

**CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ALLOWANCES, FEES AND CHARGES  
2025/26**

2024/25 agreed allowance uplift: 4%  
2024/25 agreed fee uplift: Staggered

**2025/26 Uplift**  
3.55%  
2%  
0%  
4%

	TYPE	RATES 2022/23 (1st September 2022)		RATES 2023/24 (6th April 2023)		RATES 2024/25 (6th April 2024)		RATES 2025/26 (6th April 2025)		Comments
<b>ALLOWANCES</b>										
1	Foster Carers Standard Allowance	0-4 years £154.69 5-10 years £176.20 11-15 years £219.46 16+ years £266.85	0-4 years £162.42 5-10 years £185.01 11-15 years £230.43 16+ years £280.19	0-4 years £168.92 5-10 years £192.41 11-15 years £239.65 16+ years £291.40	0-4 years £174.91 5-10 years £199.24 11-15 years £248.16 16+ years £291.40	3.55% apart from over 16s which remains the same				
2	Foster Carers Day Care Rates	Full day: 1/7th of the fostering allowance rate for the child plus 1/7th of the fostering level fee  Half day: Up to 4 hours paid at half the above rates	Full day: 1/7th of the fostering allowance rate for the child plus 1/7th of the fostering level fee  Half day: Up to 4 hours paid at half the above rates	Full day: 1/7th of the fostering allowance rate for the child plus 1/7th of the fostering level fee  Half day: Up to 4 hours paid at half the above rates	Full day: 1/7th of the fostering allowance rate for the child plus 1/7th of the fostering level fee  Half day: Up to 4 hours paid at half the above rates					
3	Additional Payments	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary payment made as an alternative to enhancement for extra costs of laundry, journeys, food, skin or hair products, educational needs.				
4	Foster Carers Birthday and Christmas Allowances	Birthday: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Christmas: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Summer holidays: 2 weeks standard rate allowance paid over six weeks or as a lump sum to enable a holiday to be booked (subject to approval)	Birthday: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Christmas: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Summer holidays: 2 weeks standard rate allowance paid over six weeks or as a lump sum to enable a holiday to be booked (subject to approval)	Birthday: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Christmas: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Summer holidays: 2 weeks standard rate allowance paid over six weeks or as a lump sum to enable a holiday to be booked (subject to approval)	Birthday: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Christmas: 1 weeks standard rate allowance Summer holidays: 2 weeks standard rate allowance paid over six weeks or as a lump sum to enable a holiday to be booked (subject to approval)					
5	Children 'Staying Put' with Foster Carers beyond eighteenth birthday	16+ rate (£266.85) less Universal Credit (UC)	16+ rate (£280.19) less Universal Credit (UC)	16+ rate (£291.40) less Universal Credit (UC)	16+ rate (£291.40) less Universal Credit (UC)	25/26 UC Rate £72.90				
6	Specialist Carers Matched for Children in Residential Schools	Weekly retainer equivalent to 50% of fostering allowance plus 50% of fee when child is at school  Fostering allowance and fee paid at the normal rate when child is at carers home	Weekly retainer equivalent to 50% of fostering allowance plus 50% of fee when child is at school  Fostering allowance and fee paid at the normal rate when child is at carers home	Weekly retainer equivalent to 50% of fostering allowance plus 50% of fee when child is at school  Fostering allowance and fee paid at the normal rate when child is at carers home	Weekly retainer equivalent to 50% of fostering allowance plus 50% of fee when child is at school  Fostering allowance and fee paid at the normal rate when child is at carers home	Foster Carers need to commit to buying clothing and toiletries and other necessary living costs Rates amended to link directly to weekly fostering allowance, and encourage Foster Carers to care for children in residential schools				
7	Residence Orders where <b>not</b> previously Foster Carers	50% of Fostering Standard Rate	50% of Fostering Standard Rate	50% of Fostering Standard Rate	50% of Fostering Standard Rate	No new placements as ROs no longer exist				
8	Connected Persons Placements	Foster carers standard rate	Foster carers standard rate	Foster carers standard rate	Foster carers standard rate	The placement of the child or young person is made within the extended family, once agreed.				

	Special Guardianship Allowance - Previous Foster Carer	<u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	<u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	<u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	<u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	Child benefit and universal credit (child element) deducted.
9	Special Guardianship Allowance - <b>NOT</b> Previous Foster Carer	<u>Set up between 2008/09 and August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 11-15 years £208.81 16+ years £253.84 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £154.69 5-10 years £176.20 11-15 years £219.46 16+ years £266.85	<u>Set up between 2008/09 and August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 11-15 years £219.25 16+ years £266.53 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £162.42 5-10 years £185.01 11-15 years £230.43 16+ years £280.19	<u>Set up between 2008/09 and August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 11-15 years £228.02 16+ years £277.19 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £168.92 5-10 years £192.41 11-15 years £239.65 16+ years £291.40	<u>Set up between 2008/09 and August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 11-15 years £236.12 16+ years £277.19 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £174.91 5-10 years £199.24 11-15 years £248.16 16+ years £291.40	Old special guardianship rates Moving to fostering payment rate at next significant birthday if it's an increase to carer. Means tested, Universal credit deducted and child benefit rate deducted.  Matches foster carer allowance rates Means tested and child benefit and universal credit (child element) deducted.  increased by 3.55% apart from over 16s which remain the same
	Adoption Allowance - previous Foster Carer	<u>Set up before August 2014</u> Foster carer allowance, minus child benefit <u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	<u>Set up before August 2014</u> Foster carer allowance, minus child benefit <u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	<u>Set up before August 2014</u> Foster carer allowance, minus child benefit <u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	<u>Set up before August 2014</u> Foster carer allowance, minus child benefit <u>Set up since August 2014</u> Protected for 2 years at fostering rate (including fees) less benefits, then means tested if continuing.	Child benefit and universal credit (child element) deducted.
10	Adoption Allowance - <b>Not</b> Previous Foster Carer	<u>Set up before August 2014 Maximum Allowance per week:</u> 5-10 years £121.31 11-15 years £150.94 16+ years £192.58 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £154.69 5-10 years £176.20 11-15 years £219.46 16+ years £266.85	<u>Set up before August 2014 Maximum Allowance per week:</u> 5-10 years £127.37 11-15 years £158.48 16+ years £202.21 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £162.42 5-10 years £185.01 11-15 years £230.43 16+ years £280.19	<u>Set up before August 2014 Maximum Allowance per week:</u> 5-10 years £132.47 11-15 years £164.82 16+ years £210.30 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £168.92 5-10 years £192.41 11-15 years £239.65 16+ years £291.40	<u>Set up before August 2014 Maximum Allowance per week:</u> 5-10 years £137.17 11-15 years £170.67 16+ years £210.30 <u>Set up since August 2014 (Maximum Allowance)</u> 0-4 years £174.91 5-10 years £199.24 11-15 years £248.16 16+ years £291.40	Old adoption allowance rates Means tested and child benefit deducted until 18.  Matches foster carer allowance rates Means tested and child benefit and universal (this has to be agreed and is outlined in the Somerset Adaption fees policy) credit (child element) deducted. increased by 3.55% apart form over 16s which remain the same
11	Stepping Stones	Rent Allowance £69.78 £128.99	Rent Allowance £73.27 £135.44	Rent Allowance £76.20 £140.86	Rent Allowance £78.91 £145.86	3.55% increase
12	Leaving Care Personal Allowance	Personal Allowance £72.50 5 weeks in lieu of benefits £61.05 Education/Training incentive up to £30.00	Personal Allowance £84.50 5 weeks in lieu of benefits £67.20 Education/Training incentive up to £30.00	Personal Allowance £84.50 5 weeks in lieu of benefits £71.73 Education/Training incentive up to £30.00	Personal Allowance £84.50 5 weeks in lieu of benefits £72.90 Education/Training incentive up to £30.00	25/26 Universal Credit rates £72.90
13	Leaving Care Setting Up Home Allowances	£2,245.00	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	Current government guidance £3,000 (no change for 2025/26)
14	Leaving Care Birthday & Christmas Allowances	Birthday: Age 16/17/19/20 £60.00 Age 18/21 £75.00 Christmas £60.00	Birthday: Age 16/17/19/20 £60.00 Age 18/21 £75.00 Christmas £60.00	Birthday: Age 16/17/19/20 £60.00 Age 18/21 £75.00 Christmas £60.00	Birthday: Age 16/17/19/20 £65.00 Age 18/21 £80.00 Christmas £65.00	Increased by £5.00
15	Leaving Care Higher Education Bursary (if living at or near place of education)	Up to an additional £4,200 over 3 years	Up to an additional £4,200 over 3 years	Up to an additional £4,200 over 3 years	Up to an additional £4,200 over 3 years	

16	Pocket Money Allowances	0 - 4 Years 5 - 7 Years 8 - 10 Years 11 - 12 Years 13 - 14 Years 15 Years 16 - 17 Years	£1.31 £2.11 £2.32 £3.32 £4.93 £7.35 £9.67	0 - 4 Years 5 - 7 Years 8 - 10 Years 11 - 12 Years 13 - 14 Years 15 Years 16 - 17 Years	£1.31 £2.11 £2.32 £3.32 £4.93 £7.35 £9.67	0 - 4 Years 5 - 7 Years 8 - 10 Years 11 - 12 Years 13 - 14 Years 15 Years 16 - 17 Years	£1.31 £2.11 £2.32 £3.32 £4.93 £7.35 £9.67	0 - 4 Years 5 - 7 Years 8 - 10 Years 11 - 12 Years 13 - 14 Years 15 Years 16 - 17 Years	£1.36 £2.18 £2.40 £3.44 £5.11 £7.61 £10.01	increase by 3.55% in line with the allowances
17	Direct Payments Rates Children & Young People Under 18		£15.37		£16.91		£17.45		£18.15	4% uplift in line with ASC
18	Home Care Rates Children & Young People Under 18		£19.83		£21.81		£22.50		£23.40	4% uplift in line with ASC
19	Mileage Rates (for approved Foster Carers only)		£0.585		£0.45		£0.45		£0.45	Temporary increase due to increased fuel costs ended in April 2023
20	Short Break Carers	Short Break Rates Fostering Allowance: 0-4 years 5-10 years 11-15 years 16+ years	£154.69 £176.20 £219.46 £266.85	Short Break Rates Fostering Allowance: 0-4 years 5-10 years 11-15 years 16+ years	£162.42 £185.01 £230.43 £280.19	Short Break Rates Fostering Allowance: 0-4 years 5-10 years 11-15 years 16+ years	£168.92 £192.41 £239.65 £291.40	Short Break Rates Fostering Allowance: 0-4 years 5-10 years 11-15 years 16+ years	£174.91 £199.24 £248.16 £291.40	Calculation is based on calendar days. match standard allowances
21	Uniform allowances	Primary Secondary	£50 £100	Primary Secondary	£50 £100	Primary Secondary	£100 £150	Primary Secondary	£100 £150	
<b>FEES</b>										
22	Fostering Fee	Allowance plus fee per child placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement	£79.33 £106.11	Allowance plus fee per child placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement	£83.30 £111.42	Allowance plus fee per child placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement	£87.88 £117.54	Allowance plus fee per child 1st Child in placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement	£107.00 £107.00	Net uplift cost of 3.55% but weighted to increase for the first child, so that the rates merge, and we pay the same rate for each child
23	Fostering Plus Fee	Allowance plus fee per child placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement  *If there is a requirement for carer to be home based	£183.38 * £235.92  £235.92	Allowance plus fee per child placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement  *If there is a requirement for carer to be home based	£192.55 * £247.72  £247.72	Allowance plus fee per child placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement  *If there is a requirement for carer to be home based	£198.33 * £255.15  £255.15	Allowance plus fee per child 1st Child in placement 2nd and 3rd Child in placement  *If there is a requirement for carer to be home based	£235.00 * £235.00  £255.15	Net uplift cost of 3.55% but weighted to increase for the first child, so that the rates merge, and we pay the same rate for each child
24	Specialist Fostering	Family Assessment & Support Team (FAST) Parent and Child Fostering:  + FAST additional fee if second parent in placement: Retainer  Complex Medical Needs:  Single Placement Scheme:	£463.59  £183.38 £100.00  £396.63  £396.63	Family Assessment & Support Team (FAST) Parent and Child Fostering:  + FAST additional fee if second parent in placement: Retainer  Complex Medical Needs:  Single Placement Scheme:	£486.77  £192.55 £100.00  £416.46  £416.46	Family Assessment & Support Team (FAST) Parent and Child Fostering:  + FAST additional fee if second parent in placement: Retainer  Complex Medical Needs:  Single Placement Scheme:	£496.50  £198.33 £105.00  £424.79  £424.79	Family Assessment & Support Team (FAST) Parent and Child Fostering:  + FAST additional fee if second parent in placement: Retainer  Complex Medical Needs:  Single Placement Scheme:	£514.13  £235.00 £108.73  £433.29  £433.29	3.55% uplift  16+ allowance also paid to foster carers for second parent  3.55% uplift for retainer - retainers payable under certain conditions  2% uplift  2% uplift
25	Step forward		£585		£614.25		£614.25		£614.25	
26	Link Carer	Link Carer	£100.00	Link Carer	£105.00	Link Carer	£109.20	Link Carer	£109.20	0% uplift, as when carers do additional support for a child such as an overnight they receive the increased rates outlined elsewhere. During 2024/25 we will finalise our review of this structure.

27	Stepping Stones	Stepping Stones Stepping Stones Plus Stepping Stones Specialist	£0.00 £79.33 £185.44	Stepping Stones Stepping Stones Plus Stepping Stones Specialist	£0.00 £83.30 £194.71	Stepping Stones Stepping Stones Plus Stepping Stones Specialist	£0.00 £86.63 £202.50	Stepping Stones Stepping Stones Plus Stepping Stones Specialist	£0.00 £89.70 £209.69	3.55% uplift
28	Stepping Stones Care Leavers Contributions		£28.05	£29.45	£29.45				£30.04	This is the contribution that care leavers make to the households they live in. Increase of 2% in 2025/26
29	Parental Contributions	33% of Fostering standard rate up to the age of 16		33% of Fostering standard rate up to the age of 16		33% of Fostering standard rate up to the age of 16		33% of Fostering standard rate up to the age of 16		Standard one third FC rate charged. Not applied to cases subject to proceeding or adoption process, OR families in receipt of means related benefits/tax credits. Not able to charge parents for 16+ as technically financially responsible themselves. National guidance
30	Mockbird Hub Home carer activity							£29,000 a year fee & allowance (to include all overnight stays, emergency support, monthly community activities and day care provided to the Constellation) = £557.70 per week.		a further £3,000 can be claimed for expenses to cover costs of running monthly activities)
31	<b>Foster care activity to support fostering services</b> (such as leading training, leading a fostering community group, mentor sessions, or ambassador activity to recruit carers)							Matched to the day care rate for a 15 year old child (for half or full days)		only for non-foster plus carers, as foster plus carers receive an enhanced rate based on contributing to the wider support of the service and undertaking roles such as fostering mentoring, amassador recruitment sessions and supporting training
32	Other Local Authority Recharges - Social Worker time		£52.80+ VAT	£52.80+ VAT	£54.91+ VAT			£57.66+ VAT		Includes travel, administrative support and overheads. (5% increase from 2024/25)
33	Welcome payments for new carers							£200 per carer household after ADM decision		* in lieu of training payments for training completed during assessment, and an acknowledgement of the commitment needed to complete the assessment process.