

**Wellbeing, Children and Families Services, Slough Borough Council**  
**Family Placements Service Schedule of Payments to Carers of all Types**

The payment rates are based on the fostering allowance rates recommended by the national Fostering Network for 2014-15. Payment rates are effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and have no retrospective effect on Adoption, Special Guardianship or Residence Order support plans commencing before the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. All new allowances are subject to an annual means test review. Existing support packages will continue to be means tested against any allowances payable .

**Detailed explanation of each allowance type.**

**Fostering Allowances**

In accordance with the Fostering Regulations 2011, Regulation 28 (7), Slough Borough Councils Criteria for calculating fees and allowances; these are applied equally to all foster carers, whether the foster carer is connected or unconnected to the child, and regardless of whether the placement is short or long term.

**Foster Carers Remuneration**

In addition to the fostering allowance for the child which is based on age of child. Foster carers can also receive a remuneration payment in addition to the fostering allowance where they meet one or more of the criteria as follows:

- 1 When the child has *exceptional* and significant on-going additional physical, learning or emotional needs
- 2 The foster carer has attended all of the following:
  - a. A fostering preparation group run by Slough Borough Council,
  - b. Completed the CWDC Standards test,
  - c. A first aid course,
  - d. Safeguarding training for foster carers,
  - e. Attends Slough Borough Council foster carer support evenings
  - f. Attends the Slough Borough Council annual fostering conference
- 3 The foster carer has met all the competencies necessary to be approved for caring for children and young people who are unconnected with them, who have a range of needs and the foster carers are available at short notice

## **Home from Home foster carers**

Home from Home carers offer a flexible service to children and young people and their families. The care they provide can be for a few hours at a time or for overnights. In order to meet the need for this flexibility of care, the payment scheme also needs to be flexible. For this reason an hourly rate is payable between 7am and 8pm and an overnight rate from 8pm to 7am. The overnight rate is 1/7<sup>th</sup> of the remuneration rate for foster carers

## **Supported Lodgings**

The rates payable to supported lodgings carers, takes into account that the young person will be receiving their subsistence directly from the service in addition to the amount paid to the carer. Where a child is over 18 they should also claim housing benefit which they should pay to the supported lodgings carer.

## **Staying Put**

When young people who are Looked After turn 18 they sometimes want to remain with their foster carers for a bit longer before living independently. Provided the foster carer is agreeable, and the fostering standards continue to be met by the carers, then the foster home will become a supported lodgings placement for that same young person.

## **Adoption, Special Guardianship or Residence Order Allowances as part of Support Plans - for children and young people who are Looked After by Slough Borough Council at the time when the order is made**

The proposed maximum allowances payable for Adoption, Special Guardianship and Residence Orders are based on the current fostering allowance which is payable by Slough Borough Council and any increase in this allowance will be at the same rate as that paid to Slough Borough Council foster carers. All support plans are signed off by the Head of Service for Placements and Resources. Allowances are subject to an annual means test review. Any enhanced support packages must be presented to and agreed by the Slough Borough Council Resource Panel.

## **Adoption, Special Guardianship and Residence Order allowances - for children who are not Looked After by Slough Borough Council at the time when the Order is made**

Allowances for children and young people who are not Looked After by Slough, can only be paid when the order is made as a result of care proceedings or as a direct alternative to care proceedings, which would otherwise lead to the child, becoming looked after long term. Agreement to such an allowance is at the discretion of the Head of Service for Placements and Resources or the Assistant Director for Children, Young People and Families. All support plans are signed off by the Head of Service for Placements and Resources. Allowances are subject to an annual means test review.

### **Foster Carers becoming Adopters or Special Guardians**

Where existing foster carers are granted a Special Guardianship Order or their foster child becomes a child placed under Adoption regulations with them, then any fee element paid to them as foster carers for the same child, will continue to be paid for 2 years. in addition to any means tested allowance agreed.

### **Enhanced Special Guardianship and Adoption Allowances**

In exceptional circumstances where the LA is of the view that it is essential in order to secure the child's future, an Enhanced SGO or Adoption financial package may be agreed, as part of the Support Plan. This will only be possible where one or more of the following criteria are met

1. When the child has *exceptional* and significant ongoing additional physical, learning or emotional needs or
2. There are significant challenges to family finding evidenced by extensive searching on behalf of the child.
3. Where there is a need to pay an enhanced allowance in order to make possible the placement of a subsequent sibling with an existing adopted child.
4. The adoption is by an existing foster carer who already meets the criteria for fostering remuneration and has cared for the child for at least 18 months prior to the SGO or placement for Adoption

### **Support Plans.**

All Adoption, Special Guardianship and Residence Order Support Packages will be based on a means tested allowance where the maximum payable is equivalent to the Slough Borough Council current fostering allowance for that child at the time the Special Guardianship or Residence Order is made, or the child is placed for Adoption, and any increase in this allowance will be at the same rate as that paid to Slough Borough Council foster carers. This sum will be used each year as the amount, against which the means test will be done.

### **The tables below set out the actual figures applicable from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013**

Type	Allowance Per Child per week unless otherwise stated *		Allowance Means Tested	Deductions	Fee Per Child	Child Benefit Claimable	Criteria
4. Fostering payments. Regulation 24/25 Carers	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	No	None	None	No	Subject to viability assessment presented to Family Placements Panel
Foster carers who do not meet the criteria for remuneration	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	No	None	None	No	Subject to approval by Family Placements Panel as I Foster Carers
Foster carers who meet the criteria to receive remuneration	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	No	None	£200	No	Subject to approval by Family Placements Panel as Foster Carers
Home from Home carers	Receive an hourly rate between 7am and 8pm plus overnight rate	6.83 per hour *  33.81 * per overnight	No	None	None	No	Subject to approval by Family Placements Panel as Home from Home Carers
5. Supported Lodgings Allowance	16&17 18+	204 204	No	None	None	No	Subject to approval by Family Placements Panel as Supported Lodgings Carers
6. Staying Put with foster carers post 18	18+	204	No	None	None	No	Subject to agreement from the Placement and Care Planning Panel

Type	Allowance Per Child based on age of child at start of support plan		Allowance Means Tested	Deductions	Fee Per Child not means tested	Child Benefit Claimable	Enhancements/Reductions	Criteria
1. Adoption Basic Adoption Allowance.	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	Yes	Child benefit and Child tax credits payable in respect of this child	None	Yes	Subject to means test and annual financial review	All children are eligible and all adopters will be assessed for an allowance.
Adoption with existing unconnected foster carers	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	Yes	Child benefit and Child tax credits payable in respect of this child	£200 Remuneration remains for 2 years from date of placement under adoption regulations	Yes	After 2 years payments change to Adoption Allowance only which is subject to means test and annual financial review	All children when a child is adopted by their existing unconnected foster carer.
Adoption Enhanced allowance	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	Yes	Child benefit and Child tax credits payable in respect of this child	£200 remuneration remains until the child is 18 years old	Yes	These packages are only for exceptional circumstances The allowance is subject to annual financial review and means test The fee element is not means tested.	Must meet at least one of the four specified criteria and be agreed by the Head of Service for Placements and Resources or Assistant Director as part of the adoption support plan at the time of the placement under Adoption Regulations.

Type	Allowance Per Child		Allowance Means Tested	Deductions	Fee Per Child	Child Benefit Claimable	Enhancements/Reductions	Criteria
Special Guardianship Allowance	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	Yes	Child benefit and Child tax credits payable in respect of this child	None	Yes	Subject to annual financial review and means test	An SGO allowance is only payable if the child would otherwise be Looked After long term by the Local Authority
Special Guardianship with Foster Carers who receive remuneration for this child prior to order	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	Yes	Child benefit and Child tax credits payable in respect of this child	£200 Fee remains for 2 years from date of placement under adoption regulations	Yes	After 2 years payments change to Basic SGO Allowance which is subject to financial review and means test and no fee will be payable	All children when a foster carer is eligible for foster carer remuneration prior to their Special Guardianship Order
Enhanced Special Guardianship Allowance	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	Yes	Child benefit and Child tax credits payable in respect of this child	£200 Fee remains until the child is 18 years old	Yes	These packages are only for exceptional circumstances The allowance is subject to annual financial review and means test The fee is not means tested.	Must meet at least one of the four specified criteria and be agreed by the HOS Placements and Resources or Assistant Director as part of the SGO support plan at the time of the Order
Residence Order Allowance	0-4 5-10 11-15 16&17	140.33 159.85 199.00 242.00	Yes	Child benefit and Child tax credits payable in respect of this child	None	Yes	Subject to annual financial review and means test	An RO allowance is only payable if the child would otherwise be Looked After long term by the Local Authority

**Holiday Allowance** Foster carers who are receiving the remuneration element in addition to the allowance, will receive up to £400 holiday remuneration per annum

**One-off payments** such as setting up grants up to £500 are paid at the discretion of Family Placement Practice Manager (Adoption)

**Legal expenses** may only be paid, subject to prior agreement by the Head of Service for Placements and Resources or Assistant Director,

Criteria must be met in any of the 3 following circumstances;

1. To provide carer applicants with one-off legal advice session to consider Adoption, Special Guardianship or Residence Order.
2. Where applications are made for SGO, RO or Adoption Orders and these are supported by Slough Borough Council the department may pay for the court application fee only.
3. For contested Special Guardianship and Adoption applications outside of care proceedings, where the LA is supporting the application and where the child would otherwise be Looked After, the LA may pay the applicants legal fees, subject to prior agreement, at the discretion of the Assistant Director

**Legal expenses will not be paid for the following:**

1. For SGO or Residence Order applications within care proceedings the LA will not pay the legal costs of the applicants to be separately represented in court. This is because the Local Authority is in support of their application, and will therefore be recommending this to the court on their behalf in any event.
2. Where the Local Authority is not supporting an application for Adoption, Special Guardianship or Residence Order. SBC will not pay the legal costs or the court application costs of the applicants.