**Family and Friends**

**Initial Viability Assessment (Appendix A to D)**

**Appendixes**

**Appendix A-** Foster Carers agreement form.

**Appendix B-** Health declaration form

**Appendix C-** Delegated Authority from.

**Appendix D-** Foster Carers Payment/ Information on Welfare Benefits.

**Appendix A**

**Nottingham City Council Family and friends (Connected Persons) Agreement form.**

This agreement is to meet the provisions of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 regarding placement with a Connected Person (Family and friends). It sets out the responsibilities and obligations of both Nottingham City Council, Children & Young People’s Service and Connected Persons(s) who are approved by the Department.

[The term “Connected Person” is used throughout this Agreement and is given to a relative, friend or person otherwise connected to a child in Local Authority care, who has been approved as a Carer for the particular child (or children)]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Carer(s)** |  |
|  |  |
| **Date of Placement:** |  |
| **The Connected Person(s) are approved to look after:** |  |

**This approval is initially on a temporary basis and does not necessarily imply continued approval beyond the 16 (sixteen) weeks normally allowed for the full fostering assessment and presentation at Fostering Panel.**

The Connected Person(s) will receive the following level of visits from their child’s social worker (in addition to the assessment visits from their fostering social worker)

**NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICE (CYPS) UNDERTAKE TO:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Support Connected Persons to promote the welfare of children in their care and to support good fostering practice. This will be monitored and supported by the provision of regular supervision which will ensure compliance to statutory regulations and procedural guidance. |
| 2 | Provide information about level of payments and allowances. We will pay allowances promptly with a full explanation about the composition of the payment. |
| 3 | Establish a visiting pattern that will meet the needs of Connected Persons and the children you care for. We will also conduct at least one unannounced visit each year.  Conduct an annual review (if the placement is approved at Fostering Panel) to assess whether the household continues to be suitable to foster. The review will take into account the views of foster carers, fostered children, your children, fostering social workers and the placing social workers. Foster carers will need to return to the Fostering Panel if it is their first review or if a significant change in circumstances has occurred or CYPS believe you may no longer be suitable to foster. |
| 4 | Review with Connected Persons, their skills and knowledge to promote their development through a variety of means including formal training opportunities and a personal development plan. |
| 5 | Offer regular supervisory sessions to Connected Persons to help them develop their skills and to aid their development as carers. |
| 6 | Provide Connected Persons with placement information about the child before or at the point that they begin to care for him/her. A placement planning meeting will take place by 5 days after the start of the placement which will involve the child, parents, carers, the child’s Social Worker and fostering Social Worker. It will produce a placement plan that will contain all the information that is considered necessary to enable the Connected Persons to care for the child with agreed support. |
| 7 | Provide Connected Persons with access to a handbook which contains information on all aspects of the fostering task, including relevant policies and procedures. We will ensure that you are made aware of any changes to these policies. You will be given information on the complaints and representation procedure and be provided with contact details for support organisations. |
| 8 | Provide membership to a support organisation such as Fostering Network. |
|  |  |
| 9 | Nottingham City Council’s Public Liability insurance policy provides cover for injuries to children in placement where the injury has been caused due to the carer’s negligence. The policy also covers damage caused by the children to property belonging to members of the public. |

**AS A CONNECTED PERSON CARER YOU ARE REQUIRED TO:**

1. Care for the child placed with you as if they were a member of your family and promote their welfare, ensuring that their care plans are fulfilled
2. Notify the Fostering Service in writing without delay of

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Any intended change of address or telephone number. 2. Any change in the composition of your household including pets. |
| 1. Any change in your personal circumstances and any other event affecting either your capacity to care for any child placed or the suitability of your household. |
| 1. Any request or application to adopt children, or for registration as an early years provider (childminding) or a later years provider (adult placement / supported lodgings). |

1. Agree not to hit or use rough handling on any children. You should only use restraint on a child where it is necessary to prevent injury to them or other people, or serious damage to property. You should inform the fostering service about this as soon as possible.
2. Maintain your home to an appropriate standard to ensure good health, safety and hygiene.
3. Regularly discuss and review your personal development plan and attend any training identified as relevant and necessary.
4. Complete the Training Support and Development (TSD)Standards for Foster Care within 18 months of Carer approval
5. Ensure that the child has his/her own bed and personal storage space. Any room sharing must be agreed in advance and be subject to a risk assessment. You will be expected to allow the bedroom to be inspected periodically.
6. Ensure that when a child moves on they move with a suitable bag and you should provide them with all of their personal belongings.
7. Ensure that all items which contribute to a child’s understanding of their history are promoted and respected. You should contribute to their memories and life story by

the provision of photographs and other mementoes. You should promote a child’s positive image of their family and actively promote sibling and other family contacts.

1. Formulate a **Safe Caring Plan** in conjunction with your fostering social worker that takes into account the individual needs of everyone in the home and protects the child or young person from abuse and promotes their welfare.
2. Notify CYPS of any incident where a child/ren goes missing from the home in accordance with the **Missing from Home Policy**
3. Ensure that each child in your care is registered with a General Practitioner, dentist and optician and that each child receives appropriate health care. We need you to adhere to a Health Care Plan and keep up to date records of the child’s health care needs. You will need to notify CYPS immediately of any serious illness or accident affecting the child.
4. Contributing to the assessment of a child's educational needs and to help with the child's Personal Educational Plans (PEP).
5. Ensure that the information relating to a child is kept confidential and is not disclosed to any person without prior consent. You should not under any circumstance speak to any media representative without the prior consent of the Service Manager. If you are aware that a child in placement and/or their family intends to speak to the media you must inform the Service Manager of this as a matter of priority.
6. Ensure that social media (eg Facebook, Twitter) is not used to circulate confidential information about the child, about Care Proceedings or about your working relationship with Nottingham City Council. Including the child on family pictures on such sites is only allowed if the following conditions are met:

* You have not been informed that for safety reasons members of the child’s family must have no way of establishing where the child is placed
* The child is not identified by name
* The child is not identified as being in local authority care

1. Co-operate as reasonably required with the Chief Inspector (Ofsted) and in particular allow a person authorised by them to interview you and visit the home at any reasonable time.
2. Allow the child or young person to be removed from the foster home by a duly authorised person.
3. Inform the fostering service without delay of any discrepancies in allowances received whether they have been under or over paid to the carer.
4. Any breach of the requirements above may result in the approval to care for the child being revoked or in deregistration as a Foster Carer.

I/We have read and understood the above responsibilities and requirements and agree to act in accordance with them for and on behalf of Nottingham City Council Children and Young People’s Service. I/we understand and consent to the information that we give you being stored electronically and used to assess our suitability as ongoing Foster Carer(s). I/we give permission for the checks listed below to be carried out and for personal references (including contacting employers and former longstanding Partners) and medical reports to be obtained.

Children & Young People’s Services

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)

Probation Service

Area Health (Health Visitor)

List of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan

Employment

CAFCASS

OFSTED

School reference for own children (if applicable).

**This agreement was discussed and agreed on:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Between

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Carer) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Carer)

And

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Social Worker

**Support available for Connected Persons**

1. Each Connected Person will be allocated a fostering social worker who will visit the foster home at regular intervals to be agreed between the foster s and the social worker.
2. Each Connected Person will be given regular supervision to help them to achieve the objectives of each placement. Carers will receive a copy of their supervision notes
3. Each child in placement will have an allocated worker from the Child Care operations team. This worker will visit the child and offer support to carers
4. By 5 days after a placement commences, a placement planning meeting will establish the purpose of the placement, will outline roles and responsibilities and will help to ensure that carers receive all the information they need to safely care for the children in their placement. Carers will receive a copy of the notes of this meeting.
5. The child’s placement plan will further set out the roles and responsibilities of all concerned with the placement
6. In the absence of the fostering social worker, a duty officer is available each day from 8:30 until 5 pm (4:30 pm on Fridays) on (0115 87) 62696
7. A Team Manager and a Service Manager are also available to meet the support needs of Connected Persons (0115 87) 62696
8. The Emergency Duty Team is available out of office hours, (4:45pm- 08:30am). Saturday and Sunday (Available 24hours) This is available whenever the office is shut and includes Christmas day – Tel (0115) 8765600
9. The Fostering Network is also available to support Connected Persons. Tel - 0300 456 260.
10. Carers can be put into contact with other carers who live in their area or with carers who are looking after similar types of children.
11. Appropriate training will be offered to support carers in the fostering task
12. All carers will be offered an induction programme to help them to better understand their fostering role
13. Carers will be offered access to CAMHS workers and to other specialist workers within the department to help support them in caring for children with additional needs.
14. Carers will receive additional financial support to help them meet the particular demands of some placements.

**Appendix B**

**Health declaration Form (applicant – 1)**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**Declaration to be completed by Connected Person.**

**Connected Person’s Name: ……………………………………………………………………..**

**DOB: …………………………………………. Name of GP: ………………………………..…**

**Address: …………………………………….. Address of GP: …………………………….…**

**…………………………………………………. …………………………………………………...**

**Tel No: ………………………………………... Name of SW: ………………………………….**

**Please list any ongoing medical conditions: …………………………………………………..**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **YES/NO** | **Please give dates and details including name of consultant and hospital** |
| 1. **Have you had any illness, accidents or operations?** |  |  |
| 1. **Have you been referred for any medical opinion, advice, x-rays or other investigations?** |  |  |
| 1. **Have you been prescribed any medicines or other treatment by your own or any other doctor?** |  |  |
| 1. **Have you suffered from depression, anxiety or any nervous or psychiatric illness?** |  |  |
| 1. **How many cigarettes do you smoke per day?** |  |  |
| 1. **How much alcohol do you drink per week?** |  |  |
| 1. **Are you on any medical treatment now?** |  |  |
| 1. **Is there any other health matter you wish to discuss?** |  |  |

**I agree that the Medical Advisor may make further enquiries of my GP or other doctors who have treated me about matters in the Declaration.**

**Signature: ……………………………………………. Date: ………………………………………**

**For completion by Fostering Panel Medical Advisor.**

**a) Agreement with Approval YES/NO**

**b) Will need to discuss at Divisional Fostering Panel YES/NO**

**c) Discussed directly with Carers/General Practitioners/Consultant YES/NO**

**d) Discussed with Family Placement Team Social Worker/Other YES/NO**

**e) Comment**

**Completed by: …………………………………………… Date: ………………………………..**

**(Fostering Medical Advisor)**

**This completed form will be returned to:**

**………………………………………………………**

**(Fostering Team Manager)**

**Appendix B**

**Health declaration Form (applicant 2)**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**Declaration to be completed by Connected Person.**

**Connected Person’s Name: ……………………………………………………………………..**

**DOB: …………………………………………. Name of GP: ………………………………..…**

**Address: …………………………………….. Address of GP: …………………………….…**

**…………………………………………………. …………………………………………………...**

**Tel No: ………………………………………... Name of SW: ………………………………….**

**Please list any ongoing medical conditions: …………………………………………………..**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **YES/NO** | **Please give dates and details including name of consultant and hospital** |
| 1. **Have you had any illness, accidents or operations?** |  |  |
| 1. **Have you been referred for any medical opinion, advice, x-rays or other investigations?** |  |  |
| 1. **Have you been prescribed any medicines or other treatment by your own or any other doctor?** |  |  |
| 1. **Have you suffered from depression, anxiety or any nervous or psychiatric illness?** |  |  |
| 1. **How many cigarettes do you smoke per day?** |  |  |
| 1. **How much alcohol do you drink per week?** |  |  |
| 1. **Are you on any medical treatment now?** |  |  |
| 1. **Is there any other health matter you wish to discuss?** |  |  |

**I agree that the Medical Advisor may make further enquiries of my GP or other doctors who have treated me about matters in the Declaration.**

**Signature: ……………………………………………. Date: ………………………………………**

**For completion by Fostering Panel Medical Advisor.**

**a) Agreement with Approval YES/NO**

**b) Will need to discuss at Divisional Fostering Panel YES/NO**

**c) Discussed directly with Carers/General Practitioners/Consultant YES/NO**

**d) Discussed with Family Placement Team Social Worker/Other YES/NO**

**e) Comment**

**Completed by: …………………………………………… Date: ………………………………..**

**(Fostering Medical Advisor)**

**This completed form will be returned to:**

**………………………………………………………**

**(Fostering Team Manager)**

**Appendix C**

**DELEGATED AUTHORITY - DECISION SUPPORT TOOL**

This document is designed to support social workers, parents, foster carers and young people to discuss who has the authority to give consent/agreement or undertake a particular task for a child who is Looked After, i.e. **Delegated Authority**. It should be used to help prepare for the initial Placement Planning meeting and each subsequent review when the Placement Plan is considered. It is an aide to good practice in working with delegated authority. **It does not replace or replicate the Placement Plan which is the legal requirement for this purpose, but should be used in conjunction with the Placement Plan proforma, entitled Child / Young Person's Placement Plan.**

The aims are to ensure that the Placement Plan:

* is viewed as a living document that can change over time
* covers all the areas necessary for individual children
* Is clear and inclusive of parents and foster carers.

This tool is not a definitive or exhaustive list of tasks and responsibilities: over the life of a child’s placement with foster carers, other areas will inevitably arise and require clarification and not all of the elements that are included will apply to every young person. Clarifying who is best placed to take everyday decisions depends on many factors: the young person’s age, views, legal status and care plan, the parents’ views and the experience and the views of the foster carers. Collaboration and consultation are essential for successful partnership working.

**Delegated Authority in relation to:**

Child’s name and Liquid Logic no …………………………………………………………………

Carer(s) name(s) ……………………………………………………..............................

Parent/person(s) with PR………………………………………………………………….

Children’s Social Worker ………………………………………………………………….

Fostering Social Worker …………………………………………………………………..

| **Consent/agreement/task** | **To who is the authority delegated?**  **(delete as applicable)** | **Who delegates the authority? Local Authority (S31& 38)/person(s) with PR (S20)? (delete as applicable)** | **Notes (inc. notifications, prior consultation/recording requirement/conditions)** | **Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Medical and Health** |  |  |  |  |
| 1.1 Signed consent to emergency medical treatment inc. anaesthesia | **N/A** | **N/A** | **Service Manager / person(s) with PR or via EDT** |  |
| 1.2 Consent – routine immunisations | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1.3 Planned medical procedures | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Can be delegated for routine treatment but Service Manager / person(s) with PR for surgery / anaesthetic** |  |
| 1.4 medical procedure carried out in the home where the person administering the procedure requires training (e.g child with disability/illness) | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1.5 Dental - signed consent to dental emergency treatment inc anaesthetic | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **NB Can be delegated provided no general anaesthetic – if general anaesthetic then Service Manager / person(s) with PR** |  |
| 1.6 Dental - routine treatment inc anaesthetic | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **NB Can be delegated provided no general anaesthetic – if general anaesthetic then Service Manager / personrson(s) with PR** |  |
| 1.7 Optician – appts, glasses | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1.8 Consent to examination/treatment by school Doctor | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1.9 Administration of prescribed/over the counter medications | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1.10 Permission for school to administer prescribed/over the counter medications | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1.11 Referral/ consent for YP to access another service e,g CAMHS | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| **2. Education** |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1 Signed consent for school day trips | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 2.2 Signed consents for school trips of up to 4 days | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Social Worker / person(s) with PR to back up with written consent** |  |
| 2.3 Signed consents for school trips of over 4 days | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 2.4 School trips abroad | **N/A** | **N/A** | **Service Manager / person(s) with PR** |  |
| 2.5 Using computers at school | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 2.6 School photos | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Parental involvement?** |  |
| 2.7 Attendance at parents’ evenings | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Parental involvement?** |  |
| 2.8 Attendance at PEP meetings | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Parental involvement?** |  |
| 2.9 Attendance at unplanned meetings re incidents or immediate issues | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 2.10 Registering at a school | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 2.11 Changing a school | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Consultation needed with IRO** |  |
| 2.12 Referral/ consent for YP to access another service (please specify the service) | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 2.13 Personal Health and Social Education | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| **3 Personal, leisure and home life** |  |  |  |  |
| 3.1 Passport application | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | Can only be signed for by someone holding PR |  |
| 3.2 Overnight with friends (‘sleep overs’) | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Should be delegated to carers for known friends** |  |
| 3.3 Holidays within the British Islands | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 3.4 Holidays outside the British Islands | **N/A** | **N/A** | **Service Manager / person(s) with PR** |  |
| 3.5 Sports/ social clubs | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 3.6 More hazardous activities- e.g horse riding, skiing, rock climbing | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Can be delegated provided SW is aware of arrangements** |  |
| 3.7 Haircuts/colouring | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | **Can be delegated unless dramatic changes planned then SW / person(s) with PR needs to be consulted** |  |
| 3.8 Body piercing | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | In English law, it is illegal for under 16s to have their genitals pierced. It is also illegal for females under 16 to have their breasts pierced, although this does not apply to males under 16. |  |
| 3.9 Tattoos | N/A | N/A | It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to have a tattoo |  |
| 3.10 Mobile phone | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | NB ensure SW liaison with SIU for any risks around exploitation |  |
| 3.11 Part time employment | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | NB ensure actions are in line with Education Act 2002 |  |
| 3.12 Accessing social networking sites e.g Facebook, Twitter, MSN | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | NB ensure SW liaison with SIU for any risks around exploitation |  |
| 3.13 Photos or other media activity | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | NB ensure SW liaison with Snr Managers and Comms in these situations |  |
| **4 Faith and religious observance** |  |  |  |  |
| 4.1 New or changes in faith, church or religious observance | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 4.2 Attendance at a place of worship | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| **5 Identity and Names** |  |  |  |  |
| 5.1 Life story work | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 5.2 New or changes in ‘nicknames’, order of first names, or preferred names. | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1. **Contact** |  |  |  |  |
| 6.1 Transport | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 6.2 Arranging | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 6.3 Facilitation | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 6.4 Formal supervision | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** |  |  |
| 1. **Other areas or categories** |  |  |  |  |
| Pocket Money | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | (Please see fostering handbook for guidance) |  |
| Savings | **Carer/SW** | **LA / Person with PR** | (Please see fostering handbook for guidance) |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **8. Additional notes or questions** |  |  |  |  |
|  | |  | | |

**Signature of child/young person …………………………………………….. Date ……………………………….**

**Signature of carer or carers …………………………………………….. Date …………………………………**

**Signature of parent/persons(s) with PR …………………………………………. Date …………………………………**

**Signature of child’s social worker …………………………………………….. Date ………………………………….**

**Signature of fostering social worker ………………………………….…………. Date ………………………………….**

**Date To Be Reviewed:**

**Appendix D**

**Fostering Payments**

**Allowances with effect from 6th April 2022**

**Fostering & Connected Person / Special Guardianship (Base Allowance)**

SGO’s are subject to financial assessment; figures below are the maximum payable

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 0 – 4 years | £141 / week |
| 5 – 10 years | £156 / week |
| 11 – 15 years | £177 / week |
| 16+ years | £207 / week |

**Fostering / Connected Person - Supplementary Allowance**

*Level 3 and 4 based on the needs of the child*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Probationary Period - Level 1 | £50 / week |
| Core – Level 2 | £90 / week |
| Enhanced – Level 3 | £175 / week |
| Complex – Level 4 | Bespoke Package |

**Fostering / Connected Person only - 11-plus Supplement**

Placements for children aged 11-plus: £50 / week

**Parent & Child placements** - £525

This is payment for parent, child and skills fee

11+ also paid if the parent is under 18, but ceases on 18th birthday

**Initial Clothing – Maximum allowance**

Initial clothing is paid only **once** per child on first entry into care

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 0 to 4 | £211 |
| 5 to 10 | £276 |
| 11 to 15 | £319 |
| 16 to 17 | £361 |

**Staying Put rate** - £207 per week

**Definitions:**

**Probationary Period**

* Ends after40 weeks of caring / from the date of the first child being placed**,** and a recommendation from a Supervising Social Worker (SSW).
* Foster Carers will be expected to have completed all mandatory training.

**Core Placements**

* Children and young people who have needs that are generally exhibited or displayed by the majority of children and young people currently in care, regionally and nationally, including needs around separation, loss and trauma. Their behaviour difficulties are similar to those generally exhibited or displayed by the majority of children or young people currently in care, including low level behavioural difficulties linked to neglect and abuse.
* Foster carers will be expected to have completed all mandatory and appropriate training to manage these behaviours.

**Enhanced**

* Children who have needs that are not so generally exhibited or displayed by the majority of children or young people currently in care regionally or nationally. They have behavioural difficulties that need more support, care and supervision relative to the majority of children or young people currently in care. Some specialist expertise and specific experience may be required along with additional support.
* Foster carers will be expected to have completed all mandatory and appropriate training to manage these behaviours; have previous experience of being a foster carer or managing difficult behaviours in another setting; be able to support children who have experienced abuse / neglect and the behaviours associated with these experiences.

**Complex**

* Children or young people who have needs that are complex and challenging relative to the majority of children and young people currently in care, regionally and nationally. Their behaviour difficulties can only be managed through the provision of specialist experience and expertise and services aimed at the child’s individual needs.
* Foster carers will be expected to have completed all mandatory and appropriate training to manage these behaviours; have significant experience of being a foster carer and managing difficult behaviours; be able to support children who have experienced significant abuse / neglect and the complex behaviours associated with these experiences.

**Allowances**

The weekly allowance includes payment for the following:

* Food, including school lunches
* Clothing and School Uniform
* Toys and play equipment
* Magazines and comics
* Family days out
* Contribution to household bills / rent / insurance etc.
* Bedding and replacement bedding
* Christmas and birthday presents
* Bus pass / Bus fares
* Pocket Money / Weekly Savings of £5 per week minimum
* Toiletries and cosmetics
* Sports and Leisure activities
* Childcare costs relating to foster carer’s work commitments
* Disturbance

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AGE | Weekly Pocket Money (Minimum) |
| 0 – 4years |  |
| 5 | £1.50 |
| 6 | £1.75 |
| 7 | £2.00 |
| 8 | £2.25 |
| 9 | £2.50 |
| 10 | £2.75 |
| 11 | £4.00 |
| 12 | £4.40 |
| 13 | £4.75 |
| 14 | £5.10 |
| 15 | £5.45 |
| 16+ | £5.85 |
| 16+ (if in further education or not eligible for benefits) | £15.70 |

**Additional allowances that Foster Carers are able to claim for are**:

* Respite – foster carers to be paid for 54 weeks per year if they do not have a period of respite without the children, or to be paid 52 weeks per year and have up to 2 weeks paid respite.
* Childcare costs relating to Nottingham City Council business or exceptional circumstances relating to the child’s needs, up to a maximum of fifteen hours nursery costs per week.
* Mileage for contact, education and medical support.
* Bus fares / bus pass for children who attend an education provision outside on Nottingham City boundaries (only the cost above the price of a Nottingham City Transport bus / bus fares).
* Taxis, in exceptional circumstances, for a time-limited period (e.g. while a new school place is sourced).
* Parking costs relating to Nottingham City Council Business.
* Initial clothing allowance, in exceptional circumstances. *Rates to be revised.*
* School Uniform, where the child has to change school as a result of a placement change.
* School trip (one per year, maximum of £500)
* Laundry and incontinence, in exceptional circumstances, for a time-limited period.
* Equipment as assessed by the SSW that is required in relation to Health and Safety or the individual needs of the child.
* Personal care; strive and achieve; contact outside of City boundary; life story work: all as per current arrangements.

**Terms and Conditions**

* Carers specify pre-school, primary or secondary age children.
* Initial and ongoing assessment of need, including:
  + Assessment of the child / young person
  + Monthly written reports submitted to Supervising Social Worker
  + Attendance at meetings and reviews relating to the child / young person
* 14 days respite each year allowed but carers are to be encouraged to take children away with them wherever possible.
* Both carers are able to work when children are in school and this does not compromise the care of the children.
* Absconding and Offending - *expectations*
  + Collect and return a child who is missing / absconding and return them to the placement
  + Attendance at court to support the child / young person
  + Attendance at Police Stations and undertaking the role of appropriate adult
* It is expected that you will provide a 28-day notice period to be given to end any placement, unless there are safeguarding concerns that prevent this.

**Training Package**

We do run pre and post approval trainings. Please see attached Training calendar for foster carers.

**Support Package**

The support package for foster carers includes:

* Foster Care Business Meeting with guest speakers / attendees (e.g. Virtual School Head teacher, Placements Service).
* Two Foster Care Events annually.
* Supervising Social Worker visits (monthly) and a SSW present when child placed.
* Buddy system: linking foster carers together to provide support to each other with placements / behaviours, information and respite.
* Monthly support group meetings for connected foster carers.
* Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Awards scheme to be extended to include Foster Carers. This would be to recognise carers who go above and beyond, celebrating excellence and commitment.
* Fostering Networks Support.

**Welfare benefits and other sources of financial help for kinship carers**

Becoming a kinship carer can place a significant strain on household resources. You will inevitably face increased expenses. At the same time, your income may reduce because you have to give up work, reduce your hours and/or draw on savings. This section gives some basic information about the benefits you may be entitled to claim and other help you can get because you are raising a child or because you are living on a low income.

Entitlement to some benefits depends on your income and/or savings. It’s worth noting that if you receive a fostering, special guardianship or residence order allowance it will be ignored as income when you apply for these means-tested benefits. The welfare benefits system is currently going through a process of major changes. For up-to-date information check Grandparents Plus’ website. For advice on your own situation including benefit entitlements and other sources of financial support, contact their advice service on

0300 123 7015.

**Benefits if you are raising a child**

Kinship carers are generally entitled to the same benefits as parents although the rules are different for foster carers.

**Child benefit**

Child benefit is paid to people who are bringing up a child aged under 16 or a young person aged under 20 who is in full-time non-advanced education. Only one person can be awarded child benefit for a particular child.

The child’s parent is allowed to keep claiming child benefit as long as they pay it to you for the child’s upkeep. However, if you want to receive the money directly you will have priority because the child is living with you. If there are competing claims, you may have to wait longer for a decision about your claim. You can get child benefit regardless of your income. However, if you or your partner have an individual income of more than £50,000 a year, you may have to pay extra tax which will offset some or all of the child benefit.

**If you are receiving a fostering allowance for a child, you cannot claim child benefit for them.**

You can get a claim form by phoning the child benefit office on 0300 200 3100. You can download a form from [www.hmrc.gov.uk/childbenefit](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/childbenefit).

**Child tax credit**

If you are on a moderate or low income you can claim child tax credit for any child who normally lives with you unless you are being paid a fostering allowance for them. If a parent is also claiming, your claim will have priority if you have the main responsibility for the child. You can get child tax credit whether or not you are working. Payments depend on your family circumstances and income. If you live with a partner you must make a joint claim. You can claim for a child or a young person up to the age of 20 as long as they are in full-time non-advanced education or on an approved training course. You can get extra child tax credit for a child who is getting disability living allowance (DLA) or is registered blind. You can check if you qualify for child tax credit and how much you should get by using the online questionnaires at www. hmrc.gov.uk/tax credits.

For an application form phone the tax credit helpline on 0845 300 3900.

**Guardian’s allowance**

You may be entitled to guardian’s allowance if you qualify for child benefit for a child whose parents have died. Sometimes you can get guardian’s allowance if only one parent has died. For example, if:

* the other parent’s whereabouts or paternity are unknown
* the parents were divorced or their civil partnership has been dissolved and the other parent isn’t paying maintenance
* the surviving parent is in prison or is detained in hospital by a court order.

You can get more information and an application form from the guardian’s allowance helpline on 0300 200 3101 or from the HMRC website at [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk).

**Benefits if you are looking after a disabled child**

Research shows that it costs three times as much to raise a disabled child (Source: Dobson and Middleton – Paying to Care: the cost of childhood disability 1998) and families with a disabled member are more likely to be living in poverty.

**Disability living allowance (DLA)**

If you are raising a child with a disability or long term health condition, it’s well worth applying for DLA because it can make a big difference to your family’s income. DLA has two parts – the care component and the mobility component. A child may qualify for one or both parts. You can claim for a child with a physical disability, learning disability, or behavioural or mental health problems – even if they don’t have a diagnosis. What matters is the impact of their condition on their care, mobility and supervision needs.

DLA is not means-tested or treated as income for other benefits. You can apply for DLA even if you are a foster carer. An award of DLA can help you to qualify for additional

benefits or for extra amounts of means-tested benefits and tax credits. If someone in your household gets DLA you will be exempt from the ‘benefit cap’. When you are filling in the claim form make sure you include as much information as you can about your child’s needs. Any information provided by a professional involved with your child’s care may also help. The form is long and can be off-putting to complete, but give as much detail as possible – it may increase your chance of getting the benefit. You can get a DLA claim form from the benefits enquiry line 0800 88 22 00 or download one from www.gov.uk/dladisability-living-allowance-benefit.

Contact a Family – a national charity supporting the families of disabled children – may be able to put you in touch with local help to complete the form. Seewww.cafamily.org.uk or phone its helpline on 0808 808 3555.

**Carer’s allowance**

If you are caring for a child who is getting the middle or higher rate of disability living allowance and you are not working (or working part-time and earning below £100 a week) you may be able to get carer’s allowance.

You may also be able to get carer’s allowance if you are caring for a disabled adult. In some cases, you may not be able to receive carer’s allowance because you are getting another benefit, such as the retirement pension or contributory employment and support allowance. Even so, making a claim for it might allow you to get extra amounts in other benefits such as pension credit, income support and housing benefit.

The rules about benefits for carers are complicated – you can contact Grandparents Plus’ advice service on 0300 123 7015 or your local citizens advice bureau for advice on your particular situation. You can claim carer’s allowance online or download a form at www.gov.uk/carers-allowance or phone the carer’s allowance unit on 0845 608 4321.

Benefits if you are not working

**Income support**

Income support is a means-tested benefit for people of working age. You may be entitled if you are bringing up a child aged under 5 on your own. You can also get it if you are a single foster carer or if you are receiving carer’s allowance. If you get income support you will have to attend work-focused interviews if you are raising a child aged between one and five (or a foster child aged between one and sixteen). These interviews are intended to help and encourage you to keep in contact with the employment market and eventually to begin full-time work. If you get income support you will be entitled to housing benefit, council tax support and other help – for example, with health costs and free school meals. If you have a mortgage you can get help towards your interest payments (usually after 13weeks).

To claim income support phone 0800 055 6688 or download a form atwww.gov.uk/income-support. Between October 2013 and April 2014 new claims for Income Support will be phased out and replaced by universal credit.

**Jobseeker’s allowance (JSA)**

JSA is a benefit for people who are unemployed or working less than 16 hours a week and who are actively looking for work. If you are raising a child on your own you must be available to work as many hours as your caring responsibilities allow and for at least 16 hours a week. If the child is under 13 you can restrict the hours you are available to their normal school hours.

JSA is a benefit in two parts: Contribution-based JSA is paid at a flat rate for the first six months you are unemployed if you have paid enough national insurance contributions Income-based JSA is means-tested.

Entitlement depends on your financial circumstances. You can’t get income-based JSA if your partner works for 24 hours a week or more. If you have a mortgage, you may be able to get some help towards your interest payments (usually after 13 weeks)To claim JSA phone 0800 055 6688or claim online at www.gov.uk/jobseekers-allowance

**Employment and support allowance (ESA)**

If you cannot work because of an illness or disability, you may be able to claim ESA. There are two types of ESA:

* contributory ESA, which you can get if you have paid enough national insurance contributions (for some people this is time limited)
* income-related ESA which is paid if your income and capital are low enough.

Initially you will have to show you cannot work by providing medical certificates from your GP. During the first 13 weeks of your claim, you will usually have to have a number of tests which, together, make up what is called the work capability assessment. To make a claim, phone 0800 055 6688or download a form from www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance.

**Other benefits if you are on a low income**

**Working tax credit**

If you are single and work at least 16 hours a week, you may be entitled to working tax credit. If you have a partner you must work at least 24 hours a week between you, with one of you working at least 16 hours.

There are some exceptions to this rule, such as if the working partner is aged over 60 or is disabled, or the other partner is ’incapacitated’ or a full-time carer. Your entitlement depends on your family’s circumstances and income. Working tax credit can include an element towards childcare costs. If you are a foster carer, you can be treated as self-employed and you may be able to get working tax credit. Your foster allowance will not be counted as income, unless it is above certain limits. Some foster carers can choose whether to claim income support, jobseeker’s allowance or working tax credit. You can contact Grandparents Plus’ advice service on 0300 123 7015 or your local citizens advice bureau for advice if you think this might apply to you. You can check if you qualify for working tax credit and how much you should get by using the online questionnaires at www. hmrc.gov.uk/ taxcredits. To obtain an application form phone the tax credit helpline on 0845 300 3900. Between October 2013 and April 2014, new claims for tax credits will be phased out and replaced by universal credit – see page 48.

**Pension credit**

Pension credit is a means-tested benefit for men and women aged above the women’s state pension age. This is gradually increasing from 60 and will reach 65 by November 2018. To find out whether you might be entitled to pension credit you can use the calculator at [www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator). Pension credit can include extra amounts if you are severely disabled or a carer or if you have housing costs. It is worth claiming pension credit even if you are only entitled to a small amount as it can help you to qualify for other financial help for your family such as free school meals and help with health costs.

To claim pension credit phone the claim line on 0800 99 1234 or download the form at [www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit). Because child tax credit and housing benefit are being abolished, pension credit will change from 2014 to include additional amounts for children and rent.

**Housing benefit**

You can get housing benefit to help pay your rent whether or not you are working – as long as your income and savings are not too high. You should contact your local council for a claim form. If you are getting income support, in come based JSA, income-related ESA or pension credit (guarantee element) you will automatically qualify for maximum housing benefit – although this may not cover your full rent. If you are affected by a shortfall in your housing benefit, you can contact Grandparents Plus advice service on 0300 123 7015 to discuss your options. Contact your local council for a housing benefit claim form. Council

tax support From April 2013 a local system of council tax support has replaced the previous national system of council tax benefit for people who can’t afford to pay a full council tax bill. Each council can decide which groups of people it will help and how much help to offer. This means entitlement to support may vary depending on where you live – although pensioners are protected from cuts to support. You should check with your local council for details of the scheme in your area.

**Other sources of financial help**

Financial support from the local authority depends on the arrangements under which you’re caring for the child and is explained in the relevant chapters

**Free school meals**

You can get free school meals for the child you’re raising if you get one of the following benefits:

* Income support
* income-based jobseeker’s allowance
* income-related employment and support allowance
* the guarantee part of pension credit
* Child tax credit and your income is below a certain amount – although in most cases this does not apply if you are also receiving working tax credit
* Universal credit and your income is below a certain level.

The child will not be entitled to free school meals if you are being paid a fostering allowance for them. You can find out how to apply for free school meals by contacting your local council or your child’s school.

**Help with health costs**

You can get free prescriptions, dental treatment and sight tests and help towards the cost of glasses/lenses if you or a member of your family get one of the following benefits:

* income support
* income-based jobseeker’s allowance
* income-related employment and support allowance
* the guarantee part of pension credit
* Working tax credit and/or child tax credit, depending on your income
* Universal credit – if your income is below a certain amount.

If your income is low, you may still be able to get help with health costs under the NHS low income scheme. This will depend on the amount of income and savings that you have. To apply for help under the NHS low income scheme, you need to complete form HC1 which is available from benefit offices, NHS hospitals and some practitioners. You can also order a form online at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk.

**Sure start maternity grants**

A maternity grant is a fixed amount of £500 to help people on a low income buy clothes and equipment for a new born baby. It does not have to be repaid. Usually, in order to qualify there must be no other children in your family and you must get one of these benefits:

* income support
* income-based jobseeker’s allowance
* income-related employment and support allowance
* pension credit
* child tax credit – depending on the amount
* working tax credit that includes a disability or severe disability element.

You do not have to be the child’s parent to qualify for a grant as long as you have become responsible for the child within the last 3 months and they are aged under 12 months. You can qualify for a payment even if a grant has already been made to the child’s parent. However you cannot get a maternity grant for a child you are fostering. You can get a claim form from your local Jobcentre or download one from www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternitygrant.

**Healthy start vouchers**

These can be exchanged for free milk, fruit or vegetables. You can get the vouchers for children under four (or for yourself if you are pregnant) if you get one of these benefits:

* income support
* income-base jobseeker’s allowance
* Child tax credit and your income is below a certain amount – though in most cases this does not apply if you are also receiving working tax credit.

You can get the healthy start leaflet and claim form from your doctor or by going to www.healthystart.nhs.uk.

**School clothing grants**

Some local education authorities will help with the cost of school clothing for pupils whose families are on a low income. Local policies vary widely on who can get help and what items they will give help for. To find out what the policy is in your area, check with your local authority. Some school governing bodies or parents associations also provide help with school clothing.

**Charitable grants**

Financial assistance is often available from grant-giving organisations, depending on your particular background and circumstances. In some cases you can apply directly, but in others a referral is needed from an advice agency or someone working with the family such as a social worker or teacher.

The Turn 2 Us website can help you find a charitable fund which meets your needs – www.turn2us.org.uk.Grandparents Plus’ advice service can help by identifying and making applications to charitable trusts on your behalf. Contact us on 0300 123 7015.