLA is being used at least twice a year within supervision and record the review on Charms
- Once a child reaches the age of 16 they will be invited to apply for personal independence payment this will replace the DLA and will be paid directly to the young person. <https://focusondisability.co.uk/benefits-and-allowances/personal-independence-payment-pip-a-guide/>



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