Foster Carer Payment for Skills (PFS) Model
and the Tasks, Skills, Competencies (TSC) Framework

Introduction

The Leeds City Council Fostering Service employs a four level Payment For Skills (PFS) model. The model underpins the Fostering Service commitment to achieving best possible outcomes for fostered looked after children supported by skilled, motivated and rewarded foster carers. The model provides clear entry requirements and post approval expectations for each level, including training and development and support group attendance. The Tasks, Skills and Competencies (TSC) carer practice framework for each level of the model encompasses the 5 Outcomes of the “Every Child Matters” framework.

Separate published and linked documents to the Payment for Skills model and Framework are: Financial Support for Foster Carers FN16 (details all payment procedures, allowances and fee levels); Foster Carer Terms and Conditions for (Payment for Skills); Tax, welfare benefits and insurance information.

The model has minimum entry requirements for new carers at each level (1 lowest, 4 highest) and also allows existing carers to progress up through the levels if they meet the Task, Skills and Competencies (TSC) requirements. A weekly skills fee is paid to Level 2, 3 and 4 carers (in addition to weekly maintenance allowance payments). Level 1 is a basic entry level where no fee is paid and also applies to kinship carers. Level 1 carers progress to Level 2 normally following a carer review including evidence of meeting the required TSC’s within a 6-12 month period.

Foster carers will need to provide evidence to the Supervising Social Worker during the assessment process or progression assessment that they meet the requirements for the respective PFS level. This framework assists carers in being clear about the expectations of the requirements at each level.

Full details of all courses linked to Payment for Skills requirements are provided in the Training and Development Calendar and the Training Framework. Courses are regularly evaluated and may be periodically updated and changed.
Overview of the Model:

(Weekly Fee structure as from October 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Entry Requirements</th>
<th>Financial Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td><em>(Includes Kinship Care)</em> Have some experience of childcare eg parenting / looking after other's children</td>
<td>1. Weekly Allowances / 2. No Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td>Have experience of childcare eg parenting / looking after other’s children / paid or voluntary work in childcare / previous fostering experience (six months minimum)</td>
<td>1. Weekly Allowances 2. 1st &amp; 2nd Placement Fee: £120 Subsequent Placements: £60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3</strong></td>
<td>In addition to Level 2, evidence significant childcare experience and ability to take more challenging children with more complex needs</td>
<td>1. Weekly Allowances 2. 1st &amp; 2nd Placement Fee: £170 Subsequent Placements: £85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 4</strong></td>
<td>Significant formal childcare experience eg previous fostering 3 years minimum inc children with complex needs /employment in childcare or related experience eg nursing, youth work, teaching. Ability to reflect upon professional experience and relate this to the fostering task</td>
<td>1. Weekly Allowances 2. 1st &amp; 2nd Placement Fee: £220 Subsequent Placements: £110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Level 1

**Entry requirement** :- Have some experience of childcare eg parenting / looking after other’s children

**General requirements**:-

1 Evidence a commitment to self development via training and support, including mentoring from an experienced carer

2 Complete the following training courses:

If you have completed any of the following training sessions as part of your occupation then you do not need to complete again. If in doubt please discuss with your Supervising Social Worker.

New Entrants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Year Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People</td>
<td>Managing Challenging Behaviour</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safer Caring</td>
<td>Promoting the Health of Looked After Children</td>
<td>Educational Issues of Looked After Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>Record Keeping</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attachment and Loss</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For ongoing years you are then expected to do a minimum of 15 hours training per year (this includes any attendance at support groups which contain a learning opportunity)

Please see the full training calendar for details of other training courses.

3 Attend an appropriate support group, minimum 4 per year

4 Undertake an Annual Personal Development Plan

5 Maintain a basic written log and achieve TDSD standards requirements within the first year of fostering

6 Kinship Carers undertake post approval courses as agreed / appropriate and are expected to complete TDSD requirements within 18 months of approval

**Practice requirements ensuring that children achieve the best possible outcomes from their care with foster carers**: Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Making a Positive Contribution; Achieve Economic Well Being

**Be Healthy**

**Level 1**

- Provide a good standard of care for children in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment
- Ensure the health and safety of children / young people within the home including completion of the Health and Safety checklist
- Maintain appropriate placement records, including the maintenance of a Foster Carer Diary
• Record significant events eg medical / health / dental appointments; unauthorised absences from the foster home; contact; child behaviours; incidents / events reported to child’s social worker
• Help and encourage children to be Healthy via healthy diet, lifestyle and regular exercise
• Attend medical and dental appointments with the child / young person
• Encourage awareness and understanding of drug and alcohol issues and positively promote the development of good sexual health
• Facilitate the fostered child / young person to receive health care which meets his / her needs for good physical, emotional and social development
• Promote and support contact for a fostered child / young person
• Act as advocate for the child / young person in cooperation with other professionals / agencies eg school / education / health / police

Stay Safe

Level 1

• Protect children / young people from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation
• Set appropriate boundaries and manage children’s behaviour within these without recourse to physical chastisement. Discuss and clarify boundaries in conjunction with others eg social worker; supervising fostering officer
• Provide and maintain suitable accommodation for the number, needs and age of the child / young person in placement
• Provide a Safe, Stimulating and Stable environment to the varied needs of individual children / young people taking into account their backgrounds and experiences
• Maintain a safe care plan for each child / young person in placement
• Make positive use of supervision and guidance from a supervising fostering officer and reflect and learn from advice given
• Attend and contribute to foster carer reviews, self assessment and reflective learning opportunities
• Attend and contribute to child care reviews

Enjoy and Achieve

Level 1

• Provision of foster care which values and promotes diversity and equality
• Ability to listen to and communicate with children / young people appropriate to their age, understanding, individual needs and ethnicity and culture
• Actively promote, support and encourage children’s / young people’s education and achievement under the guidance of a child’s Personal Education Plan (PEP)
• Attend and contribute to PEP Reviews
• Establish and maintain daily routines for children / young people eg school attendance; assisting with homework
• Assist and encourage the development of children’s / young people’s self esteem and positive identity by supporting participation in social activities and leisure pursuits
• Play an active role in relationships with Education providers eg attending school parents evenings; contributing / commenting on school reports / supporting school – home agreements
• Maintain a Clothing Inventory for each child / young person placed and ensure that appropriate levels and standards of clothing are provided
• Assist children / young people moving to other placements when required and as part of a child’s placement plan eg return to birth family; to other foster placement; to adoption placement

**Make a Positive Contribution**

**Level 1**

• Help children / young people cope with issues of separation and loss and assist them with coming to terms with previous experiences
• Assist children / young people maintain a positive view of their family and support and facilitate contact as agreed in a placement plan
• Liaise closely with a child’s social worker and work to agreed plans for the child / young person
• Maintain Confidentiality
• Work closely with other professionals in the best interest of the child / young person eg School; Education; Health; Therapeutic Services
• Demonstrate a commitment to sustaining a placement as agreed in the child care plan
• Demonstrate a commitment to ending placements in a planned, agreed way
• Assist and support contact arrangements in and outside the foster home

**Achieve Economic Well Being**

**Level 1**

• Enable a child to move on positively to other placements eg return to birth family / other foster placements / adoption
• To attend and contribute to child care reviews and other meetings / forums as agreed and identified in a child’s care / placement plan
• Maintain a nurturing home environment that will model family living and provide good standards to positively influence a child’s / young person’s aspirations
• Promote and encourage the development of independence / life skills where age appropriate
• Assist young people to develop skills, confidence and knowledge necessary for successful adult living
Level 2

**Entry requirement** Have experience of childcare eg parenting / looking after other’s children / paid or voluntary work in childcare / previous fostering experience (six months minimum)

**Progression requirement**: - Have been an approved carer for at least 6 months and met the requirements of a Progression Plan evidenced through a portfolio.

**General requirements** :- Must be able and prepared to take placements of children with more complex needs than in Level 1.

1. Attend an appropriate support group, minimum 4 per year
2. Undertake an Annual Personal Development Plan
3. Maintain a basic written log and achieve TDSD standards requirements within the first year of fostering
4. Complete the following training courses:

If you have completed any of the following training sessions as part of your occupation then you do not need to complete again. If in doubt please discuss with your Supervising Social Worker.

**New Entrants:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People</td>
<td>Child Development</td>
<td>Moving Children On</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>Managing Challenging Behaviour</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safer Caring</td>
<td>Contact Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attachment and Loss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Record Keeping</td>
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If progressing from Level 1 only need to do those courses not already completed at Level 1. With the exception of First Aid which requires a refresher every 3 years.

For ongoing years you are then expected to do a minimum of 15 hours training per year (this includes any attendance at support groups which contain a learning opportunity)

Please see the full training calendar for details of other training courses.

**Practice requirements ensuring that children achieve the best possible outcomes from their care with foster carers**: Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Making a Positive Contribution; Achieve Economic Well Being
**Be Healthy**

**Level 2** (in addition to Level 1)

- Provide good, quality care to meet the needs of a child / young person
- Show a commitment to developing greater understanding of the range of child care and child development issues
- Utilise basic therapeutic parenting techniques under the guidance of social workers / other professionals
- Promote, support and supervise Contact, including in the foster carers own home where appropriate and agreed
- Assist with Life Story work for children in placement

**Stay Safe**

**Level 2** (in addition to Level 1)

- Evidence skills development required to meet the needs of more complex and demanding children / young people
- Contribute to professional assessments under the guidance of the child’s social worker, supervising fostering officer or other professionals

**Enjoy and Achieve**

**Level 2** (in addition to Level 1)

- Make proactive contributions to problem resolution in school for children / young people placed

**Make a Positive Contribution**

**Level 2** (in addition to Level 1)

- Maintain accurate placement records and provide written reports as required
- Attend Court proceedings involving placed children / young people where required
- Actively support work with birth parents / extended family where appropriate

**Achieve Economic Well Being**

**Level 2** (in addition to Level 1)

- Actively promote the value of engaging in local activities and community links for placed children and young people where age appropriate
Level 3

**Entry requirement**: Evidence significant childcare experience eg parenting / looking after other’s children / paid or voluntary work in childcare / previous fostering experience (at least 2 years) and ability to take more challenging children with more complex needs.

**Progression Requirement**: Have been an approved carer for at least 2 years and met the requirements of a Progression Plan evidenced through a portfolio.

**General requirements**: Must be able to take children with more complex needs and undertake more challenging tasks than in Level 2 and must not work more than 20 hours per week paid employment outside of fostering commitments.

1. Attend appropriate support group, minimum 4 per year (that include learning and development)

2. Complete the following training courses:

   If you have completed any of the following training sessions as part of your occupation then you do not need to complete again. If in doubt please discuss with your Supervising Social Worker.

New Entrants at Level 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Year Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Working Together to Safeguard</td>
<td>Contact Issues</td>
<td>Child Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and Young People</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safer Caring</td>
<td>Moving Children On</td>
<td>Any one of the following TCIF / KEEP/ Nurtured</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heart Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>Equality Diversity</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment and Loss</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Record Keeping</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Those progressing from Level 2 need only complete those courses they have not already completed at Level 2. First Aid requires a refresher every 3 years.

TCIF also requires a two day refresher every 18 months.

For ongoing years you are then expected to do a minimum of 20 hours training per year (this includes any attendance at support groups which contain a learning opportunity)

Please see the full training calendar for details of other training courses.

3. Produce an enhanced Personal Development Plan evidencing planning and action towards the development of higher level skills and competencies

**Practice requirements ensuring that children achieve the best possible outcomes from their care with foster carers**: Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Making a Positive Contribution; Achieve Economic Well Being
Be Healthy

Level 3 (in addition to Levels 1 and 2)

- Maintain active involvement with and provide information to appropriate specialist health services to meet the needs of placed children / young people eg therapeutic services. Provide mentor support / advice to other carers in these areas.

Stay Safe

Level 3 (in addition to Levels 1 and 2)

- Assist with plans / agreements for children / young people as required. Work to agreements and contracts to achieve placement plans and related outcomes.
- Contribute to professional assessments of children / young people.
- Evidence ability to manage more challenging and demanding behaviours and support more specialised placement commitments.
- A commitment via supervision to identify own training and development needs.
- Be able to offer significant flexibility in meeting the placement needs of more complex children / young people.
- Work cooperatively and supportively with birth family / relatives where considered appropriate.

Enjoy and Achieve

Level 3 (in addition to Levels 1 and 2)

- Demonstrate a commitment to improving knowledge and understanding of specific educational issues in order to assist child / young person placed.

Make a Positive Contribution

Level 3 (in addition to Levels 1 and 2)

- Develop skills and evidence ability to work closely with birth parents / extended family in order to achieve placement plans.
- Provide input to specialised / therapeutic parenting strategies with professional support and guidance.

Achieve Economic Well Being

Level 3 (in addition to Levels 1 and 2)

- Provide detailed reports as required and contribute to a wide range of meetings / forums.
Level 4

**Entry requirement**: Significant formal childcare experience eg previous fostering 3 years minimum inc children with complex needs/ employment in childcare or related experience eg nursing, youth work, teaching. Ability to reflect upon professional experience and relate this to the fostering task.

**Progression Requirement**: Must have been a foster carer for at least 3 years and provide evidence of a skill set reflecting high level competencies and experience through a portfolio of evidence.

**General requirements**: Must be able to provide specialist foster care in one or more key areas eg: Parent/Child; Assessment; Planned Permanency for challenging children and young people; Children with Disability; Children having experienced significant disruption/placement breakdowns; Teens/Placements linked to the Youth Justice system; Emergency Placements for challenging children and young people; Placements for young people with particularly challenging behaviours where residential placements may be the alternative.

1. One approved carer in the household must have a full time commitment to fostering with no other paid work commitments outside the fostering service.
2. Act as a Mentor to newly approved carers.
3. Attend appropriate support group, minimum 4 per year.
4. Complete the following training courses:

   If you have completed any of the following training sessions as part of your occupation then you do not need to complete again. If in doubt please discuss with your Supervising Social Worker.

New Entrants complete the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
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<th>Year Three</th>
<th>Year Four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People</td>
<td>Contact Issues</td>
<td>Child Development</td>
<td>Any one of the following: TCIF / KEEP / Nurtured Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safer Caring</td>
<td>Moving Children On</td>
<td>Moving Children into independence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>Educational Issues Looked After Children</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Record Keeping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attachment and Loss</td>
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</table>

Those progressing to Level 4 only need to complete any training that they haven’t already completed at Level 3. With the exception of First Aid which requires a refresher every 3 years.

TCIF also requires a two day refresher every 18 months.
For ongoing years you are then expected to do a minimum of 15 hours training per year (this includes any attendance at support groups which contain a learning opportunity).

Please see the full training calendar for details of other training courses.

- Maintain a detailed Personal Development Portfolio, evidencing continuing development of high level fostering skills and competencies
- Consider/ participate in delivery of new carer preparation and training in partnership with Fostering Staff
- Support and assist the Fostering Service in promoting a positive fostering profile, including involvement in foster carer recruitment initiatives

**Practice requirements ensuring that children achieve the best possible outcomes from their care with foster carers:** Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Making a Positive Contribution; Achieve Economic Well Being

### Be Healthy

**Level 4** (in addition to Levels 1, 2 and 3)

- Achieve sustained high level work with specialist health services for children young people, including direct work with the child / young person in placement
- Supervise Contact arrangements and provide detailed analysis and assessment of contact arrangements inside and outside the foster home
- Recording and Reporting of a high quality and detail that can inform the development of child care planning

### Stay Safe

**Level 4** (in addition to Levels 1, 2 and 3)

- Provide commitment to specialised placements of children / young people with the most complex needs eg: Parent / Child; Assessment; Remand; Permanence; Children with a disability; Children / Young People having experienced significant disruption; Single placements in the household; Children / Young people who might otherwise require a residential placement
- Provision of Emergency placements (inc Out of Hours) and those required at short notice
- Management of persistently challenging and anti-social behaviours of children / young people placed

### Enjoy and Achieve

**Level 4** (in addition to Levels 1, 2 and 3)

- High level of input (verbal and written) to the range of required tasks involved in encouraging children / young people to enjoy and achieve
- Demonstrate a high level of knowledge and understanding of educational and child development issues

### Make a Positive Contribution
Level 4  (in addition to Levels 1, 2 and 3)

- Identify own training and development needs and keep up date and informed about child development issues applying this knowledge to your work
- Ability to provide comprehensive assessments of children’s needs
- In consultation with your supervising fostering officer and child’s social worker, taking a high level of responsibility for identifying and using support services available for the child / young person and to develop own knowledge and understanding of these services

**Achieve Economic Well Being**

Level 4  (in addition to Levels 1,2 and 3)

- Actively support and encourage young people to engage in further education / training / employment opportunities
- Play a pro-active role, in close liaison with other professionals in supporting a young person’s transition to new experiences and adult life
- Encourage and support young people (where age appropriate) to access work experience / part time work and promote their knowledge, confidence and understanding of work related issues eg compiling CV’s / application forms