

Sunderland City Council

NEXT STEPS

THE 'NEXT STEPS' TEAM

Children's Services



Services for Sunderland Young People Leaving Care

THE 'NEXT STEPS' TEAM

Transition to Adulthood (Leaving Care) Financial Policy, Procedures and Guidance 2016 – 2017

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Notes and Implementation Issues

1. All allowances should be based on an assessment of need and be set out in the young person's Pathway Plan. The Plan must highlight any attached conditions, how payments will be made, the frequency of payments and when they will be reviewed and cease.
2. By the age of 16 all young people should have a National Insurance Number (with certain exceptions) and relevant identity documents with photographic evidence to ensure they can register for housing, bank accounts and claim welfare benefits.
3. Ensure all young people have a bank account and where possible pay all allowances to young people through their account.
4. It is a statutory requirement that allowances are index-linked, reviewed annually and are aligned with annual welfare benefit increases.
5. The allowances set out in the following sections apply to all 'Eligible', 'Relevant', 'Former Relevant' and 'Qualifying' young people dependent on their legal/immigration status and an assessment of their needs. Care leavers who are also unaccompanied asylum seeking children are entitled to the same allowances as any other care leaver. However, allowances to this group of young people may be affected and limited as a result of their immigration status.
6. Certain groups of children looked after and care leavers aged 16 & 17 are eligible to claim welfare benefits (lone parents and sick and disabled young people), where young people are eligible to claim, support should be provided to maximise income. Where young people aged 16 & 17 are in receipt of welfare benefits a number of the leaving care maintenance allowances cease.
7. Wherever possible VAT should be reclaimed on all purchases that are VAT rated. A VAT receipt is required for all purchases made with a purchase card. When purchasing items up to the value of £250.00 a receipt with a VAT number is required. For items over £250.00, a full VAT receipt is required.
8. This document template and content was developed by John Short – Leaving Care Training and Consultancy and remains the intellectual property of that organisation. The content cannot be reproduced without the express permission of Sunderland Council or John Short – Leaving Care Training and Consultancy.
9. The headings used throughout this document are taken from the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance and the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Guidance and Regulations 2010.
10. Document Structure:
 - Section 1 – Children Looked After (aged 16 & 17) and Eligible, Relevant and Qualifying Children aged 16 & 17
 - Section 2 – Former Relevant and Qualifying Children aged 18 to 21/25
 - Section 3 & 4 - Appendices – Eligible, Relevant, Former Relevant and Qualifying Children aged 16 to 21/25

SECTION 1

Looked After Children and those deemed Eligible and Relevant (Aged 16 and 17) who are living in semi-independent and independent placements.

- Section 31 'Care Orders' living in a semi-independent or independent placements – Eligible children (and those who have not been looked after for 13 weeks)
- Section 20 'Accommodated' living in a semi-independent or independent placements – Eligible children (and those who have not been looked after for 13 weeks – Qualifying children)
- Young people previously looked after living in a semi-independent or independent setting – Relevant children

Basis and Amount	Conditions and Comments
<p>Accommodation</p> <p>Where young people are moving into private sector accommodation the rent level must be within the Housing Benefit – Local Housing Allowance rate for the specific area.</p>	<p>Placement and accommodation costs to be met in full for young people up to the age of 18. Where young people are moving into private sector accommodation the rent level must be within the Local Housing Allowance for that area. Any requirement to provide a deposit and rent in advance must be clarified prior to the tenancy agreement being authorised.</p> <p>Since April 2008 Housing Benefit for private sector tenants who rent from a private landlord is calculated using the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. The Rent Officer sets the level of the LHA for the different types of property in each LHA designated area; these are known as Broad Market Rental Areas.</p> <p>Under LHA, payments will generally be made directly to the tenant unless they are particularly 'vulnerable'. Care leaver status would, in principle, qualify a young person to have his or her LHA paid directly to the landlord. The intention of paying LHA directly to tenants is to encourage responsibility for paying the rent themselves.</p> <p>From April 2013 LHA rates are set annually.</p> <p>From 1st January 2013, all LHA claimants will have their LHA rate reviewed every April. Rates will no longer be reviewed on the anniversary of the claim. From April 2016 LHA rates are frozen until at least the 31st March 2018.</p> <p>The maximum weekly Local Housing Allowance rate for Sunderland from 1st April 2016 is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shared accommodation £45.00 • one bedroom accommodation £88.00 <p>Current rates for different areas can be checked via the Rent Service website, or via http://www.direct.gov.uk and follow the links to Local Housing Allowance and individual council areas.</p>

<p>Accommodation <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>From April 2011 absolute caps on Local Housing Allowance were introduced for each property size within the private sector, £250.00 per week being the cap for a one bedroom property.</p> <p>For general information about care leavers and the Local Housing Allowance visit: https://lha-direct.therentservice.gov.uk/Secure/pdfs/TRSHB(LHA)2CL.pdf</p> <p>Independent accommodation should not be approved for any young person where the rent charged by a landlord is higher than the Local Housing Allowance for that given area. Young people leaving care are exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR) up to the age of 22; therefore they are eligible to rent accommodation up to the 1 bedroom Local Housing Allowance rate. From January 2012 the SAR has been extended from the age of 25 to the age of 35.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances Children's Services will act as a guarantor for young people following an assessment of need and all other possible guarantors being explored and ruled out. In situations where Children's Services has acted as a guarantor for 16 and 17 year olds, a new tenancy agreement should be produced when the young person reaches their 18th birthday. This is particularly important where young people are living in private accommodation. The liability and responsibility for the condition and the cost of the accommodation should be transferred to the young person at 18. Where necessary Children's Services will pay for the new tenancy agreement.</p> <p>Prior to seeking agreement to Children's Services acting as the guarantor, social workers should clarify the level and scope of any liability. Where possible, liability should only extend to the young person's rent and the buildings insurance excess.</p> <p>Emergency accommodation or Bed and breakfast accommodation can only be used in exceptional situations, for a maximum of two nights and with the agreement of the Head of Children Looked After Services.</p> <p>When young people move into privately rented accommodation their personal adviser should take digital pictures that show the condition of the property and any items that are included in the rent/inventory. The pictures should be stored and transferred to a CD Rom. Three copies of the CD Rom should be made; one each for the landlord, young person and the young person's file. This will assist with negotiating with the landlord if there are problems regarding the condition of the property and the return of the deposit when the young person leaves the property.</p> <p>See contributions sections.</p>
<p>Deposit and Rent in Advance.</p>	<p>Where a young person has access to housing authority or housing association independent accommodation a deposit and rent in advance will not be provided. In exceptional circumstances and depending on an assessment of need a deposit and rent in advance may be considered if a young person would be at risk in housing authority or housing association independent accommodation.</p> <p>Where young people are moving into private accommodation a deposit and rent in</p>

<i>Continued</i>	<p>and Leisure Allowance cease for these groups.</p> <p>See contributions sections.</p>
<p>Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance</p> <p>Supported Lodgings</p> <p>£57.90 per Week - Minus £17.00 Utilities and Food Deduction</p>	<p>Young people will be provided with £57.90 per week and are required to make a contribution of £17.00 per week. The young person's contribution is undertaken from the principle of assisting with the development of budgeting and money management skills and enabling young people to becoming accustomed to making payments for rent and bills and food.</p> <p>Young people living in Supported Lodgings are provided with food and utilities which in part is covered by the young person's contribution.</p> <p>Young people who are undertaking low paid employment will continue to receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance until they earn a given threshold.</p> <p>This allowance is provided up to the age of 18 and can be provided in cash or kind depending on an assessment of need and the requirements and circumstances of individual young people.</p> <p>See incentives section and contributions section.</p>
<p>Lone Parent Allowances</p> <p>Lone Parents Entitled to Welfare Benefits</p> <p>Transfer to Benefits From the Birth of their Baby</p>	<p>Lone parents (children looked after and care leavers) aged 16 and 17, either Section 31 (Care Order) or Section 20 (Accommodated) are eligible to claim Income Support, Child Tax Credits, Child Benefit and Healthy Start Vouchers from the birth of their baby.</p> <p>They will also be entitled to apply for a Sure Start Maternity Grant from the day their baby is born (or up to 11 weeks earlier if in receipt of a qualifying benefit such as Employment & Support Allowance at that time). This includes young people living in foster care and residential care, and includes those who are still in education.</p> <p>The £500.00 'Sure Start' Maternity Grant is claimed from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The Sure Start Maternity Grant is only available for the oldest or first child. Lone parents should be supported and assisted to claim their full benefit entitlement.</p> <p>From 2012 new claims for income support by lone parents can only be made if they have a child under five. When the youngest child reaches the age of 5, lone parents will have to register for Jobseeker's Allowance and look for work unless they are sick or disabled or can claim income support as a carer.</p> <p>Due to having an entitlement to welfare benefits and when the young person is in receipt of these benefits the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance and Clothing Allowance will cease. All other allowances remain.</p>

<p>Sick or Disabled Allowances</p> <p>Sick or Disabled Young People Entitled to Welfare Benefits</p>	<p>Young people (looked after and care leavers) aged 16 and 17, either Section 31 (Care Order) or Section 20 (Accommodated) who are incapable of work due to ill-health (deemed Sick and Disabled by the DWP) are eligible to claim Employment & Support Allowance from their 16th birthday. This includes young people living in foster care and residential care. It can also include those aged 16 and above who are undertaking education. Being in receipt of a Disability Living Allowance/ Personal Independence Payment at the higher rate makes claiming E&SA more straight forward.</p> <p>Young people should be supported and assisted to claim their full benefit entitlement.</p> <p>Due to having an entitlement to welfare benefits and when the young person is in receipt of these benefits the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance and Clothing Allowance will cease. All other allowances remain.</p>
<p>Travel</p> <p>16 and 17 year olds –</p> <p>Sunderland All Zone Bus Pass</p> <p>£69.30 Per Four Weeks</p> <p>YOT</p> <p>Education/ Training Provider</p>	<p>All young people aged 16 and 17 who are actively in contact with the Leaving Care Team will be provided with a £69.30 per month all zone bus pass. The bus pass is conditional on young people being in regular contact with their leaving care personal adviser and actively engaged in the pathway planning process.</p> <p>Where young people live outside of the Sunderland area they will be provided with a local area travel card.</p> <p>The travel card will assist young people to access education, training and employment opportunities, facilitate family contact and contact with the leaving care team and enable access to leisure and cultural activities.</p> <p>Young people who are required to attend court appearances will be provide with travel warrants by the YOT.</p> <p>Young people undertaking education or training courses may be provided with a travel allowance by the education/training provider</p> <p>All expired bus passes must be returned to Sunderland Children's Services for audit purposes. In circumstances where a bus pass is misused the provision of a pass will be temporarily withdrawn.</p>
<p>Education, Training, Apprenticeships and Volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance. • Young people who are undertaking a paid traineeship or Apprenticeship will not receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance but will receive the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider. • Young people who are undertaking voluntary work will continue to receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance. <p>Education and Training</p> <p>Young people who are undertaking an education course or training activity will receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance.</p>

<i>Continued</i>	<p>Additionally, young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses (12 hours study/training and contact time) are eligible for the 16-19 bursary (£1,200.00 per year, usually paid for 30 weeks at £40.00 per week) scheme (administered by individual colleges). Those aged between 16 & 19 who are in care, care leavers or claiming income support or getting both E&SA and DLA/PIP will be guaranteed a bursary of £1,200.00 spread over the academic year, for those attending college or sixth form (payments of £40.00 per week over a 30 week teaching year).</p> <p>Young people are expected to attend the nearest college for the given course they wish to undertake. In exceptional circumstances, and following an assessment of need, the nearest college rule can be waved, where it can be demonstrated that it is not in the best interest of the young person to attend the nearest college.</p> <p>Paid Training Young people who are undertaking paid training will not receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance but will receive the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider. If the traineeship allowance is paid at a rate less than £57.90 the allowance is topped up to £57.90.</p> <p>Apprenticeships Young people who are undertaking an apprenticeship will not receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance but will be given the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider. The National Minimum Wage of £3.30 per hour applies to apprentices from 1 October 2015. The wage applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all apprentices aged under 19 • apprentices aged 19 or over in the first year of their Apprenticeship <p>This should mean that apprentices get a weekly wage of at least £125.40 (38 hours).</p> <p>National Minimum Wage – under 18 = £3.87 per hour, age 18 to 20 = £5.30 per hour, age 21 to 24 = £6.70 per hour.</p> <p>Voluntary Work Young people who are undertaking voluntary work will continue to receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance.</p>
Employment	<p>Young people who are working will continue to receive the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance until their wage reaches a given threshold.</p> <p>See incentives section and contributions section.</p>
Education Training Apprenticeships Employment	<p>Depending on an assessment of need, including the suitability of the course, Children's Services may provide equipment and travel expenses for the education/training course of the young person's choice and may provide this for subsequent courses. To be provided with an equipment grant for the second and any subsequent education/training course, the young person will need to</p>

<p>Equipment and Extra Tuition Commencing Work Grant <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>demonstrate commitment to the education/training programme including consistent attendance.</p> <p>In circumstances where young people are withdrawing from courses and equipment has been provided, this should be returned to the Children's Services. Young people who are entering second courses will be loaned equipment until they have demonstrated consistent attendance. When they have demonstrated consistent attendance new equipment will be purchased following an assessment of need.</p> <p>Where appropriate, Children's Services will consider funding extra tuition and travel related expenses (excluding taxi fares).</p> <p>Any child care costs should be accessed through the Care to Learn Fund</p> <p>Training and Apprenticeships If special equipment is required for a traineeship/apprenticeship the provider should be approached in the first instance. If equipment is not provided, and depending on an assessment of need, it will be provided by Children's Services.</p> <p>Education Young people who are undertaking further education courses are entitled to: Up to £50.00 Stationary Grant Up to £100.00 Educational Visits Grant Up to £150.00 Books and Equipment/IT Equipment Grant The Grant is per academic year, is not transferable and is only available for stationary, educational visits, books, general equipment and I.T. equipment.</p> <p>All young people entering full time further education (level 2 or above) or higher education (academic courses) will be provided with a one-off Computer Grant of up to £390.00 for a note-pad, laptop or desktop computer. One off – age 16 to 21/24, regardless of placement type.</p> <p>Young people should submit a list of requirements regarding equipment, course books etc. and return receipts to their social worker. Computers should be purchased by the social workers in order to reclaim VAT.</p> <p>Employment Depending on an assessment of need, Children's Services will purchase equipment and/or clothing to assist the young person with their chosen employment e.g. interview clothes, overalls, protective clothing (see Clothing Allowance section). Additionally, Children's Services may assist with the cost of travel to interviews.</p> <p>Maximum Commencing Work Grant/Allowance £100.00 – One-off.</p> <p>See incentives section and contributions sections.</p>
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<p>Incentives</p> <p>Government 16 – 19 Bursary</p>	<p>Young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses (12 hours study/training and contact time) are eligible for the 16-19 bursary (£1,200.00 per year, usually paid for 30 weeks at £40.00 per week) scheme (administered by individual colleges). Those aged between 16 & 19 who are in care, care leavers or claiming income support or getting both E&SA and DLA/PIP will be guaranteed a bursary of £1,200.00 spread over the academic year, for those attending college or sixth form (payments of £40.00 per week over a 30 week teaching year).</p>
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Contributions	<p>Contributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">When a young person has a weekly income of £140.00 net or more their leaving care maintenance allowance will be reduced by 50%.When a young person has a weekly income of £185.00 net or more their leaving care maintenance allowance and clothing allowance will cease. <p>Contributions are undertaken from the principle of assisting with the development of money management and budgeting skills. When young people are making contributions towards the cost of their accommodation, payments should always be made to Children’s Services who will then cover the full cost of the accommodation.</p> <p>Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance, pocket money, wages and earnings, Traineeship Allowances, Modern Apprenticeship Allowances and the 16 - 19 Bursary (EMA replacement) count as income.</p> <p>Young people should be issued with a Contributions Notice setting out the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">The level of reduction of their allowance/sThe level of their contributionWhen the reduction or contribution will commenceHow the contribution will be collectedWhat the young person can do if their circumstances changeWhat the young person can do if they do not agree with the assessed reduction or contribution. <p><u>Contribution equation:</u> Net income, minus fares, work costs and the cost of lunches. See examples below</p> <p>Example 1</p> <table><tr><td>Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance</td><td>£57.90</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>16 – 19 Bursary</td><td>£40.00</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Wages from part time job</td><td>£28.00</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total Income</td><td>£125.90</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Costs (lunches X 2)</td><td>minus</td><td>£10.00</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>£115.90</td><td>no deduction</td></tr></table> <p>Example 2</p> <table><tr><td>Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance</td><td>£57.90</td><td>£28.95</td></tr><tr><td>Wages from employment</td><td>£115.00</td><td>£115.00</td></tr><tr><td>Total Income</td><td>£172.90</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Costs (lunches X 4)</td><td>minus -</td><td>£20.00</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>£152.90</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance reduced by 50% LCMA reduced by 50% - total income becomes = <u>£143.95</u></p> <p>The contributions and adjustments are undertaken to assist young people to get used to saving and paying for utilities and to help with the development of financial capability and financial literacy skills, money management and budgeting skills.</p>			Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance	£57.90		16 – 19 Bursary	£40.00		Wages from part time job	£28.00		Total Income	£125.90		Costs (lunches X 2)	minus	£10.00		£115.90	no deduction	Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance	£57.90	£28.95	Wages from employment	£115.00	£115.00	Total Income	£172.90		Costs (lunches X 4)	minus -	£20.00		£152.90	
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<i>Continued</i>	<p>To assist a young person with making a successful transition to employment and managing their wages they will not be expected to make any contributions until they have completed six weeks of employment.</p> <p>A young person will need to provide proof of income in order that his/her social worker/personal adviser can calculate incentive opportunities and contributions. If proof is not forthcoming it will be assumed that earnings are exceeding £140.00 net per week. In these circumstances the minimum allowance (accommodation costs plus £57.90, or equivalent) will be provided. The £57.90 can be provided in cash, kind or food parcels. Additionally, all other allowances can be suspended.</p>
<p>Clothing Allowance</p> <p>16 & 17 year olds £10.00 Per Week.</p>	<p>16 & 17 year olds - £10.00 per week clothing allowance.</p> <p>The clothing allowance can be paid weekly, monthly or quarterly and can be paid directly to the young person or spent by the social worker or support worker with the young person. The arrangements for providing and spending the clothing allowance should be set out in the young person's pathway plan and placement plan and should be dependent on an assessment of need.</p>
<p>Initial Clothing Allowance</p> <p>Up-to £200.00</p>	<p>In circumstances where young people become looked after and are placed into semi-independent or independent accommodation they will be provided with an Initial Clothing Allowance.</p> <p>The Initial Clothing Allowance is paid in situations where young people become looked after with insufficient clothing for everyday needs. When a young person is first looked after their social worker/leaving care personal adviser/support worker should make a list of the clothing that the young person has and another list setting out what clothing is required and the cost. The list and costing should be submitted to a Service Manager for approval.</p>
<p>Birthday</p> <p>17th birthday £100.00</p> <p>18th Birthday £100.00</p> <p>Young People Living in Semi-independent or Independent Accommodation</p>	<p>A gift or gifts and/or a contribution towards the cost of celebrations to the value of £100.00. Responsibility for the purchase of the gift/gifts rests with the social worker.</p> <p>Only in exceptional circumstances can the £100.00 be provided as a gift voucher/gift card. The birthday allowance should not be provided in cash.</p> <p>The birthday allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in contact with their social worker and are actively engaged in the care planning/pathway planning process.</p>

<p>Christmas/ Festivals £150.00 Age 16 and 17.</p> <p>Young People Living in Semi- independent or Independent Accommodation</p>	<p>A gift or gifts and/or a contribution towards the cost of celebrations to the value of £150.00. Responsibility for the purchase of the gift/gifts rests with the social worker.</p> <p>Young people who are non-Christians will be given a choice as to when their festival allowance is to be provided. If they do not have a preference, the allowance should be made available at Christmas to ensure that they receive their entitlement. Additionally, they should also be offered the choice of having a proportion of their allowance at their festival of choice and a proportion at Christmas.</p> <p>Only in exceptional circumstances can the £150.00 be provided as a gift voucher/gift card. The Christmas/festival allowance should not be provided in cash.</p> <p>The Christmas/festival allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in contact with their social worker and are actively engaged in the care planning/pathway planning process.</p>
<p>Family Contact and Travel Costs</p> <p>Maximum £150.00 per Year.</p>	<p>Where young people have family members who live outside of the Children's Services area (more than a short bus/train journey), telephone and travel costs may be provided following an assessment of need. Wherever possible travel arrangements should be booked in advance in order to reduce costs.</p> <p>Following an assessment of need Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children may be provided with a £5.00 per week phone card/allowance.</p> <p>The use of the allowance and frequency of travel should be set out in the pathway plan.</p> <p>Where young people have family who live outside of the Children's Services area and travel costs may exceed £150.00 per year, agreement to exceed the limit must be sought from the Service Manager.</p>
<p>Contact with Significant Others and Travel Costs</p> <p>Maximum £150.00 per Year</p>	<p>Where young people have significant contacts that live outside of the Children's Services area, telephone and travel costs may be provided following an assessment of need. Wherever, possible travel arrangements should be booked in advance in order to reduce costs.</p> <p>The use of the allowance and frequency of travel should be set out in the pathway plan.</p> <p>Where young people have significant contacts that live outside of the Children's Services area and travel costs may exceed £150.00 per year agreement to exceed the limit must be sought from the Service Manager.</p>

<p>Social Activities and Leisure</p> <p>Maximum of £10.00 per Week. Up to £520.00 per Year</p>	<p>Where appropriate and dependent on an assessment of need Children's Services will pay for the membership of a hobby or leisure club and contribute towards the cost of equipment or special clothing/fees or contribute towards the cost of a social activity. This could include the cost of trial sessions and a contribution to travel costs. Social workers should assist young people to obtain a Sunderland Life Card (Leisure Pass). Young people should be encouraged and assisted to explore the leisure facilities that accept the Life Pass.</p> <p>Financial assistance provided to pursue hobbies, leisure interests and social activities should be governed by the principle that these activities can be afforded by the young person at the age of eighteen, when they take over financial responsibility for their own affairs.</p> <p>Where young people live outside of the Sunderland area assistance will be provided to obtain a local Passport To Leisure (Life Card/Leisure Pass).</p> <p>Young people should have access to at least one leisure/hobby/sports activity per week to ensure social inclusion.</p>
<p>Cultural/Social Activity</p> <p>Up to £130.00 per Year – one off Payment for 17 Year Olds</p>	<p>Children's Services will provide up to £130.00 for a major cultural or social activity once per year. The activity should be undertaken with a leaving care personal adviser, ex foster care or other key individual. The activity could range from a visit to the theatre, sporting event, art gallery or a day trip to a city to visit several museums etc.</p> <p>The allowance is dependent on an assessment of need and an assessment of the suitability of the activity.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need and an assessment of the suitability of the activities the allowance could be provided as two payments of up to £65.00 each.</p> <p>The allowance should be used to fund the activity and refreshments for the young person and social worker/personal adviser/foster carer and the travel costs for the young person. Travel costs for the social worker/personal adviser/foster carer should be claimed via the staff travel budget.</p>

Key Documents Up to £110.00	Children's Services will purchase a passport (including the check and send facility) and 1 birth certificate for each young person – Up to £110.00.
Up to £218.00	One passport, or passport renewal age 16 to 21, one birth certificate only if the young person does not have the original.
£936.00 50% of cost = £468.00	Children's Services will purchase a travel document for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children dependent on an assessment of need (£72.00 or £218.00).
	The total cost of the nationality and citizenship process for young people who gain citizenship is £936.00 (under 18 year old rate as at 18 March 2016). Sunderland Children's Services will contribute £468.00 (50% Cost [young person contributes 50% - £468.00] – total cost £936.00 under 18 year old rate) towards the cost of the nationality and citizenship process for young people who gain citizenship.
Introduction to Driving Licence, 1 Theory Test, 5 (1 hour) Lessons and 1 Practical Test	<p>Children's Services will provide the funding for one provisional driving licence, one theory test, one practical test and the cost of 5 (1 hour) motor car driving lessons to introduce young people to driving.</p> <p>This is available to 17, 18, 19 and 20 year olds and is conditional on the young person matching the cost of the 5 car driving lessons provided by the Sunderland Children's Services. This will enable the young person to have 10 trial lessons.</p> <p>This is only available to young people who have been engaged in education, training or employment for 3 months and do not have any driving convictions. Young people must pay the cost of the 5 lessons to their social worker/personal adviser who will then book the 10 lessons. In general, by paying for 10 lessons in a block, driving schools provide an extra lesson free.</p> <p>Additionally, Children's Services will pay for one practical driving test. This is dependent on an approved driving school recommending that the young person is ready to take the test.</p> <p>Young people must provide their contribution before the overall package is provided. Young people can use their birthday or Christmas/festival allowance to pay for their five lessons. No other allowances are transferable for this purpose.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need, which must be linked to the need to travel to an education, training or employment opportunity the driving package can be used to fund a moped/motor bike training programme. Young people must attend a CBT programme prior to driving on public roads.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need, lone parents and sick and disabled young people may be exempt from the 3 months in education, training or employment condition.</p> <p>The allowance is only available until the young person's 21st birthday.</p>

Counselling and Therapeutic Needs	Children's Services will assist young people to access counselling and/or therapeutic services via CAMHS or universal health services.
Health Maximum of £100.00 per Year (£250.00 for Hearing Aid equipment) Funding over £100.00 requires the authorisation of the Service Manager	<p>Children's Services will assist young people to access services to meet their health and developmental needs via the 'looked after' children health provision and via universal health services.</p> <p>Social workers should complete form HC1 (SC) for all 16 & 17 year olds. The HC1 (SC) form enables young people to obtain an NHS low income exemption certificate. This will provide free or reduced cost dental, optician and prescription services. In situations where young people require specific health items these will be considered following an assessment of need.</p> <p>In situations where young people require glasses and receive an NHS Voucher, Children's Services will match the value of the voucher (£37.50), total value £75.00.</p> <p>For hearing aid equipment the maximum allowance is £250.00 per Year</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances and where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Children's Services may provide funds to secure additional health services. Funding above £100.00/£250.00 per year requires the authorisation of the Service Manager.</p>
Hospitalisation Grant £40.00 Essential Items	Young people who have a hospital stay of over one week, or are anticipated to have such a stay, will be provided with a £40.00 Hospital Pack containing slippers, night wear and a dressing gown.
Cultural Needs Maximum of £100.00 per Year	<p>Children's Services will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their cultural needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Children's Services will fund services aimed at meeting identified needs i.e. skin and hair care needs, dietary needs and requirements.</p> <p>Funding above £100.00 per year requires the authorisation of the Service Manager</p>
Religious Needs Maximum of £100.00 per Year	<p>Children's Services will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their religious needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Children's Services will fund services aimed at meeting identified religious needs i.e. travel to religious venues.</p> <p>Funding above £100.00 per year requires the authorisation of the Service Manager.</p>

<p>Child Maternity Grant</p> <p>£200.00 11 Weeks Prior to the 'Due Birth Date'</p>	<p>Children's Services will assist young people who are parents to maximise their income from all available sources. Eligible and Relevant young people are entitled to claim Income Support from the day their child is born. Submitting a claim for Income Support is a pre-requisite for a Sure Start Maternity Grant.</p> <p>Children's Services will provide a £200.00 'one-off' Maternity Grant. This is available from 11 weeks before the 'Birth Due Date' to assist young people with preparing for the birth of a new baby and should be used to purchase essential equipment. The majority of items required for the new baby can be purchased from the 'Sure Start' Maternity Grant (£500.00) that is available from the birth of the baby. The 'Sure Start' Maternity Grant is only available once for the first or oldest baby.</p>
<p>Healthy Start Voucher Equivalent</p> <p>£3.10 per week</p> <p>(£6.20 after the birth of the baby)</p>	<p>Payment Equivalent to the Value of the Healthy Start Voucher, until the birth of the baby. From the birth of the baby entitlement is linked to a means tested benefit claim.</p> <p>From at least 10 weeks pregnant. £3.10 per week for Milk, Fruit and Vegetables.</p> <p>Submitting a claim for Income Support is a pre-requisite for the Healthy Start Vouchers.</p> <p>From the birth of the baby until their 1st birthday the voucher is worth £6.20 per week and £3.10 per week when they are aged over one and under four.</p>
<p>Child Care Costs</p>	<p>Lone parents, who wish to return to education, start a traineeship/apprenticeship or take up employment opportunities, will be assisted to identify funds to cover or contribute to child care costs. In the first instance the Care to Learn Fund and other universal services should be approached for funding.</p> <p>The Care to Learn Fund provides financial support to assist young parents under the age of 20 to undertake education.</p> <p>From April 2009 the majority of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children who have applied for asylum and have an initial decision such as Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave can apply for a Care to Learn Fund grant.</p>
<p>Special Needs Costs</p> <p>Maximum of £100.00 per Year</p>	<p>Children's Services will assist young people to access services to meet their special needs and depending on the outcome, may assist in providing resources to address the identified need.</p> <p>Funding above £100.00 per year requires the authorisation of the Service Manager.</p>
<p>Personal Luggage</p> <p>£35.00</p>	<p>Luggage – all young people moving to independence or between placements must have at least two items of appropriate personal luggage.</p>

<p>Winter Utilities and Heating Allowance</p> <p>£10.00 per Week</p> <p>1st year of Independent Living</p>	<p>Young people living in semi-independent or independent accommodation who are responsible for, and pay variable utility and heating costs will be provided with a £10.00 per week (£260.00) winter utilities and heating allowance during their 1st year (winter) of independent living. The allowance is available for October, November, December, January, February and March of the first winter they are living independently</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need the allowance can be provided on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. The allowance should be paid directly to the young person's utility provider or credited to his or her electricity/gas payment key/card.</p> <p>Total payment £260.00 during the first year of independent living.</p> <p>For the majority of young people this allowance will be provided between their 18th and 19th birthday.</p>
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<p>Emergency Payments</p>	<p>Children's Services will provide a maximum of 3 cash payments in any 6-month period. These payments will be dependent on an assessment of need and will not exceed £10.00 per payment.</p> <p>Where a young person requests an emergency payment due to difficulties with budgeting, the social worker/personal adviser will explore with the young person how their £57.90 weekly maintenance allowance is provided. The second request for an emergency payment will result in the young person being given two choices on how their £57.90 will be provided:</p> <p>Option 1 Two payments of £12.00 and one payment of £33.90 per-week.</p> <p>Option 2 Personal adviser accompanying the young person shopping, ensuring that £30.00 is spent on food, £10.00 is spent on utilities/bills and the remaining £17.90 is given in cash.</p> <p>Where a young person requests more than three emergency cash payments in any 6-month period, they can be assisted with a maximum of two food parcels each of which will have a utilities component. Each food parcel and utility component should not exceed £15.00 in value, i.e. £5.00 utility top-up and £10.00 food.</p> <p>Emergency payments and food parcels are discretionary and will only be provided following an assessment of need. In situations where young people make regular requests for emergency payments their Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance will be provided as three weekly payments (see above); this will mean young people will have a maximum of three days between payments.</p> <p>Young people may apply for two emergency food parcels in any six-month period. Each food parcel and utility component should not exceed £15.00 in value, i.e. £5.00 utility top-up and £10.00 food. Emergency food parcels are discretionary and will only be provided following an assessment of need.</p> <p><i>Young people will be given a food parcel of £10.00 value or their social worker or duty worker will purchase food to the value of £10.00. The social worker or duty worker will ensure £5.00 of credit is placed on the young person's utility key or card. Young people should not be provided with cash or vouchers.</i></p> <p>Food Parcel to the value of £10.00 Pasta, Rice, Tinned Tomatoes, Tinned Baked Beans, Tinned Baked Beans and Sausages, Tinned Mixed Vegetables Tinned Tuna, Packet Noodles, Long Life Milk Tea Bags Small bag – split large box into bag Sugar Small bag – split bag into small bag Packet of Cereals Tinned Fruit Salad Small Packet of Biscuits</p> <p>In situations where young people have lost, or had money/items stolen they must obtain a crime reference number before an assessment of need and compensatory payment is considered.</p>
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Subsistence	<p>Depending on an assessment of need social workers/personal advisers can purchase refreshments to enable a keywork session to be inclusive.</p> <p>As a general principle keywork session refreshments should be agreed in advance by a manager, should not exceed £12.00 in total (up to £6.00 each) and occur relatively infrequently.</p> <p>Alternatively, social workers/personal advisers can purchase ingredients and prepare a meal with a young person as part of a keywork preparation for independence session.</p>
Group Participation Activities	<p>Each 'Preparation for Independence Group' will have a £20.00 budget to enable personal advisers/young people to purchase ingredients and refreshments aimed at enabling participants to develop budgeting, cooking and independent living skills.</p> <p>Each 'Drop-In' session will have a £20.00 budget to enable young people to have access to refreshments and to facilitate a 'cooking activity'.</p> <p>Where a Drop-in Group or specific activity group requires more than a £20.00 budget the additional amount can only be agreed by a Group Manager.</p>
Consultation with Young People £10.00 Voucher	<p>Payments to young people who undertake consultation exercises should always be paid in the form of vouchers.</p> <p>Young people will receive a £10.00 voucher when they return exit questionnaires and take part in exit interviews at the age of 21.</p> <p>Expenses related to enabling young people to participate in consultation exercise will be provided following an assessment of need.</p>
Exceptional Needs Payment	<p>Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Children's Services may provide funds for exceptional needs as a one off payments. These payments can only be agreed by a Service Manager.</p>

SECTION 2

Former Relevant Children

- Care Leavers Aged 18 to 21, or until the completion of the education course being undertaken on their 21st birthday - Former Relevant Children - Section 23 C (1)
- Care Leavers Aged 21 to 25 who return to the authority to resume or commence education or training - Former Relevant Children - Section 23 CA (1)

Basis and Amount	Conditions and Comments
<p>Accommodation</p> <p>A Housing Benefit claim should be submitted for all young people on their 18th birthday. The claim can be prepared in advance and submitted on their 18th birthday.</p> <p>Where young people are not able/or claiming benefits a temporary payment of £5.00 per week for 2 months will be made to ensure they are eligible to claim Housing Benefit based on an income of £5.00 per week. - Temporary HB Allowance.</p>	<p>Accommodation costs for young people over age 18 will only be provided in exceptional circumstances. Post 18 placements for exceptionally vulnerable young people may be funded in part, or full, following an assessment of need and the case being considered by the Head of Children Looked After Services.</p> <p>In circumstances where placements are extended, leaving care personal advisers and young people must ensure a Housing Benefit claim is submitted on, or, within three days of the young person's 18th birthday. Also see Sunderland Staying Put Policy.</p> <p>Emergency accommodation or Bed and breakfast accommodation can only be used in exceptional situations, for a maximum of two nights and with the agreement of the Head of Children Looked After Services.</p> <p>Placement and accommodation costs to be met in full for young people up to the age of 18. Where young people are moving into private sector accommodation the rent level must be within the Local Housing Allowance for that area. Any requirement to provide a deposit and rent in advance must be clarified prior to the tenancy agreement being authorised.</p> <p>Since April 2008 Housing Benefit for private sector tenants who rent from a private landlord is calculated using the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. The Rent Officer sets the level of the LHA for the different types of property in each LHA designated area; these are known as Broad Market Rental Areas.</p> <p>Under LHA, payments will generally be made directly to the tenant unless they are particularly 'vulnerable'. Care leaver status would, in principle, qualify a young person to have his or her LHA paid directly to the landlord. The intention of paying LHA directly to tenants is to encourage responsibility for paying the rent themselves.</p> <p>From April 2013 the LHA rates are set annually and from April 2018 the rates are frozen until at least 31st March 2018.</p> <p>The maximum weekly Local Housing Allowance rate for Sunderland from 1st April 2016 is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shared accommodation £45.00 • one bedroom accommodation £88.00

<p><i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Current rates for different areas can be checked via the Rent Service website, or via http://www.direct.gov.uk and follow the links to Local Housing Allowance and individual council areas.</p> <p>From April 2011 absolute caps on Local Housing Allowance were introduced for each property size within the private sector, £250.00 per week being the cap for a one bedroom property.</p> <p>For general information about care leavers and the Local Housing Allowance visit: https://lha-direct.therentservice.gov.uk/Secure/pdfs/TRSHB(LHA)2CL.pdf</p> <p>Independent accommodation should not be approved for any young person where the rent charged by a landlord is higher than the Local Housing Allowance for that given area. Young people leaving care are exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR) up to the age of 22; therefore they are eligible to rent accommodation up to the 1 bedroom Local Housing Allowance rate. From January 2012 the SAR has been extended from the age of 25 to the age of 35.</p> <p>In situations where Children's Services has acted as a guarantor for 16 and 17 year olds, a new tenancy agreement should be produced when the young person reaches their 18th birthday. This is particularly important where young people are living in private accommodation. The liability and responsibility for the condition and the cost of the accommodation should be transferred to the young person at 18. Where necessary Children's Services will pay for the new tenancy agreement.</p> <p>When young people move into privately rented accommodation their personal adviser should take digital pictures that show the condition of the property and any items that are included in the rent/inventory. The pictures should be stored and transferred to a CD Rom. Three copies of the CD Rom should be made; one each for the landlord, young person and the young person's file. This will assist with negotiating with the landlord if there are problems regarding the condition of the property and the return of the deposit when the young person leaves the property.</p>
<p>Deposit and Rent in Advance.</p>	<p>Where a young person has access to housing authority or housing association independent accommodation a deposit and rent in advance will not be provided. In exceptional circumstances and depending on an assessment of need a deposit and rent in advance may be considered if a young person would be at risk in housing authority or housing association independent accommodation.</p> <p>Where young people are moving into private accommodation a deposit and rent in advance will only be provided if the rent level falls within the Local Housing Allowance rate. – Deposit equivalent to one month's rent and one month's rent in advance – total offer equivalent to two months' rent.</p> <p>Social Workers should check if a 'Rent Deposit Scheme' exists in the area the young person is aiming to live and/or what 'Rent Deposit Protect Scheme' the letting agent/landlord uses.</p> <p>Many local authority housing departments operate Deposit Guarantee Schemes that</p>

<i>Continued</i>	<p>offers landlords a legally binding deposit bond in place of a cash deposit. In circumstances where Children's Services is providing the deposit, or is providing a bond guarantee, the deposit/bond guarantee should be in the name of Sunderland Council.</p> <p>From April 2007, landlords and agents have, by law, had to sign up to one of three Government-backed schemes when they take a deposit. These schemes aim to ensure that letting agents, landlords and tenants have access to independent deposit protection.</p>
<p>Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance.</p> <p>Failed Asylum Seekers with no Recourse to Public Funds.</p> <p>£57.90 Per Week.</p>	<p>Maintenance costs should be met by the young person from their employment or benefits.</p> <p>Where a failed asylum seeker is deemed a Former Relevant Care Leaver and is ineligible for means tested benefits they will be provided with a LCMA of £57.90 per week. Young people are expected to pay any service charge and utility charge from their LCMA.</p> <p>See Barking and Dagenham Case Law Judgement Failed asylum seekers and 'all rights/appeals exhausted cases' with no recourse to public funds are provided with the above allowances only after a human rights assessment and until the removal date is reached or the age of 21, whichever comes first.</p>
Initial Benefit Claim	<p>Sunderland Children's Services will provide up to six weeks Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance (£57.90) to assist young people whilst they wait for their initial benefit claim to be processed.</p> <p>The Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance is paid in advance and welfare benefits are paid in arrears. Even where a benefit claim is verified and established on the young person's 18th birthday they will have to wait at least 2 weeks for the first benefit payment, obtaining the first payment in such a timescale would be exceptional.</p> <p>Supporting information and identity documents should be obtained prior to a young person's 18th birthday, in preparation for a claim that should be started on the 18th birthday and workers should contact the benefits agency after one week to clarify the first payment date.</p> <p>If the young person has not received their first benefit payment after six weeks they should be supported to claim a Short Term Benefit Advance (STBA) from the DWP.</p>
Temporary Housing Allowance	<p>In exceptional circumstances where young people are temporarily not able to, or are not claiming benefits, a temporary payment of £5.00 per week for 2 months will be made to ensure they are eligible to claim Local Housing Allowance/Housing Benefit based on an income of £5.00 per week.</p> <p>Where the placement is a Children's Services funded placement (Staying Put or Supported Lodgings) the 2 months can be extended to ensure Local Housing Allowance/Housing Benefit is paid as a contribution towards the placement costs.</p>

<p>Incentive Payments</p> <p>Government 16 – 19 Bursary</p> <p>Children's Services - Accessing Education, Training, Voluntary Activities</p> <p>Sunderland Positive Activities Incentives</p>	<p>Young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses (12 hours study/training and contact time) are eligible for the 16-19 bursary (£1,200.00 per year, usually paid for 30 weeks at £40.00 per week) scheme (administered by individual colleges). Those aged between 16 & 19 who are in care, care leavers or claiming income support or getting both E&SA and DLA/PIP will be guaranteed a bursary of £1,200.00 spread over the academic year, for those attending college or sixth form (payments of £40.00 per week over a 30 week teaching year).</p> <p>Young people aged 18 to 21 who are undertaking a full time education/training course or a voluntary activity (12 hours education/training/voluntary activity) and who are not entitled to a 16 to 19 Bursary will be entitled to a weekly £10.00 incentive. In addition, if the young person is not eligible for a travel/bus pass from their education/training/voluntary activity provider and they have to travel to attend the course/activity they will be provided with a weekly/monthly travel pass. The pass should cover the area/zone that enables journeys from the young person's home to the education/training/voluntary activity. The provision of the pass will also enable young people to visit family and friends and have access to the leaving care team.</p>
<p>Education Training Apprenticeships</p> <p>Equipment and Extra Tuition</p> <p>Commencing Work Grant</p>	<p>Depending on an assessment of need, including the suitability of the course, Children's Services may provide equipment and travel expenses for the education/training course of the young person's choice and may provide this for subsequent courses. To be provided with an equipment grant for the second and any subsequent education/training course, the young person will need to demonstrate commitment to the education/training programme including consistent attendance.</p> <p>In circumstances where young people are withdrawing from courses and equipment has been provided, this should be returned to Children's Services. Young people who are entering second courses will be loaned equipment until they have demonstrated consistent attendance. When they have demonstrated consistent attendance new equipment will be purchased following an assessment of need.</p> <p>Where appropriate, Children's Services will consider funding extra tuition and travel related expenses (excluding taxi fares).</p> <p>Any child care costs should be accessed through the Care to Learn Fund</p> <p>Training and Apprenticeships</p> <p>If special equipment is required for a traineeship/apprenticeship the provider should be approached in the first instance. If equipment is not provided, and depending on an assessment of need, it will be provided by Children's Services.</p> <p>In circumstances where young people are undertaking apprenticeships that are paid at the minimum wage, consideration will be given to providing the Sunderland 'Positive Activities Incentive'. Request for the incentive (apprenticeships) should be presented to the Care Leavers Education and Training Panel setting out the level of the young person's apprenticeship payment, their benefits and rent costs.</p>

	<p>Education</p> <p>Young people who are undertaking further education courses are entitled to:</p> <p>Up to £50.00 Stationary Grant</p> <p>Up to £100.00 Educational Visits Grant</p> <p>Up to £150.00 Books and Equipment/IT Equipment Grant</p> <p>The Grant is per academic year, is not transferable and is only available for stationary, educational visits, books, general equipment and I.T. equipment.</p> <p>All young people entering full time further education (level 2 or above) or higher education (academic courses) will be provided with a one-off Computer Grant of up to £390.00 for a note-pad, laptop or desktop computer. One off – age 16 to 21/24, regardless of placement type.</p> <p>Young people should submit a list of requirements regarding equipment, course books etc. and return receipts to their social worker. Computers should be purchased by the social workers in order to reclaim VAT.</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need, Children's Services will purchase equipment and/or clothing to assist the young person with their chosen employment e.g. interview clothes, overalls, protective clothing (see Clothing Allowance section). Additionally, Children's Services may assist with the cost of travel to interviews.</p> <p>Maximum Commencing Work Grant/Allowance £100.00 – One-off.</p>
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<p>Further and Higher Education Funding</p>	<p>Funding for Further and Higher Education courses is available:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. up to the young person's 21st birthday; 2. or until the completion of the course following the young person's 21st birthday where the course commenced before their 21st birthday; 3. between the 21st and 25th birthday where a young person wishes to resume or commence education or training between those dates; 4. until the education or training course is completed following the 25th birthday where the course commenced prior to the 25th birthday. <p>In the first instance funding for Further and Higher Education courses is available until the completion of the course following a young person's 21st birthday.</p> <p>Funding should be agreed as part of an assessment of need and set out and agreed in the pathway plan.</p> <p>Wherever possible, young people should access universal benefits and welfare benefits these are available to young people studying further education who are deemed to be 'estranged' from their family and undertaking 'relevant education'.</p> <p>From September 2011, the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was replaced by a new 16-19 bursary scheme targeted at those who face financial hardship. Young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses (12 hours study/training and contact time) should qualify for the 16–19 education/training bursary payment (£1,200.00 per year). Those aged between 16 & 19 who are in care, care leavers or claiming income support or getting both E&SA and DLA/PIP will be guaranteed a bursary of £1,200.00 spread over the academic year, for those attending college or sixth form (payments of £40.00 per week over a 30 week teaching year).</p> <p>From September 2011 the Adult Learning Grants has been replaced by the Discretionary Learner Support funding available to those aged 19 or over. The precise eligibility criteria and the grants themselves are set and administered and held by local colleges.</p>
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<p>Disabled Students' Allowances (D.S.A.s')</p>	<p>Disabled Students' Allowances are grants to help meet the extra course costs students can face as a direct result of a disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty. They are aimed at helping disabled students to study on an equal basis with other students. Full-time, part-time and postgraduate students can apply for Disabled Students' Allowances. The amount they get doesn't depend on their household income. Disabled Students' Allowances are paid on top of the standard student finance package, and don't have to be paid back.</p> <p>What they are for</p> <p>Disabled Students' Allowances can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist equipment they need for studying - for example, computer software • A non-medical helper, such as a note-taker or reader • Extra travel costs they have to pay because of their disability • Other costs - for example, tapes or Braille paper <p>Eligibility</p> <p>Young people can apply if they are doing:</p> <p>A full-time course that lasts at least one year (including a distance-learning course)</p> <p>A part-time course that lasts at least one year and doesn't take more than twice as long to complete as an equivalent full-time course (can include an Open University or other distance-learning course).</p> <p>Checking if they are eligible for student finance.</p> <p>To apply for financial help through Disabled Students' Allowances, both the young person and the course must be eligible. It is important to check this before an application is made. Information is available at:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview</p>
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Further Education

Children's Services is committed to assisting and supporting young people to maximise their potential through educational opportunities.

1. Eligible and Relevant young people (16 and 17 year olds) who are studying at sixth form college or further education colleges will be supported via their foster care placements or children's homes and for those living independently via their leaving care maintenance allowance.
2. From the age of 18 to the end of the academic year following their 21st birthday, care leavers who are 'estranged from their families' and who are studying full time (12 hours or more of 'guided learning') can claim Income Support and Housing Benefit on the grounds of being in 'Relevant Education'. Young people can start or change courses at any point up until their 21st birthday.
3. Where young people aged 21 to 25 wish to resume or commence education or training and have ceased to be supported by the Children Looked After and Leaving Care Service the following arrangements apply:
 - Young people should resume contact via the Children Looked After and Leaving Care Service Duty Officer;
 - Young people will be provided with support and services following an Assessment of Need;
 - The Assessment of Need will consider the young person's motivation for undertaking the chosen education/training activity and the commitment to the activity (see below);
 - The Assessment of Need will consider what resources may be available to the young person and will assist in maximising universal provision, for example college bursaries and learner support funds, welfare benefits and nursery vouchers and child care support;
 - Children's Services will consider making individual grants towards the chosen activity which will range from paying enrolment, registration & exam fees and making specific equipment and study grants of up to £300.00 per year;
 - Young people aged 21 to 25 who are undertaking courses of less than 16 hours of 'guided learning' (part time) may be eligible to claim Housing Benefit if they have a 'low income'. It is advisable to check with the Housing Benefit Department regarding the circumstances of individual young people.
 - Any request for financial support that exceeds £300.00 will be presented to the Care Leavers Education and Training Panel.

Funding requests exceeding £300.00 will be considered by the Care Leavers Education and Training Panel following an assessment of need (including the young person's access to financial resources) and will be based on need, motivation to gain education/training qualifications and the commitment of the young person to undertake, sustain and complete the course and whether the candidate has any education qualifications. A key priority will be to ensure all young people hold a level 2 qualification.

The following activities immediately prior to the start of a resumed or new education or training course will be taken as evidence of motivation and commitment:-

1. A courses of study leading to a level 1 qualification or above;
2. Employment in the field relating to the requested education/training course;
3. Voluntary work relating to the requested education/training course;
4. Training courses relating to the requested education/training course.

Further Education (*continued*)

Young People Aged 21 – 25 Resuming Education or Training - Continued

Young people may also be required to demonstrate that they can contribute to the funding package via part time employment. In such circumstances an assessment of financial need will be completed in order to assist the young person with their weekly maintenance.

Following the assessment of need the request for financial support will be presented to the Care Leavers Education and Training Panel who will consider all requests.

The Care Leavers Education and Training Panel consist of:

1. The Head of Service for Looked After Children and Care Leavers
2. The Leaving Care Team Manager
3. The Leaving Care Personal Adviser for Education and Training
4. The Young Person's Participation Worker

Following the Panels' agreement to funding, each case will be allocated to a Leaving Care Personal Adviser who will develop a Pathway Plan and a system for monitoring the young person's education/training progress.

Financial Support - Traineeships and Apprenticeships – 21 to 25 year olds

Apprenticeships

The majority of apprenticeships are classed as employment with a study component. These types of apprenticeships are generally secured by young people gaining employment with a company or organisation that is a registered apprenticeship provider. The young person is employed and also undertakes a study component towards a:

- National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)
- Technical Certificate
- Functional Skills (Mathematics, English)
- Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)
- ERR (Employment Rights and Responsibilities) Workbook

From the 1st October 2015, the minimum wage rate is £3.30 per hour for apprentices aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. All other apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage for their age and can be found on www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

As the (employment based) apprenticeship is deemed employment, young people will be eligible for a range of benefits, including housing benefit depending on their circumstances. If the apprenticeship is deemed employment, the young person would not be covered by the age 21-25 education and training, care leaver entitlements.

Traineeships and Programme Led Apprenticeships

These types of traineeships and apprenticeships are provided by a training provider or college, with work experience provided at the establishment site, and are therefore deemed education/training rather than employment. In general young people aged 22 to 25 undertaking education or training will not be able to access benefits or tax credits (unless they are parents or have a disability). Young people undertaking these courses are eligible for the 21-25 education and training care leaver entitlements, subject to an assessment of need and the conditions above being met.

Further Education (*continued*)

Financial Support - Traineeships and Apprenticeships - *Continued*

Financial Support – 21 to 25 year olds

Access to financial support will always be dependent on an assessment of the young person's financial circumstances. Where appropriate; young people will be provided with practical support to help them access education, training or benefits funding, rather than with the provision of direct grants. The level of practical support and financial support should be set out within the young person's pathway plan and highlight any conditionality to the support being provided.

Financial Support – 18 to 21 year olds

From September 2011, the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was replaced by a new 16-19 bursary scheme targeted at those who face financial hardship. Young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses (12 hours study/training and contact time) should qualify for the 16–19 education/training bursary payment (£1,200.00 per year). Those aged between 16 & 19 who are in care, care leavers or claiming income support or getting both E&SA and DLA/PIP will be guaranteed a bursary of £1,200.00 spread over the academic year, for those attending college or sixth form (payments of £40.00 per week over a 30 week teaching year).

Young people aged 18 to 21 who are undertaking a full time education, training course or voluntary activity (12 hours education/training/voluntary activity) and who are not entitled to a 16 to 19 Bursary will be entitled to a weekly £10.00 incentive and a local travel pass (the travel pass is provided if travel is required and the education/training/voluntary activity provider does not supply one. - 'Children's Services Positive Activity Incentive.'

From September 2011 the Adult Learning Grants has been replaced by the Discretionary Learner Support funding, held, and administered by local colleges.

Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Children's Services may provide assistance for specific grants and one off payments to young people who are studying, for items such as books and equipment.

(Also see "Staying Put" Policy - Young people remaining in placement prior to undertaking a course of higher or residential further education and the section on young people's allowances).

Welfare Benefits for Lone Parents and Sick or Disabled Young People in Further Education Aged over 21

The majority of young people over the age of 21 who undertake full time further education courses are ineligible for welfare benefits such as Income Support and Housing Benefit. Certain limited groups of young people over the age of 21 such as lone parents and sick and disabled young people, who undertake further education courses, may remain eligible for welfare benefits. If a young person is entitled to welfare benefits (Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credits) he/she is not eligible for Children's Services' further education support as this is intended to replicate family and/or welfare benefit support. Young people will be able to access one-off fees and equipment grants.

Additional Funding and Financial Information

Care leavers are a 'priority group' in terms of college (Discretionary) Learner Support Funds which are sometimes called Access Funds. Many colleges also have bursaries and specific welfare grants which care leavers may be able to apply for. The students' support service should be able to provide information on both the practical and financial support that may be available.

Higher Education

Student Finance

The level of fees, loans, grants, and bursaries for higher education student's change each academic year. The most accurate and up to date information is available via the following links:

<http://www.gov.uk/studentfinancesteps>

Tuition Fees and Tuition Fee Loans

From September 2016 the maximum tuition fees and tuition fee loan per year is:

- New full-time students £9,000.00
- New full-time students at private university or college £6,000.00
- New part-time students £6,750.00
- New part-time students at private university or college £4,500.00

To qualify for a tuition fee loan the part time course needs to be at least 25% of an equivalent full-time course each year (e.g. four years instead of one year full time).

The tuition fee loan is provided by Student Finance England and is paid directly to the university to cover the full cost of the course.

Maintenance Grant

Maintenance grants have been discontinued for new students starting courses after the 1st August 2016, existing students will continue to receive a maintenance grant, but will receive a lower student loan.

Maintenance Loans

The maintenance loan is provided by Student Finance England and is paid directly to the student, normally in three instalments and is provided to help with living costs such as rent, food, bills and equipment and books.

The maximum maintenance loan in 2016-2017 for students starting courses after the 1st August 2016 (per year) is set out below:

- Students studying in London £10,702.00
- Students studying outside of London £8,200.00
- Students living at home £6,904.00

Students who started courses in 2015-2016 or before:

- Students studying in London £8,009.00
- Students studying outside of London £5,740.00
- Students living at home £4,565.00
- In the final year of the course the maximum loan rate is reduced by approximately 10%.
- Young people who get the maximum Maintenance Grant will receive a reduced Maintenance Loan.

Loan Repayment

Graduates repay the combined tuition fee and maintenance loan when they have finished studying and are earning over £21000.00 per year. The monthly repayments are linked to the person's income and the interest charged is linked to the retail price index (RPI), plus 3%. After a certain amount of time (30 years), any outstanding loans will be written off, if the money has not been repaid.

Higher Education Continued

Support From Individual Universities

In addition to the financial support provided by Student Finance England, most Higher Education Institutions will offer their own financial support. Each university will have its own eligibility criteria and any awards may only be available to a limited number of students:

- **Bursaries**
- **Scholarships**
- **Fee Waivers**

Bursaries and Scholarships will generally not have to be repaid and Fee Waivers are applied to part, or all of the course costs.

Access To Learning Fund

Most universities also have an Access to Learning Fund which is available to students who are experiencing financial hardship. Some universities offer care leavers priority access to Access to Learner Funds.

National Scholarship Programme (NSP)

The National Scholarship Programme is designed to offer support to students from low income backgrounds. The NSP is funded jointly between the government and individual universities. Individual universities can make their own decisions as to who receives a National Scholarship. Some universities may offer care leavers priority access to the NSP. Support may be offered in a variety of ways including cash grants, reduced cost accommodation or a fee waiver. Any funds received from the NSP are non-repayable.

The Care Leavers Higher Education Bursary

The Care Leavers Higher Education Bursary is provided by the student's local authority (Children's Services) and is provided as a minimum grant of £2000.00 throughout the length of the whole course.

Grants and Awards From Charitable Trusts

Trusts and charities provide financial grants and awards to students. Advice about what may be available is available through individual universities or through the Educational Grants Advisory Service (EGAS).

Public libraries should have directories of charitable trusts that provide grants and awards:

- The Educational Grants Directory
- The Charities Digest
- The Grants Register
- The Directory of Grant Making Trusts

Higher Education Continued

General Information

Care leavers considering attending university should check with the universities that they are thinking about applying to, for information about the support that each institution will provide. This information can then assist when making a final choice about which university to apply for as a first, second or third choice.

The students' support service should be able to provide information on both the practical and financial support that may be available.

Many universities are now accredited under the Buttle Trust Quality Mark Award Scheme. The Quality Mark acknowledges and highlights additional support that establishments provide to young people leaving public care. http://www.buttletrust.org/quality_mark

Information about additional support to care leavers can be found via the Fair Access Agreements that each institution is required to have. Information can be found on the web site of each institution or via: <http://www.offa.org.uk>

Young people considering attending university should make use of :

- The Who Cares? Trust – H.E. Handbook via - <http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk>
- The North Class – Care Experienced North England University Guide via http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/NorthWest/Supporting_Care_Leavers_in_Accessing_Employment_and_Skills_Training_A_Guide_for_Leaving_Care_Teams_Guide_5.pdf

Welfare Benefits

The majority of young people who undertake higher education courses are ineligible for welfare benefits such as Income Support and Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance. Certain limited groups of young people who undertake higher education courses such as lone parents and sick and disabled young people may remain, or be eligible for welfare benefits whilst studying. If a young person is entitled to welfare benefits (Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance and Child Benefit/Child Tax Credits) they are not eligible for the full Children's Services Higher Education Grant, but continue to receive the Government Higher Education Bursary.

Lone Parents and Sick and Disabled Students who are in receipt of Welfare Benefits should check with the Department for Work and Pensions regarding the rules about student finance. Being in receipt of student finances may cause disqualification for welfare benefits. Generally, lone parents and sick and disabled young people will be required by the DWP to take out Student Loans and apply for the Special Support Grant. Their level of welfare benefit will be calculated by taking into account the loans and grants. Lone Parents may be eligible for the Government's **Childcare Grant** (£155.24 per week for one child and up to £266.15 per week for more than one child) and/or **Parents' Learning Allowance** (up to £1573.00 per year). Disabled students may be eligible for the **Disabled Students' Allowance**. Students who have adult dependents may be eligible for an **Adult Dependents' Grant (ADG)** (up to £2757.00 per year).

Where a young person is eligible to claim welfare benefits Children's Services will continue to provide the Government's Higher Education Bursary of £2000.00, which is provided over the period of a two, three or four year course. Depending on the length of the course the £2000.00 per year will be constituted of £1000.00 per year (2 year course) H.E. Bursary, £666.67 per year (3 year course) H. E. Bursary, £500.00 per year (4 year course) H. E. Bursary.

Children's Services – Higher Education Financial Support

All young people entering higher education will be provided with the following (for a maximum of four years):

A Sunderland Higher Education Grant of £6000.00 per year.

- This includes the Government Higher Education Bursary which is set at £2000.00 over the whole length of the course. Depending on the length of the course the £2000.00 per course will be constituted of £1000.00 per year (2 year course) H.E. Bursary, £666.67 per year (3 year course) H. E. Bursary, £500.00 per year (4 year course) H. E. Bursary.

Arrangements for the use of the £6000.00 should be flexible and will depend on the type of course and university location and should be set out in the young person's pathway plan. The pathway plan should cover the following requirements:

- Accommodation costs will be variable and dependent on the educational establishment and location. In year one, it may be most appropriate that the Grant is used to cover the cost of halls of residence during term time and the cost of independent accommodation outside of term time. In year two and three, if halls of residence are not available, the Grant can be used to cover the cost of independent accommodation. The level of the 'Independent Accommodation' element should not exceed the Local Housing Allowance rate for the given area. It is important to note that all universities have accommodation that is available for 52 weeks per year for vulnerable and priority groups including care leavers. The amount of 52 week per year accommodation is limited and therefore needs to be organised and reserved as far in advance of the university start date as possible;
- Living costs;
- Travel;
- Stationary, books, equipment and educational visits.

How the Grant is provided to each individual young person should be set out in their Pathway Plan.

- Additional One Off Grants:
 - A One Off Computer Grant of up to £390.00 [if not used prior to starting university].
 - A Graduation Grant of £1000.00. This is paid once, and is paid on graduation in order to assist young people make the transition from Higher Education to employment.

The Higher Education Grant is available for a maximum of four years in total and can be used for a second degree or post graduate award.

The Care Leavers Education and Training Panel will consider requests for the Higher Education Grant that involves exceptional and/or specific circumstances.

Payment Process

The frequency and amount of each payment as well as the method of paying the allowance should be set out in the young person's Pathway Plan and be provided in a flexible manner in order to meet individual needs. For example, the accommodation/rent component of the allowance could be paid directly to the university, to the young person's landlord, or to the young person to pay for their accommodation costs, with the remaining allowance being paid to the young person as required.

Additional Funding/Second Chance Funding and Funding Specific to Sunderland Children Looked After and Care Leavers

The following information provides additional guidance on financial support that may be available to children looked after and care leavers.

The Buttle Trust - Estranged Young People Programme

<http://www.buttleuk.org>:

The Buttle Trust UK can help address the needs of young people (including care leavers) by providing funding to enable them to fully access and participate in education, employment or training opportunities. The fund can also be used to help settle care leavers into secure accommodation by contributing to setting up home costs. Through this funding, young people can be offered a personalised package of support created in collaboration with the young person and their support worker. This project offers an 'enhanced' level of grant award, with a maximum allocation of £2,000 per case.

The Estranged Young People Programme can only be considered by the Buttle Trust in circumstances where a young person has already used their local authority entitlements.

The Princes Trust

Princes Trust: Young people may be eligible for a grant if you are a UK resident, and they are:

- Aged 14-17 still in compulsory education and do not have/are not expecting to achieve five GCSEs grades A-C (or equivalent)
- Aged 17-25 and unemployed or working fewer than 16 hours a week, or in education fewer than 14 hours a week

Examples of what can be funded include:

- tools or equipment for a job or qualification e.g. hairdressing kit, carpentry tools, chef's whites
- course fees
- interview clothes
- license fees e.g. CSCS card (construction) or SIA license (security)
- childcare costs to help single parents access short term education
- transport to a new job until a young person receives their first wages/salary.

Sunderland Funding Options

Greggs Foundation/Joanne Rhowbotham in SCC deals with applications - 0191 5615813 – applications to fis@sunderland.gov.uk

Sunderland City Council Connexions Access Fund (limited funds available - contact Brenda Cogdon - 0191 5617351 or Faye Gething - 0191 5617336)

<p>Birthday £25.00 £75.00 £25.00</p>	<p>19th and 20th birthday 21st birthday The birthday allowance of £25.00 continues after a young person's 21st birthday in circumstances where they are engaged in an agreed and designated education/training program which commenced before their 21st birthday.</p> <p>A gift or gifts and/or a contribution towards the cost of celebrations to the value of £25.00/75.00.</p> <p>Young people will be provided with £25.00 (19th & 20th birthday) and £75.00 (21st birthday) allowance. The allowance can be provided as a gift or as a gift card/voucher, only in exceptional circumstances can the allowance be provided as cash (or as a contribution towards the cost of a celebration). Responsibility for the purchase of the gift/gifts rests with the social worker/personal adviser.</p> <p>The birthday allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in contact with their social worker/leaving care personal adviser and are actively engaged in the pathway planning process.</p>
<p>Christmas/ Festivals £25 00</p>	<p>£25.00 - Age 18 - 21. £25.00 – Age 21 plus - where young people are engaged in a designated and agreed program of education/training, the Christmas/Festival allowance will continue until the completion of the education/training programme being undertaken on the 21st birthday.</p> <p>Young people will be provided with a Christmas/Festival allowance of £25.00. The allowance can be provided as a gift, as a gift card or voucher or, in exceptional circumstances as cash.</p> <p>Young people who are non-Christians will be given a choice as to when their festival allowance is to be provided. If they do not have a preference, the allowance should be made available at Christmas to ensure that they receive their entitlement. Additionally, they should also be offered the choice of having a proportion of their allowance at their festival of choice and a proportion at Christmas.</p> <p>The Christmas/festival allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in contact with their social worker/leaving care personal adviser and are actively engaged in the pathway planning process.</p>

Key Documents Up to £110.00	Children's Services will purchase a passport (including the check and send facility) and 1 birth certificate for each young person – Up to £110.00.
Up to £218.00	One passport, or passport renewal age 16 to 21, one birth certificate (only if the young person does not have the original).
£618.00 – 50% (aged 18 and over rate - £1236.00) Towards the Nationality and Citizenship Process	<p>Children's Services will purchase a travel document for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children dependent on an assessment of need (£72.00 or £218.00).</p> <p>Children's Services will contribute £618.00 (50% Cost [young person contributes 50% - £618.00] total cost £1236.00 (18 year olds and over [18th March 2016] towards the cost of the nationality and citizenship process for young people who gain citizenship.</p> <p>In circumstances where a young person gains citizenship the case worker must inform the Finance Team Manager in order to adjust the Home Office Asylum returns.</p>

<p>Introduction to Driving</p> <p>Licence, 1 Theory Test, 5 (1 hour) Lessons and 1 Practical Test.</p>	<p>Children's Services will provide the funding for one provisional driving licence, one theory test, one practical test and the cost of 5 (1 hour) motor car driving lessons to introduce young people to driving.</p> <p>This is available to 17, 18, 19 and 20 year olds and is conditional on the young person matching the cost of the 5 car driving lessons provided by the Sunderland Children's Services. This will enable the young person to have 10 trial lessons.</p> <p>This is only available to young people who have been engaged in education, training or employment for 3 months and do not have any driving convictions. Young people must pay the cost of the 5 lessons to their social worker/personal adviser who will then book the 10 lessons. In general, by paying for 10 lessons in a block, driving schools provide an extra lesson free.</p> <p>Additionally, Children's Services will pay for one practical driving test. This is dependent on an approved driving school recommending that the young person is ready to take the test.</p> <p>Young people must provide their contribution before the overall package is provided. Young people can use their birthday or Christmas/festival allowance to pay for their five lessons. No other allowances are transferable for this purpose.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need, which must be linked to the need to travel to an education, training or employment opportunity the driving package can be used to fund a moped/motor bike training programme. Young people must attend a CBT programme prior to driving on public roads.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need, lone parents and sick and disabled young people may be exempt from the 3 months in education, training or employment condition.</p> <p>The allowance is only available until the young person's 21st birthday.</p>
<p>Child Care Costs</p>	<p>Lone parents, who wish to return to education, start a traineeship/apprenticeship or take up employment opportunities, will be assisted to identify funds to cover or contribute to child care costs. In the first instance the Care to Learn Fund and other universal services should be approached for funding.</p> <p>The Care to Learn Fund provides financial support to assist young parents under the age of 20 to undertake education.</p> <p>From April 2009 the majority of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children who have applied for asylum and have an initial decision such as Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave can apply for a Care to Learn Fund grant.</p>

<p>Special Needs Costs</p> <p>Maximum of £100.00 per Year</p>	<p>Children's Services will assist young people to access services to meet their special needs and depending on the outcome, may assist in providing resources to address the identified need.</p> <p>Funding above £100.00 per year requires the authorisation of the Service Manager.</p>
<p>Personal Luggage</p> <p>£35.00</p>	<p>Luggage – all young people moving to independence or between placements must have at least two items of appropriate personal luggage.</p>
<p>Winter Utilities and Heating Allowance</p>	<p>Young people living in semi-independent or independent accommodation who are responsible for, and pay variable utility and heating costs will be provided with a £10.00 per week (£260.00) winter utilities and heating allowance during their 1st year (winter) of independent living. The allowance is available for October, November, December, January, February and March of the first winter they are living independently</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need the allowance can be provided on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. The allowance should be paid directly to the young person's utility provider or credited to his or her electricity/gas payment key/card.</p> <p>Total payment £260.00 during the first year of independent living.</p> <p>For the majority of young people this allowance will be provided between their 18th and 19th birthday.</p>
<p>Emergency Payments</p> <p>£10.00 per Week</p> <p>1st year of Independent Living</p>	<p>In emergency situations the Children's Services may provide a food parcel following an assessment of need. The food parcels should not exceed £15.00 in value and should include a £5.00 utility component. No more than three emergency food parcels will be provided in any twelve month period. In exceptional circumstances and dependent on an assessment of need a cash payment may be considered.</p> <p>Emergency food parcels and cash payments are discretionary and will only be provided following an assessment of need.</p> <p>In situations where young people have lost, or had money/items stolen they must obtain a crime reference number before an assessment of need and compensatory payment is considered.</p>
<p>Subsistence</p>	<p>Depending on an assessment of need social workers/personal advisers can purchase refreshments to enable a keywork session to be inclusive.</p> <p>As a general principle, keywork session refreshments should be agreed in advance by a manager, should not exceed £12.00 in total (up to £6.00 each) and occur relatively infrequently.</p> <p>Alternatively, social workers/personal advisers can purchase ingredients and prepare a meal with a young person as part of a keywork preparation for independence session.</p>

Group Participation Activities	<p>Each 'Preparation for Independence Group' will have a £20.00 budget to enable personal advisers/young people to purchase ingredients and refreshments aimed at enabling participants to develop budgeting, cooking and independent living skills.</p> <p>Each 'Drop-In' session will have a £20.00 budget to enable young people to have access to refreshments and to facilitate a 'cooking activity'.</p> <p>Where a Drop-in Group or specific activity group requires more than a £20.00 budget the additional amount can only be agreed by a Service Manager.</p>
Consultation with Young People £10.00 Voucher	<p>Payments to young people who undertake consultation exercises should always be paid in the form of vouchers.</p> <p>Young people will receive a £10.00 voucher when they return exit questionnaires and take part in exit interviews at the age of 21.</p> <p>Expenses related to enabling young people to participate in consultation exercise will be provided following an assessment of need.</p>
Exceptional Needs Payment	<p>Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Children's Services may provide funds for exceptional needs as a one off payments. These payments can only be agreed by a Service Manager.</p>

Section 3

Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant Children
Aged 16 to 21, or until completion of an agreed
program of education or training being undertaken
on the young person's 21st birthday

Setting Up Home Allowance	
£145.50 Not Transferable	For TV licence. (First licence paid for by Children's Services and subsequent ones paid for by young person).
£1600.00	To be spent on items for equipping accommodation. This allowance should be spent in stages; initially on semi-independent setting needs and subsequently, on independent accommodation needs. The allowance should always be spent collaboratively between the social worker/personal adviser and young person. Original receipts should be retained by the social worker/personal adviser for audit purposes, reclaiming VAT and in case defective items need to be returned.
Up to £60.00 Not Transferable	Setting up home starter pack. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coffee, tea, washing-up liquid, light bulbs, laundry and cleaning equipment, utility card/key top-up etc.
Up to £110.00 Not Transferable	Removal and transport costs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-off, only in exception circumstances will this be available for a second move.
Up to £100.00 Not Transferable	One year's contents insurance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is provided for the first year of independent living age 18 plus (£9000 cover).
Up to £60.00 Not Transferable	Health and safety pack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two smoke detectors, one carbon monoxide detector, door security chain, fire blanket and first aid kit.
Up to £110.00 Not Transferable	Cooker and washing machine connection cost. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-off, only in exception circumstances will this be available for a second connection
Up To £2185.50	Total Amount
<p>The Setting Up Home Allowance is available up to the age of 21 or, until the completion of an education/training programme extending beyond the age of 21. The Setting Up Home Allowance should always be used to purchase household items. In situations where part, or all of the Setting Up Home Allowance (equipment section only) is unused by the age of 21 or completion of the post 21 education/training a list of requirements should be included in the final Pathway Plan. The Pathway Plan should also set out a time scale for obtaining the items.</p> <p>The entitlement to the Setting Up Home Allowance extends to the age of 21, or until the end of the agreed program of education/training being undertaken on the 21st birthday.</p>	

Section 4

Appendices

Appendix A

Eligible and Relevant Children who are 'detained'

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations Section 23A (3) paragraph (2)

- Children and young people who are detained and are subject to a Section 31 Care Order remain looked after on entering custody (on being remanded and being sentenced) and on reaching age 16 they become 'Eligible' care leavers.
- Young people who are Accommodated under Section 20, remain looked after when 'remanded' and cease to be looked after if they receive a custodial sentence.
- Young people who are remanded become looked after on being remanded and cease to be looked after on being sentenced.
- Young people who have been looked after for 13 weeks from the age of 14 (remand and non-remand) and receive a custodial sentence (or are still on remand) before their 16th birthday become 'Relevant' care leavers on reaching their 16th birthday.
 - Young Offender Institution (YOI).
 - Secure Training Centre (STC).
 - Secure Children's Home (SCH).

Where a young person is 'detained' in hospital or custody, the majority of their financial allowances will be suspended. Financial support for young people who are detained in Young Offenders Institutes is governed by the rules of the particular establishment they are detained in. In general, young people are expected to undertake education or training and are provided with pocket money for engaging in these activities. Additionally, they will often be provided with clothing, or are able to bring clothing with them. As such, they will not be provided with any allowances while detained. In exceptional situations where education, training or work opportunities are not available and no pocket money or remuneration scheme exists, young people will be provided with a £10.00 per week allowance. This will be provided in-line with any recommendations of the particular establishment.

Additionally, and in exceptional circumstances, a clothing allowance commensurate with the leaving care clothing allowance of £10.00 per week will be provided.

Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Birthday and Christmas/festival allowances will continue to be paid and depending on the rules of the institution, will be given to the young person or retained until their release. The use of the Birthday/Christmas/Festival Allowance can only be authorised by a Service Manager.

On release young people will have access to their 'Setting Up Home Allowance' and, where a young person has been detained for more than six months, and dependent on an assessment of need, an Exceptional Needs Payment for clothing etc will be

considered. The maximum clothing payment for 16 and 17 year olds who are being released from detention is linked to the Initial Clothing Grant of £200.00.

The Pathway Plan for young people who are detained should set out the provision of all financial allowances.

Young people who are detained in hospital will be provided with an allowance of £10.00 per week and the standard leaving care clothing allowance of £10.00 per week (paid quarterly).

On release young people will have access to their 'Setting Up Home Allowance' and, where a young person has been detained for more than six months, and dependent on an assessment of need, an Exceptional Needs Payment for clothing etc will be considered. The maximum clothing payment for 16 and 17 year olds who are being released from hospital is linked to the Initial Clothing Grant of £200.00.

Former Relevant Children who are 'detained'

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations Section 23C (1)

Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Birthday and Christmas/Festival allowances will continue to be paid and, depending on the rules of the institution, will be given to the young person or retained until their release. On release young people will have access to their 'Setting Up Home Allowance' and if they are claiming Jobseekers Allowance, or Income Support, they can apply for a Short Term Benefit Advance (STBA) from the DWP or a grant/loan through the Local Authority Welfare Assistance Scheme.

Where family member are in receipt of welfare benefits prison visits and contact can be facilitate by the 'Assisted Prison Visits Scheme' allowances provided by the DWP. Travel costs for family members not in receipt of welfare benefits may be provided following an assessment of need.

Appendix B

Guidance on the Provision of Financial Support to Children aged 16 or 17 who are A) Placed with Parents, or B) Return to Live with Parents in a Planned, or Unplanned Manner

Principles:

- Wherever possible, parents should be financially responsible for their own children and should not be funded by the local authority to support their own children.
- Where financial allowances are provided to parents, these should not create inequalities with other siblings and children within the family/household who have not been looked after.

Section 1

Placement with Parents – Children Reaching the Age of 16 Subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 and associated Guidance sets out that the Responsible Local Authority is required to assess and meeting the needs, including the financial needs of an 'Eligible' child.

Her Majesties Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Guidance sets out that where a child aged 16 or 17 is resident with a parent and is undertaking full-time education or training, the parent will normally be eligible for child benefit. As a result of being eligible for child benefit, the parent should also be eligible for child tax credit and/or working tax credit (depending on income), and any benefits arising from a child's disability. Where a child is placed with a parent, a transitional payment equivalent to the level of child benefit and child tax credit/working tax credit that a parent would be entitled to will be provided for a period of up to six weeks. On average it takes four to six weeks to establish a child benefit and child tax credit and/or working tax credit claim.

Transitional payment example:

Child benefit equivalent -	£20.70
Child tax credit:	
Family element -	£10.48
Child element -	£53.46
Total Paid – 6 weeks maximum	£84.64

For a parent to be eligible for child benefit and tax credits no part of the child's accommodation or maintenance costs should be met by the local authority, as such Children's Services should set a date to cease any transitional payments. The date to cease financial support should be set at a point between four and six weeks after a placement with a parent or a return home.

Child benefit can continue, or be reinstated if a child is residing with a parent on a regular basis, generally on at least 2 nights per week from Monday to Sunday or is home for a complete week. – HMRC Guidance.

Where a child was placed with a parent/s prior to their 16th birthday a review of the financial support for the child and parent/s must take place when the child becomes an 'Eligible' child. The review must be undertaken within the framework of the Leaving Care Assessment of Need.

The majority of 'Eligible' children will be living in foster care, residential care or, in a placement deemed 'Other Arrangements'. The financial support provided to the child will be set out in the fostering financial policy, residential financial policy and leaving care financial policy.

In situations where a child aged 16 & 17 is placed with a parent or returns home to live with a parent and is not engaged in any education or training, the leaving care financial policy provides guidance on the provision of any allowances.

In circumstances where the child is living with a parent/s and the Care/Pathway Plan is focused on revoking the Care Order, or Interim Care Order, both the assessment of, and financial support should be based on assisting the transition to parental financial support and for the child to enter/resume or continue education or training.

The primary aim of leaving care financial support for 16 & 17 year olds is to enable young people to prepare for independent living and develop money management skills; as such, each young person should have an assessment of their individual leaving care financial needs and any subsequent allowance provided to those not in education or training should be provided to the young person in a manner that assists with the development of these skills and a return to education or training.

Young people placed with parents who are not engaged in education or training should therefore be provided with the standard Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance of £57.90 per week (2016-2017).

In order to avoid any inequalities within the family by the provision of leaving care support, an assessment must be undertaken regarding the need for supplementary allowances, i.e. those in addition to the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance. For example, where there are children in the family who have not been looked after, it may be inappropriate to provide any allowances other than the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance if these allowances create disparities, inequalities and potentially undermine parenting responsibilities.

The provision of a leaving care birthday allowance for one child would potentially create an inequality if other family members do not receive a similar allowance, as such, the leaving care birthday allowance should not be provided and parents therefore take responsibility for the level of all birthday allowances to their children. The assessment of, and the reason behind this decision should be made using the guidance contained in this document and should be set out in the young person's Care/Pathway Plan.

When developing a Care/Pathway Plan for a young person placed with parent/s or living with a parent/s who is not engaged in education or training, consideration should be given to whether the young person should provide a percentage of their Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance to their parent/s as a contribution to living costs. The level of the contribution should be set out in the young person's Care/Pathway Plan. For example, it may be appropriate that the young person retains an amount for pocket money and clothing i.e. £10.00 pocket money and £10.00 clothing allowance and provide a contribution to the parent of £37.90 per week.

In circumstances where a contribution has been set and the young person does not make the necessary contribution, the amount set can be deducted from the young person's Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance and paid directly to the parent/s.

As noted above, there is an obligation on the local authority to provide financial assistance to young people leaving care that would normally fall on parents, and/or on the welfare benefit system. Being an Eligible or Relevant child not engaged in education or training (regardless of them being placed at home) disqualifies parents from welfare benefits/tax credits/universal credit. In situations where the child is not engaged in education or training, the leaving care financial policy should be used as the framework for the provision of allowances to the child and/or parent.

The majority of Eligible or Relevant children, regardless of being engaged in education or training are disqualified from welfare benefits/tax credits/universal credit, with the exception of sick and disabled children and children who are also lone parents.

In circumstances where a care leaver aged 16 or 17 (not engaged in education or training) is placed/living with a parent who is in receipt of a welfare benefit/tax credit/universal credit, the difference between the young person's Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance and the level of the welfare benefit/tax credits/universal credit that the parent would be entitled to in respect of that child, (if they were not an Eligible or Relevant child) can be provided directly to the parent/s. This would only apply to a child not engaged in education or training.

Care Order Revocations and Ceasing Financial Allowances

Where an 'Eligible' child has lived with a person with parental responsibility for at least 6 months and they cease to be looked after, due to the revocation of the Care Order, or Interim Care Order they become a 'Qualifying' child (a Qualifying child is a 16 to 21/24 year old subject to Section 24 of the Children Act 1989). The 6 month period living with parents that is required to be deemed a Qualifying child, can include time both prior to and after the revocation of the Care Order.

Welfare benefit legislation relating to 'Qualifying' children sets out that both parents and children are entitled to welfare benefits/tax credits/universal credit in their own right.

'Qualifying' child status does not have any impact on either the child, or parents benefit or tax credit entitlements. Once a child is deemed a 'Qualifying' child and following a financial re-assessment of their financial needs, the majority, if not all, of the leaving care financial support being provided should cease. The primary responsibility for meeting a 'Qualifying' child's financial needs rests with the parent/s.

The detailed financial and practical arrangements to support the child and parent should be set out in the Care/Pathway Plan and Placement Plan. The level of the leaving care financial support should be based on an assessment of need and set out in the Care/Pathway Plan.

Placement with Parents – Children aged 16 or 17 Subject to Care Order or Interim Care Order Being Placed with Parent/s

In circumstances where, following an assessment of suitability, it is deemed appropriate to place a child with a parent/s at the age of 16 or 17, the assessment of

financial support to the child and parent should be completed prior to the placement being made and should be set out in the Care/Pathway Plan and Placement Plan.

The principles and financial approach set out above in section 1, i.e. the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance being provided to the young person (if not engaged in education or training), and, an assessment of the need for any additional allowances being undertaken to consider the types and level of financial support to be provided should be followed. The Care/Pathway Plan should be used to evidence and explain the level of, and the types of financial support to be provided.

Section 2

Children aged 16 & 17 Accommodated Under Section 20 Returning to Live with a Parent/s in a Planned Manner who Cease to be Looked After and Become 'Relevant' children

In circumstances where it is deemed appropriate for a child to return to a parent/s at the age of 16 or 17, following an assessment of suitability, the evaluation of financial support to the child and/or parent should be completed prior to the child returning to the parent/s. On the child returning to the parent/s the child becomes a 'Relevant' child. Where the young person is undertaking an education or training activity, financial responsibility should transfer to the parent as set out in section 1. Transitional financial support will be provided for a period of four to six weeks.

In circumstances where a young person (subject to section 20) aged 16 & 17 returns to live with a parent, agreement to, and approval of the ceasing to be looked after must be sought from the Director of Children's Services - Regulation 39 (The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015). Applied from 1st April 2015.

In circumstances where the 'Relevant' child is living with a parent/s as part of planned return to a parent/s, both the assessment of, and financial support should focus on assisting the transition to parental financial support. The principles set out above in section 1 should be used to assess the type and level of financial support. The Pathway Plan should be used to evidence and explain the level of and the types of financial support to be provided (for those not engaged in education or training).

Where a child remains living with a parent/s for six months (after a planned return) the child's status changes from a 'Relevant' child to that of 'Qualifying' child. Once a child becomes a 'Qualifying' child, both parent/s and child are entitled to claim welfare benefits/tax credits like other parents/children. See above section 1.

Once a child is deemed a 'Qualifying' child and following a financial re-assessment of their financial needs, the majority, if not all of the leaving care financial support being provided should cease. The primary responsibility for meeting a 'Qualifying' child's financial needs rests with the parent/s.

Section 3

Children Subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order Returning to a Parent/s Against the Assessment of the Child's Needs and the Wishes of the Local Authority

Social workers will need to undertake an assessment and risk assessment of the appropriateness of the child remaining with the parent/s where the child has returned to a parent/s against the wishes of the authority and follow due procedure.

Financial support should only be provided to the child in line with the Leaving Care Finance policy. No payment or any percentage of the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance should be made to the parent/s until it is deemed an authorised placement with parent/s.

The Pathway Plan and the provision of financial support should focus on positive engagement or re-engagement with the child.

Section 4

Children Accommodated Section 20 Returning to a Parent/s Against the Assessment of the Child's Needs and the Wishes of the Local Authority

Social workers will need to undertake an assessment and risk assessment of the appropriateness of the child remaining with the parent/s where the child has returned to a parent/s against the wishes of the authority and follow due process. A statutory review should take place to approve the decision to cease the child's Section 20 status. In circumstances where a young person (subject to section 20) aged 16 & 17 returns to live with a parent, agreement to, and approval of the ceasing to be looked after must be sought from the Director of Children's Services - Regulation 39 (The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015). Applied from 1st April 2015.

Financial support should only be provided to the child in line with the Leaving Care Finance policy (where the young person is not engaged in education or training). No payment or any percentage of the Leaving Care Maintenance Allowance should be made to the parents until it is deemed appropriate for the 'Relevant' child to remain living with the parent/s.

The Pathway Plan and the provision of financial support should focus on positive engagement or re-engagement with the child.

Summary

In essence, financial support to 16 and 17 year olds living at home should be provided by parents:

- where a child/young person is engaged in an education or training activity, the parent/parents are entitled to claim child benefit/child tax credits;
- where children/young people are not engaged in education or training the guidance above and the leaving care finance policy provides the framework for the provision of allowances.

Appendix C

Qualifying Children and Young People over 16

Section 24 (advice and assistance) of the Children Act 1989 [as amended by the Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers 2010 Guidance and the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010] covers 'Qualifying Young People'.

Depending on an assessment of need, Children's Services has a responsibility to provide practical and financial support and assistance to Qualifying Children and Young People over 16. Individual young people may be given practical support and financial assistance (Children Act 1989 (Section 24A (5)) and Section 24B) with priority being given to support relating to education, training and employment opportunities. Leaving care personal advisers should assist young people to maximise financial support available from employment, benefits and education allowances and opportunities.

Children's Services has a duty to provide vacation accommodation, or the means to secure it, to any care leaver qualifying for advice and assistance, who is between the ages of 16 and 25, who is in higher education or in residential further education and who needs it.

Depending on an assessment of need Qualifying Children and Young People may require, and should be provided with the same level of service as Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant young people.

See Volume 3 Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Guidance – Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 – Para 2.6 to 2.11 Page 15 & 16. Para 8.43 to 8.51 Page 84 & 85.

Young People Deemed Qualifying Children and Young People Over 16

- Young people aged 16 & 17 who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order
- Young people aged 18 to 21, or up to 25 who were previously subject to a Special Guardianship Order.
 - The young person must have been looked after immediately prior to the making of the Special Guardianship Order.
- Young people who were privately fostered
- Young people who were looked after for less than 13 weeks between their 14th and 18th birthdays, but for at least 24 hours aged 16 or 17.
- Young people who returned home and are subject to a Section 31 Care Order and were looked after for a minimum of 13 weeks (age 14 or 15) become an 'Eligible' child on reaching their 16th birthday (if still looked after). If they live at home successfully for 6 months or more and their care order is revoked they become Qualifying on the revocation of their order.
 - If the arrangement at home breaks down before the age of 18, they automatically become 'Relevant' children.
- Young people aged 16 or 17 who are deemed 'Eligible' and are Accommodated under Section 20 cease to be looked after and become

'Relevant' children on returning to parents or those with parental responsibility. After a stable and settled six month period as 'Relevant' children this group become Qualifying.

- If the arrangement at home breaks down before the age of 18, they automatically revert to being 'Relevant' children.
- Young people subject to respite care arrangements do not become Eligible or Relevant even where their period of being looked after exceeds 13 weeks between their 14th and 18th birthday. The respite periods must all be planned periods with no individual period exceeding 4 weeks. This group are deemed Qualifying.

Appendix D

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

Eligible and Relevant Children

Key Guidance

Social Workers and Personal Advisers must ensure an UASC has applied to extend their leave to remain and the application is submitted to the Home Office before their leave status expires. In the majority of UASC cases their leave status expires at the age of 17½, or on their 18th birthday. If this task is completed and submitted within time the young person is eligible to claim means tested benefits on their 18th birthday. See section on - Access to Public Funds and Welfare Benefits at the end of this appendix.

Consideration should also be given to appealing an initial asylum decision where a young person is granted limited leave to remain.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are covered by the Children Act 1989 and the provisions of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Guidance and Regulations 2010 [16 & 17 year olds] and the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Guidance 2010 and the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 [16 to 21/25 year olds] in exactly the same way as other children in this country.

However, they will also have an immigration status:

1. Applying for Asylum;
2. Accepted as a Refugee;
3. Granted Exceptional Leave to Remain [divided into:
 - a. Humanitarian Protection, or
 - b. Discretionary Leave],
4. Indefinite Leave to Remain;
5. Refused Leave to Remain.

all of which will need to be taken into account when undertaking their Leaving Care Assessment of Need and developing their subsequent Pathway Plan.

It should be noted that applicants who are granted refugee status may not automatically receive indefinite leave to remain. Applicants granted refugee status may be given limited leave to remain for five year periods. At the end of each five year period their circumstances will be reviewed and if the conditions in their home country have improved they will be expected to return.

Most Eligible and Relevant (16 & 17 year olds) unaccompanied asylum-seeking children will receive the same entitlements as any other young person. However, there may be some differences in entitlement, which will need to be acknowledged in their Pathway Plan. For example, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who are applying for asylum and are awaiting an initial decision, or have been granted exceptional leave to remain are not entitled to the 16- 19 Bursary.

When developing Pathway Plans with Eligible and Relevant (UASC) particular attention must be paid to their immigration status and contingency plans developed which take account of their possible status options at the of age eighteen.

Department for Education guidance highlights that pathway planning for the majority of UASC who do not have permanent immigration status should initially take a dual or triple planning perspective, which, over time should be refined as the young person's immigration status is resolved.

Planning may be based on:

- a transitional plan during the period of uncertainty when the young person is in the United Kingdom without permanent immigration status;
- longer term perspective plan in the United Kingdom should the young person be granted long term permission to stay (for example through the grant of Refugee Status); or
- a return to their country of origin at any appropriate point or at the end of the immigration consideration process, should that be necessary because the young person decides to leave the UK or is required to do so.

Failed Asylum Seekers aged 18 to 21/25

Former Relevant Children

Where young people have an immigration status that means they have permission to work and/or have recourse to public funds they will be expected to be working or claiming benefits like other Former Relevant Children. Additionally, Children's Services will apply all of the aspects of the Former Relevant Children section of the leaving care financial policy with some exceptions to the Higher Education and Further Education sub-section.

Where young people have:

- limited leave to remain;
- exceptional leave to remain;
- (are) appealed an adverse decision;

they are only eligible for a Children's Services Higher Education Grant for higher education courses that finish in the academic year prior to their status expiring.

Children's Services will provide a Higher Education Grant to unaccompanied asylum seeking young people only if all of the following circumstances are met:

- a) they have been offered a higher education place
- b) Student Finance England have awarded them a loan and/or grant
- c) they are classified as a home student.

Children's Services will work with education establishments and training providers to ensure that young people who have limited leave to remain have access to purposeful activities such as short education courses, training opportunities and courses and voluntary activities.

Where asylum seeking young people:

- have lodged an asylum application, but do not have an initial decision;
- have no recourse to public funds;
- are all rights exhausted;

they will not be eligible for higher education funding.

Consideration will be given to supporting young people with short term universal access courses that provide enhanced education and training skills.

Young people who have exhausted all 'avenues and rights' regarding appealing an adverse asylum decision, and/or are unable to extend their exceptional leave to remain, and/or lose access to public funds and the right to work are deemed 'end of line cases' or 'all appeal rights exhausted' cases (at this point the young person will usually receive a removal directions notice).

Where young people lose access to welfare benefits and are deemed 'end of line cases' or 'all appeal rights exhausted' case Children's Services will provide an allowance commensurate with benefits following the completion of a Human Rights Assessment. This allowance can continue to be paid until the removal date or the young person's 21st birthday (or the end of their education course following their 21st birthday) whichever comes first. In addition, the provision of an allowance and accommodation is dependent on the young person remaining in contact with their personal adviser and actively engaging in the pathway planning process.

(See London Borough of Barking and Dagenham [2010] EWCA Civ 1101 - Case Law)

Pathway Planning Guidance

When undertaking the Leaving Care Assessment of Need with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children at age fifteen and a half and subsequently developing their Pathway Plans, personal advisers must take account of young people's immigration status and how this may limit access to public funds and services at the age eighteen. Every effort must be made to clarify young people's immigration status as soon as possible in order to develop clear plans for their future e.g. ensure that extensions to Discretionary Leave and Humanitarian Protection are applied for within timescale i.e. six to eight weeks before expiry.

Pathway Plans should explore how an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child's immigration status may limit future support and financial opportunities. Pathway Plans for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children should always incorporate a dual plan approach. For example, Pathway Plans should highlight what support would be given if the young person gains indefinite leave to remain, and an alternative Pathway Plan should highlight what support would be available should they be granted limited leave to remain and/or receive removal directions.

Appealing an Initial Asylum Decision

When young people receive their initial asylum decision consideration should be given to lodging an appeal against the decision if they receive a status other than Indefinite Leave to Remain/Refugee Status. In effect, Limited Leave to Remain is a failed asylum decision. Young people are more likely to obtain a positive decision if they appeal at the first decision stage rather than wait until their limited leave status expires. Social workers and personal advisers should liaise with the young person's solicitor to support/consider an appeal. Young people have to lodge an appeal within a very limited time (14 days of the initial decision). Evidence highlights that a high percentage of initial decision appeals are successful.

Young people who receive an initial decision giving them Limited Leave to Remain for a year or less may not be able to appeal the initial decision.

Summary

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) making the transition from care to adulthood have both a leaving care status and an asylum and immigration status in addition to their placement and accommodation, education, health, financial and religious and cultural needs.

Planning transition to adulthood for UASC is a particularly complex process that needs to address young people's care needs in the context of wider asylum and immigration legislation and how this changes over time. Pathway planning to support a UASC's transition to adulthood should cover all areas that would be addressed within all young people's plans as well as any additional needs arising from their specific refugee and immigration status and issues.

The majority of young people making the transition from care to independence, will, with support and assistance develop a settled life in the U.K. Whilst this may be the case for some UASC this may not always apply due to the outcomes of their asylum claim. Planning for many UASC may have to be based around short term achievable goals whilst entitlement to remain in the UK is being determined.

Planning for a return home may be difficult (for both young people and staff working with them), but care and pathway plans should include contingencies for durable and best interest plans for UASC and young people who are likely to have to return to their country of origin. It will be essential that arrangements for returns should be managed in a sensitive and consistent way.

Transition to adulthood planning and pathway planning for the majority of UASC who do not have permanent immigration status should initially take a dual or triple planning perspective which over time should be refined as the final asylum outcome becomes known:

- Longer term perspective plan in the United Kingdom should the young person be granted Refugee Status
- A transitional plan during the period of uncertainty when they are in the United Kingdom without permanent immigration status.
- A return to their country of origin at an appropriate point or at the end of the process should that be necessary due to their immigration status.

Claiming asylum can be a complex process and social workers/personal advisers should work with the young person's legal representative and the dedicated case owner at the Home Office to ensure that the young person understands the process of claiming asylum, the possible outcomes and to provide them with necessary support.

Pathway plans should always consider the implications for the young person if their application to extend their leave to remain or their appeal against refusal of that application is dismissed. In such circumstances the person will become unlawfully present in the United Kingdom and be expected to make plans for return to the country of origin. Pathway plans should highlight the risks associated with young people disappearing ('going underground') to avoid returning and the difficulties associated with returns that occur quickly with little or no planning. Liaison with the Home Office case owner may be necessary to manage these risks.

Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002

It is important that Personal Advisers and others working with the young people understand that their immigration status may affect their eligibility to leaving care support after they turn 18 because of the provisions of Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

This is especially the case for any of the young people who are "unlawfully present in the UK" – which includes those who have been refused asylum and have either not applied for an extension of further Discretionary Leave to remain or have applied for an extension but that application and any appeal has been rejected.

Liaison with the legal adviser may be required to establish whether Schedule 3 applies in a particular case, as refusal of asylum does not necessarily indicate that a young person is 'unlawfully present in the UK'.

In these cases, the young people can generally only be supported to the extent necessary to avoid a breach of their human rights (under the European Convention of Human Rights).

Access to Public Funds and Welfare Benefits

Young people must apply to extend their leave to remain at least two months before their immigration leave status expires. If this task is completed by a young person's eighteenth birthday and they have proof that the Home Office has received their application the young person is eligible to apply for benefits. Personal Advisers should obtain a letter from the young person's solicitor that includes details of the young person's immigration status; the date of the application to extend the leave to remain was submitted. The solicitor submits the renewal/extension by recorded post. The recorded post item will have a tracking number that can be used to verify that the Home Office received the application. The letter from the solicitor and a print out of the Post Office tracking statement should be submitted with the young person's benefit claim.

Appendix E

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, Standard Benefit Claim Letter

Children Looked After and Leaving Care Team Address

YOUNG PERSON'S NAME:

D.O.B:

N.I. NUMBER:

IMMIGRATION STATUS:

IMMIGRATION REGISTRATION NUMBER:

ADDRESS:

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is provided to verify the identity of the above named young person and to confirm and clarify his/her circumstances. The above named young person who is an unaccompanied asylum seeking young person and was granted **(Add Immigration Status)** on **(Add Date)**. As **(Add Full Name)** applied to extend his/her immigration status prior to his/her immigration status expiring and therefore I believe he/she will be entitled to claim means tested benefits.

Please find attached a letter from **(Add Full Name)** solicitor detailing **(his/her)** application to extend **(his/her)** immigration status including the recorded delivery registration number and a printout confirming the recorded delivery application was received by the Home Office prior to **(his/her)** immigration status expiring. See Access to Public Funds and Welfare Benefits Above.

I can confirm that **(Add Full Name)** was previously an 'Eligible' child, or an 'Eligible' and 'Relevant' child and became a 'Former Relevant' child on **(Add Date)** as defined by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance 2010 and Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010.

I can also confirm that **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' by Children's Services and was 'Accommodated' under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

(Add Full Name) ceased to be 'Looked After' on **(Add Date)** and will continue to receive practical support and, in specific circumstances, financial help from Children's Services under Section 24 of the Children Act 1989 or Section 23C of the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010. Section 23C and Section 24 payments must be declared when claiming benefits but are not be counted as income for welfare benefit purposes. Whilst **(Add Full Name)** is establishing his/her welfare benefit claim **(he/she)** will be provided with a £57.90 leaving care maintenance allowance under these powers (for 6 weeks).

1. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child and ceased to be 'Looked After', I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Jobseekers Allowance at the rate of £57.90 per week and full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
2. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is engaged on a traineeship at the rate of £57.90 per week, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
3. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After', remains estranged from **(his/her)** parents and is covered by the relevant education criteria, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Income Support at the rate of £57.90 per week and full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
4. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After', remains estranged from **(his/her)** parents and has been given a 'Fit Note' by **(his/her)** Doctor, I believe he/she will be entitled to claim Employment and Support Allowance and full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
5. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is earning a low income, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. Please find attached relevant wage slips/prove of income.
6. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is temporarily unable to submit a claim for means tested benefits, Children's Services will provide a £5.00 allowance under Section 23C of the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010. As this payment will constitute a low income, I believe he/she will be entitled to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.

As **(Full Name)** was 'Looked After' on/or after **his/her** sixteenth birthday **he/she** is exempt from the single room rent restriction.

- A As **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' and remains vulnerable I would request that the Housing Benefit is paid directly to Children's Service as an agent of the landlord.
- B As **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' and remains vulnerable I would request that the Housing Benefit is paid directly to his or her Landlord.

(Add specific information)

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Approved Signatures

Team Manager

Deputy Team Manager

*** Please complete, or delete, either section A or B, the subsequent three bullet points and complete the bold text sections and the relevant sections 1 to 6. All other sections must be completed.**

Information about disregarding Social Services payments to care leavers.

Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook; Child Poverty Action Group: 2014/2015

Part 3 General rules for means tested benefits

Chapter 14 Income under pension credit age

4: Income other than earnings

Page 286

Payments by Social Services

The Following payments are ignored:

A payment from a social services department under ss17, 23B, 23C or 24A of the Children Act 1989 or, in Scotland, a payment from a social work department under s12 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 or under ss29 or 30 Children (Scotland) Act 1995 – i.e., payments from social services to assist children in need or young people who have been in care or who have been looked after. For IS and income-based JSA, such payments are not ignored if you or your partner are involved in or, for IS only, have returned to work after a trade dispute. 208

208 **IS** Sch 9 para 28 IS Regs
 JSA Sch 7 para 29 JSA Regs
 ESA Sch 8 para 30 ESA Regs
 HB Sch 5 para 28 HB Regs
 CTB Sch 4 para 29 CTB Regs

Appendix F

Criminal Injuries Compensation Award Payments

The rules on Criminal Injuries Compensation Award (C.I.C.A.) payments have recently changed and allow a young person a 52 week 'grace period' regarding an eligibility for benefit entitlement after receipt of the award. The following guidance should still be followed.

Housing Benefit, Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance legislation sets out that a C.I.C.A. payment is disregarded in terms of calculating benefit entitlement for the first 52 weeks after receipt of the award.

Young people who receive a C.I.C.A. payment should be assisted to seek independent financial advice regarding establishing a Discretionary Trust Fund. Additionally, young people should be made aware of the implications of the C.I.C.A. payment for any benefit claim they may make after the 52 week disregard period. Young people should visit the Citizen's Advice Bureau and choose an independent solicitor and financial adviser to explore opportunities to use their award in a positive manner.

Generally, young people will receive their C.I.C.A. payment on their eighteenth birthday. If young people establish a 'Discretionary Trust Fund' prior to, or within 52 weeks of receiving their payment they continue to be eligible for benefits. Establishing a 'Discretionary Trust Fund' results in their award payment being 'tied up' until they reach the age of 21.

If a C.I.C.A. award has not been placed in a Trust Fund, or used after 52 weeks the following will apply; if the award was less than £6000.00 it will not affect a claim for benefit. If the award is between £6000.00 and £16,000.00, it will result in a reduced benefit payment and an award of over £16,000.00 will disqualify a young person from benefit. Strict benefit rules apply in regard to spending the award after the 52 week disregard period, consideration should be given to the DWP rules on the inappropriate disposal of 'capital'. It is important that young people are given independent advice regarding C.I.C.A. payments and that social workers/personal advisers are not responsible for choosing who gives advice.

Where a young person has been awarded a sum in compensation for a criminal injury, Children, Schools and Families is required to disregard that capital entirely. See page 62 para 4 - Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance.

Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook; Child Poverty Action Group: 2014/2015

Part 3 General rules for means tested benefits

Chapter 17: Capital: under pension credit age

4: Disregarded capital

Page 347 and 356

A payment that does not come from a trust and is made because of a personal injury to you or your partner is disregarded for 52 weeks. ²⁵

²⁵

IS Sch 10 para 12A IS Regs

JSA Sch 8 para 17A JSA Regs

ESA Sch 9 para 17ESA Regs

HB Sch 6 para 14A HB Regs

UC Reg 75 (6) UC Regs

Appendix G

Criminal Injuries Compensation Award Payments Standard Letter

Children Looked After and Leaving Care Team Address

YOUNG PERSON'S NAME:

D.O.B:

N.I. NUMBER:

ADDRESS:

Criminal Injuries Compensation Award Payments

This pro-forma is used to verify that a young person has been provided with advice, assistance and guidance regarding his/her responsibilities associated with receiving a Criminal Injuries Compensation Award Payment.

Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance, Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance and Employment & Support Allowance legislation sets out that a C.I.C.A. payment is disregarded in terms of calculating benefit entitlement for the first 52 weeks after receipt of the award.

I **ADD FULL NAME** confirm that I have been advised that if I do not place my C.I.C.A. Payment in a Discretionary Trust Fund within a year of receiving it (generally by the age of nineteen (if the payment is over £6000.00) the payment may result in me not being eligible for means tested welfare benefits or my benefits being reduced. I confirm that my social worker/personal adviser has set up and/or taken me to appointments at the Citizens Advice Bureau or other independent welfare benefit advice agencies. I confirm that after being given advice that my C.I.C.A. Payment may affect my means tested welfare benefits, I have chosen to receive the full payment on my eighteenth birthday. I have been advised that if I set up a Discretionary Trust Fund before the age of eighteen/nineteen and place my C.I.C.A. Payment in the Trust Fund it will remain in the Fund until my twenty first birthday and I would therefore remain eligible to claim/receive means tested welfare benefits. I am aware that my social worker/personal adviser may be duty bound to inform the Department for Work and Pensions and Housing Benefits Section that I am in receipt of a C.I.C.A. Payment.

Signed

Young Person.....

Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser.....

Appendix H

Capital and Trust Funds Other Than Criminal Injuries Compensation Board Payments and Child Trust Funds

Eligible and Relevant Children

If young people have funds of their own, such as legacies, trust funds or money in savings and bank accounts the following guidance should apply. Children's Services, as recommended in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance (page 62, para 3) will treat capital according to the Department for Work and Pensions regulations governing Income Support (the Income Support (IS) (General) Regulations 1987). This sets out a scale whereby capital up to £6000.00 is disregarded and someone with capital assets of £16,000.00 or more is not entitled to assistance. Where a young person's capital exceeds £6000.00 but is not more than £16,000.00 an amount corresponding to the excess is treated as a weekly contribution against council support. For every £250.00 of capital above £6000.00 young people will lose £1.00 (Tariff Income) per week of their Children's Services allowance. Housing Benefit regulations sets out a similar scale whereby capital up to £6000.00 is disregarded and someone with capital assets of £16,000.00 or more is not entitled to assistance.

The details will be recorded in the Pathway Plan. Where a young person has been awarded a sum in compensation for a criminal injury, Children's Services is required to disregard that capital entirely.

Appendix I

Starting Work Loans

In exceptional circumstances Children's Services will provide a financial loan to Former Relevant Children, following an assessment of need and where they are assessed as being able to repay their loan. Situations where loans would be considered appropriate would primarily be related to education, training and employment opportunities. For example, when a young person is commencing a monthly paid job and was previously in receipt of benefits and/or paid weekly.

Where young people have been in receipt of Housing Benefit, Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance for more than 26 weeks they may be eligible for 'back to work' and 'benefit run-on' payments available from the Department for Work and Pensions and Housing Benefit Section.

All loans must be certified by a **Group Manager** and a written agreement established which sets out the amount to be loaned and repayment dates.

Appendix J

Starting Work Loan – Draft Example

Agreement Between Sunderland Children's Services and (Add Full Name)

Sunderland Children's Services will loan (Add Full Name) £57.90 per week for four weeks, from 26/04/2016 to 22/05/2016 (four weekly payments). This will cover her first month's employment, for which she will receive payment in arrears on the 29th May 2016. During this period (Add Full Name) will claim 'extended housing benefit'. (Add Full Name) will repay the £231.60 on 30th May 2016.

Amount £57.90 Signed (Add Full Name).....

Date..... Personal Adviser.....

Team Manager.....

Amount £57.90 Signed (Add Full Name).....

Date..... Personal Adviser.....

Team Manager.....

Amount £57.90 Signed (Full Name).....

Date..... Personal Adviser.....

Team Manager.....

Amount £57.90 Signed (Full Name).....

Date..... Personal Adviser.....

Team Manager.....

Amount Returned £231.60

Date.....

Signed (Full Name).....

Personal Adviser.....

Team Manager.....

Appendix K

Information Regarding Benefits and Education Allowances

From 1st October 2013 Universal Credit will be introduced. Universal Credit is a single payment for people who are looking for work or on a low income. It is intended that Universal Credit will be fully implemented by 2017.

The majority of the current rules governing entitlement to welfare benefits will also apply to the conditionality regarding care leavers' entitlement to Universal Credit.

For current information see: www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/universal-redit/

The following websites provide useful information about benefits and education support.

www.adviceguide.org.uk

The Citizens Advice online guide has a large section on benefits

<http://www.support4learning.org.uk>

Information about education grants, loans and student support

<http://www.gov.uk/student-finance/overview>

Information on all aspects of student funding

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/MoneyTaxAndBenefits>

Information on Tax and Benefits

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk>

Information on Benefits

<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/>

Information about the Sure Start initiative

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/CareToLearn>

Information about the Care to Learn initiative

<http://www.nhs.uk>

Information about the HC1 (SC) and HC1 form. Info line 0845 850 1166

When applying for benefits it is important to seek expert advice regarding entitlements and any conditions attached to particular benefits. A useful source of information is the Citizens Advice Bureau. www.adviceguide.org.uk

National Insurance Numbers

All young people should automatically receive a National Insurance Number at the age of 15 and 9 months (with the exception of certain UASC). The National Insurance Number is sent to the address where Child Benefit is being claimed for the young person. As the majority of children looked after do not have a Child Benefit claim National Insurance Numbers do not automatically get issued. At the age of 15 and 9 months the social worker for the young person needs to contact the New Registrations Section of the National Insurance Number Office – HMRC. For detailed guidance see:

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/nimmanual/NIM39310.htm>

Former Relevant Young People can claim the following benefits and payments, depending on their circumstances:

- From the age of 18 young people who are undertaking non-advanced full time (12 hours contact time) education courses and are estranged from their family can claim Income Support on the grounds that they are in 'Relevant Education' (Income Support rate 2016 – 2017 - £57.90). This is available from the young person's 18th birthday (care leavers) until the end of the academic year following his/her 21st birthday. Income Support is available where young people change courses and/or return to education as long as they commence a course prior to their 21st birthday.
- From the age of 18 young people who are sick or disabled and unable to work can claim Employment and Support Allowance. This is paid at different levels starting at £57.90 - 2016 – 2017). In certain circumstances Employment and Support Allowance is available to 16 and 17 year olds (children looked after and care leavers).
- At any point, disabled children, young people and adults can claim Disability Living Allowance for care and mobility needs/Personal Independence Payment for daily living and mobility needs. It is not affected by other income or savings, care status or accommodation (unless the claimant is in hospital or residential accommodation). See below.
- From the age of 18 young people who are 'actively seeking employment' are eligible to claim Jobseekers Allowance (£57.90 – 2016 - 2017). Those who are studying part-time (less than 16 hours per week) in non-advanced education may still be able to claim JSA so long as they are willing to give up the course if offered a job.
- From the age of 18 young people are eligible to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. Housing Benefit is generally paid where young people live in council or housing association accommodation and Housing Benefit based on the Local Housing Allowance is paid where young people live in private accommodation. Where young people live in situations where meals are provided, such as Staying Put arrangements housing benefit can still be claimed and will be based on the local reference rent and claim related rent level.

- From April 2013 Council Tax Benefit has been replaced by Council Tax Support that reflects individual local authority priorities and will be administered through local rules.
- Young people leaving care are exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate of LHA up to their 22nd birthday. Single young people aged 16 to 35 are only eligible for housing benefit up to the LHA Shared Accommodation Rate.
- Young people who are attending college/sixth form, or undertaking a training course are eligible for the education/training bursary scheme targeted at those who face financial hardship. Those most in need (aged between 16 & 19), such as those in care, care leavers or those claiming income support (or E&SA and DLA/PIP combined) will be guaranteed a education/training bursary of £1,200.00. The education/training bursary scheme will provide a set of incentive payments amounting to £1,200.00 spread over the academic year for those attending college or sixth form (payments of £40.00 per week over a 30 week teaching year).
- The 16-19 Year olds Bursary does not affect eligibility for Income Support and Housing Benefit.
- The Adult Learning Grant has now been discontinued and replaced by Discretionary Learner Support funds administered by individual colleges, care leavers are a priority group.
- Section 24 and Section 23 leaving care payments are not counted as income for benefit purposes and therefore do not affect care leavers' benefits.

Appendix L

Agencies and individuals I agree to share information with

I agree to my Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser sharing my information and discussing my situation with the following agencies:

Tick each agency or person as relevant:

- ☐ Connexions Service
- ☐ Job Centre Plus
- ☐ Housing Benefit Department
- ☐ Housing Department and Partner Housing Associations
- ☐ Local College
- ☐ Employment and Training Providers
- ☐ Health Services
- ☐ Other Agency or Individuals (Specify)

I understand that my Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser will only share my personal information with these agencies on a 'need to know' basis and in situations relevant to each particular agency. If a situation arises where my information needs to be shared as a result of safeguarding issues, i.e. where I or others are at imminent risk of serious harm, or if there is a legal requirement to share information I will be consulted and informed beforehand.

Full Name.....

Signed.....

Date of Birth.....

Address.....

National Insurance Number.....

My Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser will review this consent to share information on a yearly basis.

Date agreement made.....

Date agreement to be reviewed.....(not more than one year after the agreement is made)

Appendix M

Standard Benefit Claim Letter 2016-2017

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL LOGO

ADDRESS

CLIENT NAME:
(Tenant)

D.O.B:

N.I. NUMBER:

CURRENT ADDRESS:

TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION AND TENANCY: (Licence Agreement/Assured Shorthold)

PLACEMENT TYPE

NAME OF LANDLORD
ADDRESS OF LANDLORD

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is provided to verify the identity of the above named young person and to confirm and clarify his/her circumstances in support of their welfare benefit claim.

The above named young person was previously placed in **(private accommodation /semi-independent accommodation)** by Children's Services at the above address. As the young person has now reached the age of eighteen and **(he/she)** is deemed 'independent in **(his/her)** own right' and is liable for accommodation costs of **£00.00 per** week, excluding utility and support charges. The information provided below sets out **(his/her)** legal status and financial circumstances

I can confirm that **(Add Full Name)** was previously an 'Eligible' child, or an 'Eligible' and/or 'Relevant' child and became a 'Former Relevant' child on **(Add Date)** as defined by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance 2010 and Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010.

- A. I can also confirm that **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' by Children's Services and was 'Accommodated' under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989.
- B. I can also confirm that **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' by Children's Services and was subject to a Section 31 Care Order under the terms of the Children Act 1989.

(Add Full Name) ceased to be 'Looked After' on **(Add Date)** and will continue to receive practical support and, in specific circumstances, financial help from Children's

Services under Section 24 of the Children Act 1989 or Section 23C of the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010. Section 23C and Section 24 payments must be declared when claiming benefits but are not be counted as income for welfare benefit purposes. Whilst **(Add Full Name)** is establishing his/her welfare benefit claim he/she will be provided with a £57.90 leaving care maintenance allowance under these powers (for 6 weeks).

1. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child and ceased to be 'Looked After', I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Jobseekers Allowance at the rate of £57.90 per week and full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
2. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is engaged on a traineeship at the rate of £57.90 per week, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
3. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After', remains estranged from **(his/her)** parents and is covered by the relevant education criteria, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Income Support at the rate of £57.90 per week and full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
4. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After', remains estranged from **(his/her)** parents and has been given a 'Fit Note' by **(his/her)** Doctor, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Employment and Support Allowance and full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
5. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is earning a low income, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. Please find attached relevant wage slips/prove of income.
6. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is temporarily unable to submit a claim for means tested benefits, Children's Services will provide a £5.00 allowance under Section 23C of the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010. As this payment will constitute a low income, I believe he/she will be entitled to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.

As **(Full Name)** was 'Looked After' on/or after **his/her** sixteenth birthday **he/she** is exempt from the single room rent restriction.

- A As **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' and remains vulnerable I would request that the Housing Benefit is paid directly to Children's Service as an agent of the landlord.
- B As **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' and remains vulnerable I would request that the Housing Benefit is paid directly to his or her Landlord.

(Add specific information)

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Approved Signatures

Team Manager

Deputy Team Manager

*** Please complete, or delete, either section A or B, the subsequent three bullet points and complete the bold text sections and the relevant sections 1 to 6. All other sections must be completed.**

Information about disregarding Social Services payments to care leavers.

Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook; Child Poverty Action Group: 2014/2015

Part 3 General rules for means tested benefits

Chapter 14 Income under pension credit age

4: Income other than earnings

Page 286

Payments by Social Services

The Following payments are ignored:

A payment from a social services department under ss17, 23B, 23C or 24A of the Children Act 1989 or, in Scotland, a payment from a social work department under s12 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 or under ss29 or 30 Children (Scotland) Act 1995 – i.e., payments from social services to assist children in need or young people who have been in care or who have been looked after. For IS and income-based JSA, such payments are not ignored if you or your partner are involved in or, for IS only, have returned to work after a trade dispute. ²⁰⁸

- ²⁰⁸ **IS** Sch 9 para 28 IS Regs
 JSA Sch 7 para 29 JSA Regs
 ESA Sch 8 para 30 ESA Regs
 HB Sch 5 para 28 HB Regs
 CTB Sch 4 para 29 CTB Regs

Appendix N

EMERGENCY PAYMENTS LEAFLET (TEMPLATE)

Emergency Support – Children's Services Offer and Your Responsibilities

This leaflet provides information about how Sunderland Children's Services Leaving Care Team will help you financially when you reach the age of 18 and how we can help you if you have run out of money; if your wages or welfare benefits have not been paid on time, or if your benefits have stopped.

We will always explain what we are going to provide, why and how it will be given. We also expect that you treat staff and Children's Services property with respect.

Supporting you at age 18

When you reach the age of 18 we aim to ensure you will be employed, undertaking training or engaged in education. These activities will provide a wage, an apprenticeship or training allowance and in the case of education an education bursary paid by the collage. You may also be entitled to a means tested benefit, including housing benefit, these will depend on your income and if you are living independently. If you are unemployed and looking for work you will be able to claim Jobseekers Allowance and Housing Benefit.

To help you manage the move from financial support provided by the Children's Services Leaving Care Team or your foster carer we will continue to provide an allowance for up to 6 weeks after your 18th birthday whilst your benefit claim is being set up.

What you will need to do

To ensure your benefit claim is processed quickly, your social worker, personal adviser, foster carer or keyworker will ensure you have all the documents you need to make a successful claim, these could be:

TWO forms of Identity:

- Birth certificate
- Passport
- Driving License
- UK residence permit
- Utility Bill in own name

ONE form of National Insurance:

- National Insurance Card
- Letter from DWP with your National Insurance Number

ONE proof of Address:

- Utility bill in own name

- Bank Statements
- Letter from Children's Services

You will need these before your 18th birthday. We will help and support you to make a benefit claim when you reach the age of 18. We will ask you to sign an 'Authorisation to Disclose Information' form so that we can talk to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) about how your claim is progressing and to help sort out any problems.

You may have to attend interviews, supply supporting documents and phone the DWP whilst your claim is being process, to help you through this time Children's Services will continue to provide 6 weeks of leaving care allowance or fostering allowances whilst you do all these things.

At the end of the 6 weeks, your claim should have been set up, if it is not set up and you have done all of the things the DWP asked and sent all the documents they need, you can ask for a Short Term Benefit Advance (STBA).

The amount of money you get from an STBA is similar to the amount of your benefit and will be paid until your benefit is fully set up.

Unfortunately if you do not complete all of the tasks the DWP ask, your claim may be delayed or may be suspended (stopped). If this is the case, you may need to start the process again.

It is important to be aware that if you do not do what the DWP require, you could have what is called a 'Benefit Sanction' applied to you for up to 26 weeks. This means that you may not be allowed to claim or be given any benefit for up to 6 months.

Children's Services Leaving Care Team can only pay allowances for 6 weeks after your 18th birthday; however, we will still support you to help set your claim up.

What we will do:

Help and support you to complete all the tasks the DWP require.

We will only provide a £5.00 per week allowance if you are working towards completing all of the DWP tasks. By providing this allowance it will ensure that your housing benefit claim is processed, so that you do not get into rent arrears. You will need to work with your personal adviser to complete a housing benefit form. We will provide the £5.00 per week allowance for up to 3 months as long as you are working to set up your benefit claim.

We will ask you to sign an 'Authorisation to Disclose Information' form to check on progress.

Support after 18

If your benefits are stopped or you receive a 'Sanction' we can talk to the DWP and help you to understand the reason why it has happened and if there is anything you

can do to get your benefit set up again. We can only do this if you have signed an 'Authorisation to Disclose Information' form.

If your 'Benefit Sanction' cannot be changed you will quickly need to consider training courses and/or employment to ensure you have some money.

In exceptional circumstances and if you have run out of money or food we can help in the following ways.

What we can offer:

Subject to an assessment of need the Leaving Care Team can provide a maximum of:

- three £10.00 cash payments; (or)
 - three food parcels (to the value of £10.00, plus a £5.00 utility top-up);
- in any 6 month period.

In addition, we can refer you to the 'Children's Services Welfare Advice and Support Scheme and/or the 'Children's Services Food Banks' located at ADD LOCATION. You will need a referral voucher/letter for these options.

We recognise that being unemployed, having a 'Benefit Sanction' and being short of money and food can be very distressing and stressful. We ask that you do not get frustrated with Children's Services staff whilst we are trying to help sort these issues out and also acknowledge that we may not be able to reinstate your benefits, as it is the DWP who set benefit rules.

We can provide a letter to the Local Authority Housing Benefit Department to confirm that you are not getting any benefits or other money; as such, it is likely that you will be given housing benefit so that you do not get into rent arrears.

If you are rude or aggressive to staff, we may have to make special arrangements for where and how we work with you.

In extreme circumstances we may have to involve the Police and limit, or temporarily suspend the service we provide to you. If we have to do this we will always tell you this and why and will give you information as to what you will need to do to have the service reinstated.

Discuss these issues with your social worker and personal adviser so that wherever possible we can help to prevent emergencies arising.

Appendix O

Categories of Care Leavers

Categories of Young People Eligible for Leaving Care Services and Support

Eligible children: [paragraph 19(2)(b) of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989 and Regulation 40 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010]

- An eligible child is a young person aged 16 or 17 who is looked after and has been looked after for at least 13 weeks after the age of 14. [Can become an eligible child at any point from 16th to 18th birthday as long as they have completed 13 weeks] [must complete 24 hours looked after age 16/17]
- The 13 weeks can be continues period or a series of episodes.
- In calculating the 13 weeks no account is taken of pre-planned short breaks amounting to no more than 4 weeks and where a child returns to their parent, or someone with parental responsibility.
- The 13 weeks includes periods of remand.

Relevant children: [Section 23A(2)] Planning Transition to Adulthood Guidance, including the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010

- A relevant child is a young person aged 16 or 17 who was an 'eligible' child' but is no longer looked after.
- Additional relevant children:
 - Detained (sentenced), or in hospital prior to 16th birthday, and
 - Looked after for at least 13 weeks after age 14 and looked after at point of being detained (sentenced) or entering hospital.
- In calculating the 13 weeks no account is taken of pre-planned short breaks amounting to no more than 4 weeks and where a child returns to their parent, or someone with parental responsibility.
- A child who has lived with someone who has parental responsibility or a residence order for a continuous period of 6 months or more, and has ceased to be looked after (whether that period commenced before or after they ceased to be looked after) is not deemed a Relevant child (but is deemed a qualifying child).

- If the above arrangement breaks down and the child ceases to live with the person concerned, the child becomes a relevant child.

Former Relevant children (age 18 to 21, or, until the education or training programme being undertaken on their 21st birthday is completed): [Section 23C (1)]

- A young person who was previously an 'eligible' child or a 'relevant' child

Former Relevant children (age 21, and under 25) [Section 23CA (1)]

- Young people who inform the local authority that they want to pursue education or training between the age of 21 and 25 and where previously a former relevant child.

Persons Qualifying for Advice and Assistance (aged 16 to 21, and under certain circumstances aged under 25)

- Young people aged at least 16, and under 21 who were subject to a special guardianship order and were looked after before the making of that order
- Young people who were previously subject to a private fostering arrangement
- Young people who successfully returned home for six months (aged 16/17) and were previously eligible and/or relevant
- Young people who were looked after for less than 13 weeks between the age of 14 to 18, but were looked after for at least 24 hours aged 16 and 17
- Young people aged 16, and under 21 who were looked after in a series of pre-planned short breaks.

Version One – 2016-2017
2nd April 2016