

Appendix 1.

INFORMATION FOR FOSTER CARERS CONSIDERING STAYING PUT.

Staying Put is to enable young people to stay with their foster carers post 18, up until their 21st birthday.

Staying Put is to develop independence skills, improve self-care skills, enhance life skills, improve social resilience, enhance employability and protect against vulnerability. The idea is that at 21 years old, the young person would be able to move on into independence.

If the young person is eligible for the scheme there are many similarities to that of fostering, but many significant changes.

- Under the staying put scheme, carers are no longer expected to fund toiletries, clothes or leisure pursuits. This would come out of the young person's income.
- There is no additional Staying Put allowance at birthdays, Christmas or holiday periods, but there is a separate allowance available to all care leavers.
- If a carer will no longer be a registered foster carer (i.e. they have no other foster children) they will no longer receive support from their Supervising Social Worker. The majority of the support will come from the Pathway Accommodation Officer and Pathway Worker for the young person.
- If the carer is in receipt of welfare benefits in your own right, there would not be any impact on these as the Staying Put allowance is disregarded for benefit purposes.
- The tax exemptions remain the same for Staying Put providers as they do for foster carers. Carers are allowed to 'earn' from fostering and/or Staying Put is £10,000 per household per annum and £250 per child or young person (aged between 10 - 21, it is £200 per child 0-10). This is the same as for foster carers. It all comes under the Qualifying Care Relief system.
- The young person becomes an 'excluded licensee' in the eyes of the law, and the carer a tenant. However, if the arrangement were to break down there is no eviction process to follow due to the excluded licensee status.
- In reality the relationship between the carers and the young person is the same as it was at 17 years and 11 months, as the carer will continue to develop the skills.
- Staying Put has proved massively successful in helping young to move onto the next stage of adulthood.
- Staying Put provides young people with the security of the on-going relationship with their carers. It cannot be under estimated how beneficial this is for the young person.