

Financial Support for Social Care Professionals

Fostering Rotherham Fees and
Allowances for Carers




Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council



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FOSTERING
ROTHERHAM



We believe that children and young people in Rotherham should grow up with the right conditions to allow them to be healthy, safe and achieve their potential in life. That's why we are looking for people who, with guidance and support, can help us to provide these conditions for children and young people in care.

Here at Fostering Rotherham, we want you to feel valued. That's why we provide financial support to all our foster carers for the amazing work they do.

Although money might not be your first concern, it is important that you understand the fees and allowances in order to decide if fostering is affordable for your family.

On average, we pay our foster carers £442 per week to care for children and young people who need help in our community. This is equivalent to £1,915 per month, which is above the national average. The actual amount you will earn will depend on how many children you are caring for, their ages and other factors such as the type of fostering.

Our Financial Support Guide

This guide will help to give you a clear idea of the financial support you will receive from us, including financial payments, help with child care, annual leave and tax breaks.

And remember, our support team is always available for a friendly chat to answer any of your questions at a time to suit you. You can book a call back at www.fosteringrotherham.com/book or call us on **01709 357370**.

Other ways to get in touch

Visit: www.fosteringrotherham.com

Email: support@fosteringrotherham.com

Follow us on social

Facebook: [@FosteringRotherham](https://www.facebook.com/FosteringRotherham)

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We Value the Amazing Work You Do

We think you have the skills to foster

Fostering is a role that requires hard work, dedication and a lot of time. We believe it's a vital role to help a child feel safe, happy and healthy.

Foster carers come from all walks of life, including careers such as teaching, health and social care roles, early years support roles and child minding.

As a professional from one of these fields, we appreciate that you regularly provide dedicated care and support to children in a social setting. This experience gives you fantastic transferable skills to apply to caring for vulnerable children and young people on a one-to-one basis.

Just like any important job, fostering provides a community of support. Part of this support includes receiving competitive financial allowances.

We want to help our fantastic carers do the job they do to the best of their ability, and that includes offering a skills-based allowance where you are rewarded for your skills and experience from previous roles.

Your relevant experience means that you can be approved as a Skills Level 2 foster carer straight away. Once you're an approved carer, your ongoing development will be a key priority, and you will have a plan which can enable you to work towards a progression to Skills Level 3. This will offer you greater benefits and allow you to care for children with more complex needs.

Your skills-based allowance helps a child in your care feel looked after, so they can thrive in your home. We want all children to feel safe, happy and achieve their potential in life- and part of that includes providing financial support so you can make that happen.

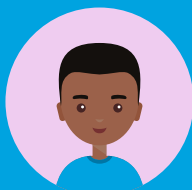


How fostering fees compare to your current salary

Fostering allows you to centre your career around the specific needs of a child. We believe that everybody entering fostering should receive the right financial support to help with their everyday life, and you are no exception.

Our allowances break down into weekly skills payments and allowances to help support the children in your care. You can also enjoy tax benefits as a foster carer, based on your self-employed status (more on this in our tax break benefits section). With substantial tax allowances and competitive skills based fees your fostering allowance could be similar if not better than your current salary.

Here are some examples of how much you could earn as a skilled foster carer:



Bradley was a children's care worker in a residential home, supporting children aged 8-18. As a foster carer, Bradley and his partner care for Ellen (13) and her sister Lauren (12). Because of his NVQ status and experience, Bradley qualifies as Skills Level 2 and is in the process of progressing to Skills Level 3.

Bradley currently earns:

Weekly take-home	Children's Care Worker*	Skill Level 2	Skill Level 3	Fostering Allowance	Skill Level 2	Annual Equivalent
Two Children	£180.51* (after tax)	£250	£350	£393.30	£643.3	£33,450

Bradley noticed a definite change in his day to day life- without the unpredictable shift hours at his residential work, he's more energetic and able to take Ellen and Lauren to their dance class each Saturday. Plus, he's earning more than his previous salary.

*Based on national average salaries. Last updated March 2022

How fostering fees compare to your current salary



Cora worked as a mental health worker for ten years, but wanted to shift her hours to part-time. She cares for brothers Michael (4) and Jamie (6), who thanks to Cora weren't separated when they entered care. Cora works 2 days a week, and her partner Alex handles the school runs.

Cora currently earns:

Weekly take-home	MH Worker*	Skill Level 2	Skill Level 3	Fostering Allowance	Skill Level 2	Annual Equivalent
Two Children	£152.42 (after tax)	£250	£350	£297	£697	£36,244

Cora loves the flexibility of choosing her work hours, but not as much as she loves coming home to a busy home. Michael and Jamie keep Cora and Alex on their toes, and Cora's mum often visits- "it feels like a natural family home!"

*Based on national average salaries. Last updated March 2022

There are so many ways that fostering can fit around your life and work, whether you'd like to take on fostering full time or pair it with your current job.

Book a check-in call with one of our fostering advisers to discuss your options:
www.fosteringrotherham.com/book



Tax Break Benefits



As a foster carer you will benefit from excellent tax break benefits. Every foster carer has a basic tax allowance of £10,000 per household per tax year (a household allowance would be the same whether you're fostering as a single carer, or you live with another carer). On top of this, you'll receive a tax allowance for every child you're matched with, with the exact amount depending on their age.

Once your tax threshold has been set up, you could be exempt from paying tax on all or most of your fostering earnings.

We won't leave you in the dark with tax queries. Our partners at The Fostering Network can help you with all your tax support needs. You automatically become a member of the Fostering Network once you've been approved. You can find more info about The Fostering Network's free advice, and fixed fee tax service, on their website.

Our tax support is just one element of our wide-reaching support offer for foster carers. You can find out more about how we'll help you, and the children in your care, by downloading our info pack via our website; www.fosteringrotherham.com

*please note that we cannot advise you on your personal financial situation and that you should seek advice from an independent financial adviser or tax adviser, we will help you to access guidance documents from the tax office and from reputable organisations such as The Fostering Network.



Our financial benefits package is just one element of the wide range of support we provide for our newly qualified foster carers.

Find out more by visiting our website
www.fosteringrotherham.com

How our Fees are Calculated

We pay our carers an average of £442 a week.

This figure differs for everyone, because it's based on skills level assessment and the number of children in your care, as well as their needs.

Your relevant experience means that you can be approved as a Skills Level 2 foster carer straight away. This comes with a competitive allowance, and plenty of recognition to match your knowledge. Once you're an approved carer, your ongoing development will be a key priority, and you will have a plan which can enable you to work towards a progression to Skills Level 3. This will offer you greater benefits and allow you to help children with more complex needs.

How does this look on a daily basis?



Karen is a foster carer approved at Skills Level 2. She currently cares for Phoebe (5) and Adam (8).

Karen's foster carer fee is £250 a week, and her allowance is £304.24.

Total £554.24 per week/ £2,401 per month



Barney was a residential care worker when he pivoted to fostering. That means he automatically qualifies for Skills Level 2. Because of his previous experience working with teenagers, Barney cares for Dylan (16).

He receives a £125 carer fee per week, and an allowance of £189.37 per week.

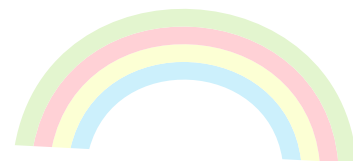
Total £314.37 per week/£1,347.30 per month



Holly and her partner Lorna are carers together. Holly was a home support staff for children with more complex needs so she's qualified as a Skills Level 3 carer. Together, Holly and Lorna care for Alex (8).

They have a carer fee of £175, plus an allowance of £152.12.

Total £327.12 per week/ £1,401.94 per month



How our Fees are Calculated



Frank and Alice are Skills Level 3 carers. Frank took early retirement from his paediatric role to take up fostering full time, while Alice still works part time. They currently have two children in their care, Sierra (12) and Jono (14).

Their carer fee is £350 a week, and allowance is £349.19.

Total £699.19 per week/ £2,996 per month



Diane had a lot of experience working with children and young people with additional needs. Now she's a foster carer and is able to give that 1 on 1 attention in her own home. Diane looks after Finn (4), who needs constant support.

Her foster carer fee is £360, and allowance is £138.

Total £498 per week/ £2,134 per month

Remember, your situation is always going to be unique to you and the children in your care. We always advise speaking to our fostering team to see how much you could earn as a foster carer.

Speak to our team today by calling 01709 357370 or booking a call back: www.fosteringrotherham.com/book

*Monthly calculations are for demonstration purposes only and are based on having the home match scenarios in the examples above in place full time for a period of 365 days per year. The amounts paid to you will be based on actual placement durations, your fostering skills levels and the age of the children matched with you. These care stories are fictional examples. No real names or stories of children have been used in the interest of safeguarding and privacy.



Allowances to Support Your Looked after Children

Some children enter care under emergency situations. They may come to you with few belongings, or none at all. We want to ensure you're able to help them experience everything that makes a child happy and healthy. Equally importantly, we want them to have fun with you.

Part of your weekly allowance will be set aside for the child in your care. This includes everyday items, such as clothing and food costs. We also encourage looked after children with a weekly pocket money allowance, so they can have a say in how their money is spent.

We offer up to £200 for clothing, and £500 for any bedroom equipment, car seats or other activities. A big part of a child's life is school, too. We offer up to £70 in a one-off payment so you can buy school uniform.



"Children enter foster care for a whole range of reasons. In some cases, a child will arrive with very few belongings. When you first become a foster carer we will contribute up to £500 for equipment that you may need when a child is matched with you. We also provide up to £200 for clothing and up to £70 for school uniform."

- Sarah, Fostering Adviser



Special Occasions

It's not just little expenses that we think a child should have access to. We believe in sharing unforgettable experiences for both you and the child in your care. We offer up to £1,100 a year in allowances for special occasions. This includes birthdays, religious festivals such as Eid al-Fitr and Christmas, and also holidays.

One of our fantastic social workers, Laura, shared a wonderful story of looked after children:

"It can be really rewarding being able to give a child new experiences. I worked with two siblings who were aged 8 and 9 years old. They'd never been to the seaside before, and their foster carer had a caravan near a beach. They had such an amazing time together! The children spent all day on the beach making sandcastles and splashing in the sea. The family made some amazing memories. Many years later, they're still talking about their first time at the seaside."

We believe it's vital to offer children and young people these experiences which make a big difference, whether it's a new jumper or a first holiday.

Additional Financial Support

Our financial offer to you is far-reaching, and includes plenty of additional benefits. You can read about our full support offer on our website: www.fosteringrotherham.com/support



Annual Leave

We know that sometimes you'll want time between placements. We offer up to 14 days paid leave every year. If you have a child in your care at this time, they'll be supported by our respite carers who form part of your fostering community.



Discounts and Benefits

We understand that fostering isn't all school runs and getting homework done- we want you and the child in your care to have fun together. All of our foster carers receive discounts in the local area, thanks to our Rothercard and Blue Light Card. This is an easy way to brighten up your weekends together, and make lasting memories for the child that they'll always thank you for.



Fuel

Part of a foster carer's daily routine involves taking the child in your care to school, activity clubs or visits with their birth family. We'll support your journey with mileage offers so you can get around more easily. Our weekly allowance includes up to 40 miles per week for transporting a child. In addition, you can claim another 45p per mile for longer transport requirements.



Training

We also want you to benefit from your relationship with Fostering Rotherham. As a part of our fostering community, you'll always have the chance to level up your skills. Your supervising social worker will work with you on a professional development plan. This personalised plan means you have an opportunity to develop your expertise even further, and help more local children.

We're here for you, every step of the way.

Our professional development plan is just one of the ways we support your growth. Find out more about our training by booking: www.fosteringrotherham.com/book

Additional Support for Stepdown and complex carers

Stepdown care is provided for young people who have previously been or currently live in a residential care home. Many of these young people would thrive in a fostering family environment. We have incredible carers who offer care to these children and young people, known as Stepdown carers.

What does Stepdown care involve?

Ultimately, Stepdown is all about providing stability to a child who might have experienced a lot of changes in their life. As a Stepdown foster carer, you offer:

- Support to a young person's education
- A warm and caring environment
- Daily activities to support emotional and psychological wellbeing using a therapeutic model
- Close communication with a network of professionals (including social workers, medical and therapeutic teams)
- Time for a chat and a cuppa together at the end of the day

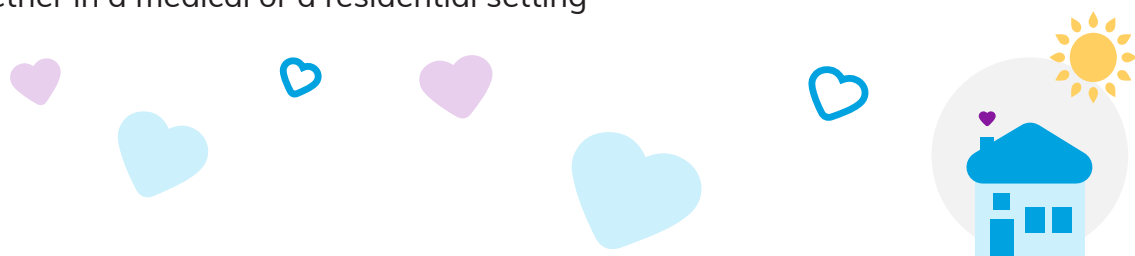
A lot of Stepdown overlaps with long term fostering requirements, so it's easily learned by an experienced and enthusiastic carer.

How do I know Stepdown is for me?

If you have experience of caring for and working with children or have fostered before, you might want to help older children who have experienced some difficulties. We're always looking to recruit more experienced carers to foster for our Stepdown Programme, as well as those who can care for a child with more complex health or behavioural needs.

You may come from a background working with:

- Older children in a school or a pupil referral unit
- Children and young people that experience mental health, emotional and behavioural difficulties such that they need specific care on a continuous basis
- Children and young people during and after a challenging time in their lives, whether in a medical or a residential setting



How we support our Stepdown carers

These young people have likely experienced a number of moves from one home to another, and they need stability and therapeutic care. Being a Stepdown foster carer is a full time role. It is also incredibly rewarding with the right support around you.

Because there's an increase in the demands on your time and skills as a foster carer, we offer additional support both in terms of our team members and our financial package.

We offer up to £790.30 a week, which equates to £3,161.20 a month, for Stepdown care.

How this works:

Stepdown carers receive a complex payment of £200 a week. This is in addition to your carer fee, which will be paid at Skills Level 4 (£360). With carer fee, children's allowance and the complex payment you could receive anywhere between £716 and £790.30 per week. The only variation here would be around the child's allowance so the skills level and complex care pay would be static at £560 per week.

We appreciate that when caring for a child with very complex needs and/or disabilities, you will need an additional level of support. Children with complex needs may have a long-term health condition or severe disability. Some children may have particular emotional needs that need extra care and support. We always recommend therapeutic support for complex care. Our complex carers dedicate an incredible amount of time to helping these young people. To aid you, we offer your Skills Level carer fee and the child's weekly allowance (which depends on their age), as well as a complex payment of £100 a week.

Taking on the additional time needed to be a Stepdown or Complex carer doesn't mean you won't feel our support. We have a positive group of second home carers able to support your annual leave. This means you'll feel refreshed and ready to help a child who needs you.

You can read more about how these rates are calculated in the Our Fees and Allowances Broken Down section. We also recommend that you discuss your complex care with your social worker, who can confirm the right financial support for you and the looked after child in your care.



Our Fees and Allowances Broken Down

		Skills Level 1	Skills Level 2	Skills Level 3	Skills Level 4
Foster carer fee per week	Per child	£100.00	£125.00	£175.00	£360.00
	Stepdown			+£200.00	
	Complex			+£100.00	

* Once a carer is approved to Skills Level 2, the additional payment changes from Skills Level 1. The Skills Level payments are not cumulative payments.

		Age: Babies	Age: 1-4 (Pre-Primary)	Age: 5-10 (Primary)	Age: 11-15	Age: 16+
Basic Allowance	Standard weekly fees	£141.00	£141.00	£156.00	£189.37	£230.30
	Birthday allowance	£141.00	£141.00	£156.00	£189.37	£230.30
	Christmas allowance	£141.00	£141.00	£156.00	£189.37	£230.30
	Holiday allowance	£282.00	£282.00	£312.00	£378.74	£460.60
	Clothes allowance**	£75.00	£75.00	£75.00	£200.00	£200.00

**This is a one off payment paid at the start of the placement.



"Payments shown are per child in your care and are cumulative. For example, a Skill Level One foster carer with one child in their care would receive £100 allowance, whereas a Skill Level One foster carer with two children in their care would receive £200."

- Diane, Fostering Adviser

What's Next?

If you have any questions about this Financial Support guide we would be happy to help. We're here for you every step of the way.

Talk with one of our expert fostering team today by contacting us on the details below.

We are looking forward to speaking with you.



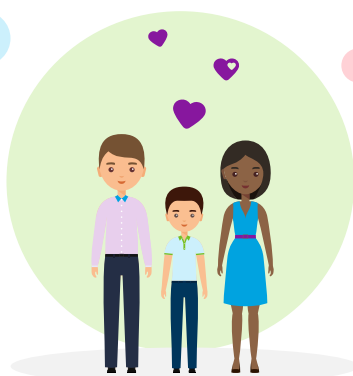
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Terms and conditions:
This document was last updated in December 2022.
We reserve the right to review and amend our rates at any time without prior notice.

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