

ALLOWANCES TO SUPPORT “CARE LEAVERS”



Allowances Booklet

April 2014

Introduction	2
Definition of Terms	2
Eligible Young People	2
Young people who return home	3
Young parents	3
Former Relevant Young People	3
Qualifying children and young people over 16	4
Payment arrangements	5
Allowances Payable	5
Young people who enter care on or after their 16 th Birthday	5
Eligible Young People	6
Relevant Young People	6
Former Relevant Young People	7
Qualifying Young People over 16	7
Relevant Young People	7
Housing costs	7
Supported Lodgings (Relevant Young People)	8
Supported Accommodation	8
Eligible and Relevant young people who return home	9
Private Sector Accommodation	10
Damage to Accommodation	10
Personal Allowance	11
Education incentive	11
Starting college, training or work	11
Travel costs	11
Social and Leisure Allowance	12
Birthday Allowance	12
Festival Allowance	12
Identity	12
Other allowances as detailed in the Pathway Plan	13
Contingency Plans	13
Crisis Loans	13
Crisis Grants	13
Clothing	13
Prescription costs	14
Young People in custody	14

Eligible and Relevant young mothers and mothers to be	15
Former Relevant Young People	15
Young people in Supported Lodgings	16
Set Up Grant	17
Starting work, training course or college	18
Birthday Allowance	18
Other allowances as detailed in the Pathway Plan	18
Education incentive (Further Education or training)	19
Vacation Accommodation	20
Qualifying young people (Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000)	21
Advice, befriending and assistance	21
Employment, education and training	21
General Assistance	22
APPENDIX A	23
Example 1 – Young Person in own flat	23
Example 2 – Young Person in Supported Lodgings or with Carer	24
APPENDIX B	25

INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 This guidance relates to young people who are in care or who were in the care of Plymouth City Council and is to be applied to young people aged between 16 and 18 who are living independently, or who have attained the age of 18.
- 1.1 This booklet has been written in accordance with the regulations and guidance set out in Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers.
- 1.2 More detail about the regulation and guidance and can be accessed here: <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/p/volume%203%20planning%20transition%20to%20adulthood%20for%20care%20leavers.pdf>

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 2.0 This document contains the broad definitions and further guidance should be sought from the relevant Service Manager.

YOUNG PEOPLE ENTERING CARE ON OR AFTER THEIR 16TH BIRTHDAY

- 2.2 This includes young people who enter care as a consequence of Homelessness, those remanded to care and separated children (formally known as unaccompanied asylum seeking children).
- 2.3 Young people entering care on or after their 16th birthday will not be considered to be Eligible young people until they have completed 13 weeks in care, although any episodes of care after the young person's 14th birthday will be taken into account.
- 2.4 Young people who return home within 13 weeks will be "Children in Need" and there is no residual duty under Section 24, Children Act 1989.
- 2.5 Young people who move on to independent or supported accommodation may be owed duties under Section 20 or Section 24 of the Children Act 1989.

ELIGIBLE YOUNG PEOPLE

- 3.0 An Eligible young person is one who is aged 16 or 17, has been looked after by the local authority for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14, and remains looked after. The period of 13 weeks need not have been continuous and could have been made up of a series of shorter periods during which the child was looked after. Planned periods of respite care do not count towards eligibility.

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RETURN HOME

- 4.0 Young people who enter care on or after their 16th birthday and who return to live with a parent before they have completed 13 weeks “in care” will be considered to be Children in Need and will not be owed duties under the Children (Leaving Care) Act.
- 4.1 Young people who are subject to a care order and who are placed with a parent will be Eligible Children until the order is discharged or they attain the age of 18.
- 4.2 If the order is discharged they will become Relevant or Qualifying young people dependent on how long they had lived at home before the order was discharged.
- 4.3 Should a young person subsequently leave home and return to local authority accommodation provided under Section 20 CA 1989 they will regain their eligible status.
- 4.4 Should a young person subsequently leave home and move to live independently before their 18th Birthday they will regain their relevant status.
- 4.5 If the order remains in place until their 18th birthday they will become Former Relevant young people.

RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE

- 5.0 Under the Act, a relevant young person is one who was previously an eligible child but who is no longer looked after and is under the age of 18.

YOUNG PARENTS

- 6.0 Relevant young people who are lone parents will still be able to claim social security benefits, but not local housing allowance. For all other purposes of the Act they will be considered relevant.

FORMER RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.0 Former relevant young people are those who have reached age 18 but not 21 and were eligible and/or relevant prior to becoming 18.
- 7.1 However, if someone is being helped with education or training they remain a former relevant child to the end of their agreed programme, even if that takes them beyond the age of 21.

7.2 Adults who have been Former Relevant young people can seek assistance with education from the responsible authority up to the age of 25.

QUALIFYING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVER 16

- 8.0 Within this group there are different entitlements dependent on the type of care they were receiving and it is important that advice is sought from the 16+ Service.
- 8.1 Young people who left care aged 16 or older, but who did not complete 13 weeks after their 14th birthday and who moved on to independent or supported accommodation.
- 8.2 Young people who received a pre-planned series of short-term breaks (respite or shared care) after their 16th birthday, none of which individually exceeded four weeks, and who returns to a parent or parent with parental authority.
- 8.3 Young people who were privately fostered after their 16th birthday
- 8.4 Young people who were accommodated by any Health Authority, Special Health Authority, Primary Care Trust, or local education authority for a consecutive period of at least three months. (The three-month period can begin before the young person became 16).
- 8.5 Young people accommodated in any care home or independent hospital or in any accommodation provided by a National Health Service trust for a consecutive period of at least three months. (The three-month period can begin before the young person became 16).
- 8.6 Any young person aged under 21 (under 24 if in education or training) who was looked after prior to being made subject to Special Guardianship.

YOUNG PEOPLE MOVING TO OR FROM OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS

- 9.0 Where young people move to Plymouth agreement must be sought from their home (Responsible) authority as to whether to apply this scheme or the one used by the home authority, as the young person remains the responsibility of their home authority.
- 9.1 Similarly if young people move away from Plymouth this scheme should continue to be used, unless agreed otherwise with the receiving authority.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 10.0 Young people must be encouraged to set up a Bank or other account able to receive payments via BACS transfer.
- 10.1 Payments are credited to such accounts on the Friday and funds are available on that date.
- 10.2 Payments are processed weekly on a Monday from all notifications received up to Friday of the previous week. The payment period will be from Monday until the following Sunday.
- 10.3 In exceptional circumstances personal allowances can be paid in cash and may be broken up into daily or twice weekly amounts.
- 10.4 Where young people cannot budget an agreed amount can be retained to meet the cost of utilities such as water or accommodation service charge.
- 10.5 All transactions will be in accordance with Plymouth City Councils financial regulations.
- 10.6 All arrangements will be recorded in the Pathway Plan

RECORDING OF PAYMENTS

- 11.0 All proposed payments or transactions will be recorded on the form SSI 16 and must be endorsed by the relevant managers before being processed

ALLOWANCES PAYABLE

Young people who enter care on or after their 16th Birthday

- 12.1 This section only applies to young people who enter care (Section 20 CA 1989) it does not apply to young people who have been remanded by a Court.
- 12.2 Some young people enter care from protracted periods of “sofa surfing” or rough sleeping.
- 12.3 A grant of up to £100.00 is available to purchase clothing and equipment to meet their immediate needs.
- 12.4 In all cases attempts must be made to retrieve belongings before payment can be made and discussions had with parents/carers as to what financial assistance they can provide.
- 12.5 Examples of legitimate expenditure include clothing, holdall, and PAYGO mobile phone (for contact purposes).

- 12.6 Where the young person is provided with a start-up pack this expenditure will form part of the £100.00. Start-up packs will be charged at the rate of £35.00 per pack.
- 12.7 A start up pack may be used as part of the provision of temporary accommodation and may include bedding and essential toiletries.

PERSONAL ALLOWANCE

- 13.0 Subject to the accommodation secured and service charges to be deducted, Young People will be entitled to a Personal Allowance of £57.35 per week.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES

- 14.0 Where the young person requires identity documents, e.g. to prove that they are child, a birth certificate will be purchased for them. Subsequent copies will be the responsibility of the young person.

Any other funding will require the authorisation of the Service Manager and will be based on the assessed need of the young person concerned.

ELIGIBLE YOUNG PEOPLE

- 15.0 This group of young people, by definition, is looked after. They will receive all the benefits of the looked after system **but** will not receive allowances from this scheme until they move to an independent living situation or become Relevant.
- 15.1 Independent living includes supported lodgings or other supportive living arrangements.

RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE

- 16.0 This group of young people are entitled to receive the following:
- Housing Costs
 - Personal Allowance
 - Set Up Grant
 - Grant to support young people starting work, training course or college
 - Birthday and Festival allowances
 - Social and Leisure grant

Dependent on their circumstances they may also receive
Education Allowance
Local Travel Costs

16.1 Any other payments or allowances must be agreed by the Service Manager and detailed in the Pathway Plan.

FORMER RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE

17.0 This group of young people is entitled to receive the following:
Assistance with employment
Assistance with education and training including support to access higher education
Assistance in general
Housing costs for vacation accommodation if they are engaged in higher education or residential further education
Such other financial assistance as detailed in the Pathway Plan

QUALIFYING YOUNG PEOPLE OVER 16

18.0 This group of young people may receive:
Assistance with education and training
Assistance in general
Housing costs for vacation accommodation, if needed, if they are engaged in higher education or residential further education.

RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE

19.0 *This section also applies to those eligible young people who chose to live independently or semi-independently.*
19.1 Housing costs - The Act places a duty on the local authority to provide relevant young people with suitable accommodation.

BED AND BREAKFAST

20.0 Bed and Breakfast accommodation should not be considered suitable for anything but occasional, short-term use and permission must be sought from the Service Manager before placing any child in such accommodation.

TRAINING FLATS

21.0 Plymouth City Council has a number of furnished flats available as “training flats” – these should be used as part of an agreed transition plan. Young People

will need to be advised that £250.00 will be “ring-fenced” within their set up grant to cover damages and excessive cleaning costs. The ring-fence will be lifted at the end of the placement.

- 21.1 The young person is required to pay all utility costs associated with their accommodation. The service will seek to ensure that pre-payment meters are fitted wherever possible.
- 21.2 Where this is not possible a service charge will be levied and the amount deducted from the young persons weekly allowance.
- 21.3 Should the young person not pay bills then the service may meet the cost of the arrears and make an adjustment to the young person’s allowance until the arrears are cleared. This reclaim will not exceed £5.00 per week.

SUPPORTED LODGINGS (RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE)

- 22.0 Plymouth City Council has procured a supported lodgings scheme.
- 22.1 The Social Worker or Personal Advisor is responsible for ensuring that payments are started and ended promptly to providers within the scheme using the I16 Form.
- 22.2 For Relevant young people the department is required to pay £155.00 per week.
- 22.3 The young person is required to contribute £20.00 per week.
- 22.4 Where the needs of the young person are assessed to exceed hours support a week, additional hours can be agreed at a rate of £7.00 per hour to a maximum of 8 hours per week.
- 22.5 The needs and expected outcomes will be recorded in the Pathway Plan and will be subject to regular review.

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

- 23.0 This definition includes providers such as the Foyer Project and some Housing Association Schemes.
- 23.1 The Service is responsible for the basic room rent in such schemes. The young person may have to pay an individual service charge. It is expected that support costs will be covered by existing agreements with Plymouth City Council.

“FOUND PLACEMENTS”

- 24.1 This definition covers accommodation in a friends/relatives household found by the young person. It does not include private rented accommodation where the young person is not under the care or supervision of an adult.
- 24.2 These placements will be subject to assessment. The assessment will require every member of the household over the age of 16 to undergo a full Criminal Records Bureau check and the property will need to have a health and safety assessment completed.
- 24.3 Subject to satisfactory checks the department will pay £50.00 to the householder as “rent” on behalf of the young person.
- 24.4 There is an expectation that the young person will contribute a further £20.00 from their personal allowance.

SET UP COSTS

Young people, aged under 18, moving to supported accommodation are allowed up to £250.00 to purchase essential items such as bedding, towels, etc. This does not form part of the Set Up grant available (see page 17) to those qualifying care leavers who turn 18.

ELIGIBLE AND RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RETURN HOME

- 25.0 Young people who return home on a care order will remain eligible until the order is discharged or they become 18.
- 25.1 Young people who return home will become or remain Relevant for the first six months of this period. Should the arrangement break down before the six months has been achieved and before the young person becomes 18, they will revert to their Relevant status.
- 25.2 Should they remain at home or leave home after their 18th birthday they become qualifying young people.

PAYMENTS:

- 26.0 ***The rules around child benefit, income support and Tax Credits and Housing Allowance for older children are complex and specialist advice must be sought.***
- 26.1 In all cases any personal allowance to the young person will cease (travel and training incentives will continue, if applicable).

- 26.2 Any other allowances will cease when the young person no longer has Relevant or Eligible status.
- 26.3 Any support, including financial support must be set out in the Pathway Plan.

PRIVATE SECTOR ACCOMMODATION

- 27.0 This definition includes lodgings, bed-sit accommodation and private flats.
- 27.1 The Legal Department **must be** consulted about the agreement to be entered into.
- 27.2 The cost of such placements will be recorded in the Pathway Plan as will the method of payment.
- 27.3 When agreeing rents it is important to remember that when the young person turns 18 and becomes former relevant should they need to claim housing benefit they will only be entitled to receive an amount equal to the agreed *local market rent* and that there may be further reductions in the amount of benefit available when they turn 22 and are no longer considered “single room rate exempt”.
- 27.4 Other changes to housing support may affect the type of property that young people can occupy and up to date advice must be sought from Housing Advice Officers.

DAMAGE TO ACCOMMODATION

- 28.0 This applies to all independent, semi-independent or supported accommodation options.
- 28.1 Deliberate damage to accommodation is potentially a criminal offence and we will give consideration to reporting matters to the Police for investigation.
- 28.2 The cost of the damage will be paid for using the £250.00 ring fenced within the set up grant. Similarly where we are required to undertake a “deep clean” using an external contractor the cost will be set against the ring fenced amount.
- 28.3 Where the cost of the damage exceeds £250.00, this excess may be offset against the set up grant.

PERSONAL ALLOWANCE

- 29.0 Allowances, where applicable, have been based on rates published by the Department for Work and Pensions. We cannot pay less than these amounts.
- 29.1 Every Relevant young person is entitled to receive £57.35 per week.

EDUCATION INCENTIVE

- 30.0 Where a young person is engaged in education or a recognised training scheme the Department will pay an additional £18.00 per week, pro-rata for part time courses. **A full time course is defined as any course that runs over 16 hours per week.**
- 30.1 This additional payment will cease immediately should the young person give up the course or otherwise be excluded.
- 30.2 For young people engaged in full-time study or training this allowance will be suspended during vacation periods.
- 30.3 This allowance will be paid in arrears.**

STARTING COLLEGE, TRAINING OR WORK

- 31.0 A grant of up to £269.00 is payable should the young person start college, join a training course or move into employment.
- 31.1 It is expected that the grant will be used to purchase equipment (including course materials) associated with the work or course.
- 31.2 It is expected that the grant is only payable once, however it may be that young people change courses or employment for genuine reasons and a further grant may be claimed at the discretion of the service manager.

TRAVEL COSTS

- 32.0 In cases where the young person is engaged in education or training and the provider does not meet transport costs the young person will be provided with a bus pass.
- 32.1 In all but the most exceptional cases travel will be made by public transport (e.g. where the young person has a learning disability or physical disability that means they are not able to access public transport or they are vulnerable).
- 32.2 Travel outside the city for example attending college or a training course, for contact with family and friends agreed as part of the Pathway Plan, or when

undertaking other activities as agreed as part of the Pathway Plan will be met by the Department

- 32.3 Where a young person starts work but has not yet received any income the department will provide fares to cover this initial period.

APPRENTICESHIPS OR EMPLOYMENT

- 33.0 Young people on apprenticeship schemes or in employment will need to have their income assessed using the formula set out in appendix A.

SOCIAL AND LEISURE ALLOWANCE

- 35.0 This is an allowance payable to young person to enable them to pursue hobbies or leisure activities agreed within their Pathway Plan. It may also be used for driving lessons.
- 35.1 The way this allowance is used must be discussed with their Personal Advisor and agreed with the Service Manager.
- 35.2 The amount available is up to £250.00

BIRTHDAY ALLOWANCE

- 36.0 A young person is entitled to receive a birthday allowance on their 17th and 18th Birthdays.
- 36.1 This will be £60.00

FESTIVAL ALLOWANCE

- 37.0 A young person is entitled to receive a festival allowance whilst they are considered “Relevant”. If the allowance is to pay at any other times than Christmas, this should be recorded as part of the Pathway Plan.
- 37.1 This will be £60.00

IDENTITY

- 38.0 Every young person is entitled to have the costs of a Birth Certificate, and Passport met by the Department. Young people can opt for a Provisional Driving Licence **instead** of a Passport.

OTHER ALLOWANCES AS DETAILED IN THE PATHWAY PLAN

- 39.0 As each young person is an individual with his or her own individual need it is not possible to cover every eventuality in the above guidance.
- 39.1 Where additional needs are identified and agreed as part of the Pathway Plan the costs of meeting those needs will be negotiated and recorded as part of the plan, which **must be** agreed by the 16+ Service Manager.
- 39.2 Such costs could include additional costs associated with a special diet (health or cultural need) or skin and hair care needs (ethnic or cultural need) or the costs of undertaking coaching for sports, drama or music.

CONTINGENCY PLANS

- 40.0 Young people attempting to live independently may make mistakes with their budgets or misuse allowances. This section cannot be definitive as each circumstance needs to be considered on its own merits.

CRISIS LOANS

- 41.0 A Crisis Loan of up to 50% of the personal allowance is available to the young person – this will be reclaimed from future personal allowances at a maximum of £5.00 per week.
- 41.1 Only one crisis loan can be in place at any one time and the loan can be given in the form of food vouchers/food parcels

CRISIS GRANTS

- 42.0 These are grants to cover emergency situations such as replacing property following a burglary.
- 42.1 A grant of up to £100.00 is available.
- 42.2 Grants are not repayable and may be in the form of food vouchers/food parcels.

CLOTHING

- 43.0 **It is expected that young people leaving public care have sufficient clothing to meet their day to day needs and that this clothing fits and**

is in good order. For further information please see foster care allowance booklet. Where this is not the case an approach will be made for funds to bring the young persons clothing up to a reasonable standard.

- 43.1 Once a young person is living independently they are responsible for maintaining their clothing and budgeting for the purchase of new clothes as required.
- 43.2 In the event that a young person requires clothing then in **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** they can draw down funds from their set up grant. This must be with the agreement of their Personal Advisor.

PRESCRIPTION COSTS

- 44.0 Young People are eligible for free prescriptions, dental and optical treatment. A form HCI will need to be completed in all cases.
- 44.1 Information about who is entitled to receive support and how to obtain the form is available here:
http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/Illorinjured/DG_10018978

YOUNG PEOPLE IN CUSTODY

- 45.0 **This section does not apply to young people detained in Secure Units on “welfare” grounds as they are considered to be Looked After.**
- 45.1 A number of young people who are deemed Eligible or Relevant Care Leavers are remanded or sentenced to custodial sentences in YOI or secure accommodation.

In addition any young person who is subject to Remand is also now a looked after child, regardless of the placement used.
- 45.2 Young people in the wider community lose their entitlement to state benefits when they are in Custody. They become reliant on their parents, carers or relatives for financial support.
- 45.3 In recognition of this and our duties as corporate parents we will work with the young person and the relevant officer of the unit to ensure that they can access toiletries, etc. and we may provide the cost of footwear if needed.
- 45.4 Those that have been in care prior to the remand will retain their entitlement to birthday allowance. This allowance will normally be retained until their release; however young people can request that some of the allowance is passed to the relevant organisation so that they can purchase personal items whilst in custody.

ELIGIBLE AND RELEVANT YOUNG MOTHERS AND MOTHERS TO BE

- 46.0 Mothers to be are not able to claim state benefits until the baby has arrived and in the case of young mothers who are Eligible they are not able to claim state benefits until they are 18 or the order is discharged.
- 46.1 In all cases the local authority is responsible for the accommodation costs and will remain so until the young person is 18.
- 46.2 This section assumes that they are living alone in independent or semi-independent accommodation – if they are living in a fostering or other situation advice must be sought from the Children in Care or Fostering Service.
- 46.3 During pregnancy the young person will receive the normal allowances for an eligible or relevant young person living independently.
- 46.4 In addition they should be able to access “Healthy Start Vouchers”
- 46.5 More details about these benefits and vouchers are available from the following website: <http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>
- 46.6 Young women who are “Relevant” will be able to claim benefits for themselves and the child following birth.
- 46.7 Young women who are “Eligible” will not be able to claim benefits for themselves, but should be able to access all benefits and entitlements for their child following birth.

FORMER RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE

- 48.0 Former Relevant young people are eligible to claim benefits, including housing benefit.

PERSONAL ALLOWANCE

- 49.0 Young people can and should be supported to claim benefits. In recognition of delays in change over the young persons personal allowance can continue for up to two weeks to cover the transition.
- 49.1 Although the department is no longer responsible for young people’s day to day living costs, it is recognised that any further delay may place young people in a position of hardship. The department will therefore provide Hardship Loans of £35.00 per week to provide for immediate needs.

- 49.2 Young people are required to re-pay this loan on receipt of their benefits; failure to do so will result in their set up grant being reduced accordingly.
- 49.3 Evidence of a claim being made will be required and failure to produce such evidence means that the department will not provide hardship loans.

ACCOMMODATION

STAYING PUT ARRANGEMENTS

- 50.0 The department is committed to enabling young people to remain with their previous carer, where there is an agreement and it is in the young person's best interest to do so.
- 50.1 Agreement to any arrangement will need to be sought from the Resource Panel.
- 50.2 The funding of such an arrangement will need to be recorded in the young persons Pathway Plan.
- 50.3 The young person will be expected to claim Housing Benefit and contribute a further £20.00 from their benefits/income as appropriate.
- 50.4 Where a young person is in employment or an apprenticeship the formula set out in Appendix A should be used to determine the exact amount the young person will contribute.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN SUPPORTED LODGINGS

- 51.0 Where young people remain Supported Lodgings or move to Supported Lodgings after their 18th birthday it is expected that:
- 1) Housing Benefit will be Claimed
 - 2) The young person will contribute a further £20.00 towards the cost of the placement*
 - 3) The local authority will then support the placement by providing "top up costs" to ensure that the provider is receiving a total of £175.00 per week

*Where a young person is in employment or an apprenticeship the formula set out in Appendix A should be used to determine the exact amount the young person will contribute.

SUPPORTED LIVING PROJECTS

- 52.0 Supported living projects, (The Foyer for example) will require the young person to claim Housing Benefit or fund the rent element from earnings. Young people may also have to pay a service charge. No additional funding should be required from this service

HOUSING ASSOCIATION TENANCIES (REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORDS)

- 53.0 Registered Social Landlords will require the young person to claim Housing Benefit or fund the rent element from earnings. Young people may also have to pay a service charge. No additional funding should be required from this service.

PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION

- 54.0 Due to changes in national and local housing policy it is likely that young people will increasingly need to seek housing solutions within the private rented sector.
- 54.1 Workers and young people are reminded of the need to consider affordability as the changes to housing benefit will mean that after the age of 22 care leavers are only likely to receive benefit equivalent to the market rent for room in shared housing. This would mean that a young person could move to a one-bedroom flat at 18, however if they remain reliant on housing benefit at 22 they may need to move to shared accommodation in order to remain housed.
- 54.2 In order to enable young people to move into suitable accommodation this service will provide a deposit if one is not available from other schemes, (such as PATH).
- 54.3 The Service will also provide the “rent in advance”, (likely to be up to four weeks in advance), this will form part of the claim for housing benefit and should be returned to this service by the young person.
- 54.4 In order to protect this service the “rent in advance” will be ring fenced within the leaving care grant and will only be released once the housing benefit has been recovered.
- 54.5 Reasonable fees such as “booking fees”, introduction fees or other administrative charges may be paid.

SET-UP GRANT

- 55.0 The set-up grant is set at £2,000.00 for all young people leaving care during the financial year 2014/15.
- 55.1 Workers and young people are to be reminded that £250.00 may have been retained by the service due to damage or cleaning costs.
- 55.2 Any balance owed will be paid to the young person on occasion of their 21st Birthday, or the conclusion of their degree or study at higher level, and in all cases by their 24th Birthday.
- 55.3 A list of items that may be funded is set out in Appendix B

STARTING WORK, TRAINING COURSE OR COLLEGE

- 56.0 A grant of up to £269.00 is payable should the young person start work; join a training course or a college course.
- 56.1 It is expected that the grant will be used to purchase equipment (including course materials) associated with the work or course.
- 56.2 It is expected that the grant is only payable once, however it may be that young people change courses or employment for genuine reasons and a further grant may be claimed at the discretion of the service manager.

BIRTHDAY ALLOWANCE

- 57.0 Young people are entitled to receive a birthday allowance on their 19th Birthday.
- 57.1 The allowance is £20.00.
- 57.2 A further £20.00 is to be paid if the young person is following a valid course of education or training or is employed.

OTHER ALLOWANCES AS DETAILED IN THE PATHWAY PLAN

- 58.0 As each young person is an individual with his or her own individual needs it is not possible to cover every eventuality in the above guidance.
- 58.1 Where additional needs are identified and agreed as part of the Pathway Plan the costs of meeting those needs will be negotiated and recorded as part of the plan, which **must be** agreed by the Care Leavers Service Manager.

- 58.2 Such costs could include additional costs associated with a special diet (health or cultural need) or skin and hair care needs (ethnic or cultural need) or the costs of undertaking coaching for sports, drama or music.

EDUCATION INCENTIVE (FURTHER EDUCATION OR TRAINING)

- 59.0 Where a young person is engaged in education or a recognised training scheme the Department will pay an additional £18.00 per week, pro-rata for part time courses. **A full time course is defined as any course that runs over 16 hours per week.**
- 59.1 This additional payment will cease immediately should the young person give up the course or otherwise be excluded.
- 59.2 For young people engaged in full-time study or training this allowance will be suspended during vacation periods.
- 59.3 **This allowance will be paid in arrears and will cease at the end of the academic year in which the young person becomes 19, if not already ceased due to other reasons.**

YOUNG PEOPLE IN HIGHER EDUCATION (1ST DEGREE)

- 60.0 The department is committed to supporting young people who are undertaking study at university.
- 60.1 We are required to ensure that young people have suitable accommodation during vacation periods.
- 60.2 Normally support would cease on the young person's 21st birthday. However support can continue for Care Leavers aged 21-25yrs returning to Education, Employment or Training. (see Related Guidance and Policy)
- 60.3 In addition to grants and loans available from Student Finance England young people should be encouraged to seek assistance from their university as many will provide additional funding for students who were formally in care.

Student Finance England:

http://www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk/portal/page?_pageid=153,4680119&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

UNIVERSITY OPEN DAYS OR INTERVIEWS

- 61.0 Most Universities offer open days to enable prospective students to attend to gain a sense of the course and facilities available. Some Universities may require a prospective student to attend an interview.
- 61.1 The department will provide for reasonable travel expenses to enable the young person to attend.
- 61.2 These must be discussed and agreed with the young persons Social Worker or Personal Adviser **before** undertaking the trip. Failure to obtain agreement in advance will mean that any claim may not be paid.
- 61.3 Financial Support**
The Children Act 1989 (Higher Education Bursary)(England) Regulations 2009 require every local authority to provide a bursary to support Former Relevant young people undertaking their 1st Degree.
- 61.4 The regulations set the level of this bursary at £2000.00.
- 61.5 Plymouth City Council has determined that in order to support young people undertaking a course of study it will provide a payment of £3000.00 per annum which will be paid in £1000.00 instalments at the beginning of each term providing the young person:
- 1) Provides evidence of a firm offer and acceptance in the first year
 - 2) Provides evidence of passing course requirements for subsequent years.
- 61.6 **The payments in year one will include the bursary payment as required by the Regulations.**

VACATION ACCOMMODATION

- 62.0 Where a young person requires support from the department to secure and fund vacation accommodation the proposed arrangements and costs must be discussed and agreed with the young person's Personal Advisor before the young person enters into any agreement with a third party or provider.
- 62.1 Failure to obtain agreement in advance will mean that any claim may not be paid.
- 62.2 In all cases the cost of the accommodation will be recorded in the Pathway Plan as will the method of payment.

FURTHER EDUCATION OR PROGRESSION COURSES

- 63.0 Some young people may wish to continue study to Masters level, or undertake further training to complement their degree, for example a Postgraduate Certificate in Education.
- 64.0 Young people will be supported by their Personal Adviser to look at how such courses can be funded using post graduate loans and bursaries. Where there is a need for additional funding the Personal Adviser will need to present an assessment of need and report to the Resource Panel for consideration.

QUALIFYING YOUNG PEOPLE (CHILDREN (LEAVING CARE) ACT 2000)

- 65.0 Advice, befriending and assistance**
Young people in this group are entitled to assistance, which may be in kind, or, in exceptional circumstances, in cash. (Sec 24B(5) Children Act 1989).
- 65.1 If assistance is given under Section 24A then assistance can be either unconditional or repayable.
- 65.2 Before giving assistance or imposing conditions about repayment the local authority will need to consider the means of the young person concerned and of each of its parents
- 65.3 No repayment can be required where the recipient is in receipt of state benefits.
- 65.4 The presumption should be that such assistance should be provided where it is necessary to protect the young person's welfare and it cannot be made available by any other agency.

EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 66.0 General Duties: The local authority may give assistance to a young person who qualifies for such assistance as defined by Section 24(2)(a) of the Children Act 1989 by contributing to expenses incurred by him/her living near where he/she is, or will be, employed or seeking employment.
- 66.1 The local authority may give assistance to a young person aged 16-24 by contributing to expenses incurred by the person in living near the place where he/she is, or will be, receiving education or training
- 66.2 The local authority may make a grant to enable the young person to meet expenses connected with his/her education or training.

- 66.3 In all cases an assessment of need will be completed and a request made to the Service Manager for agreement.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE

- 67.0 Financial support under this section is deemed to be exceptional and will only be provided where it is necessary to protect the young person's welfare
- 67.2 Personal Advisor must ensure that it cannot be made available by any other agency.
- 67.3 Assistance may be given in the form of food vouchers and/or money.

YOUNG PEOPLE "RETURNING TO EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING"

- 68.0 Section 23CA of the 1989 Act requires that young people previously eligible for leaving care services resuming programmes of education or training after the age of 21 are entitled to continuing support from a Personal Adviser allocated from their responsible authority.
- 68.1 Although the department can cease involvement when the young person becomes 21; they can return and seek assistance from the department should they wish to return to education. They are able to seek such assistance at any time up to the age of 25.
- 68.2 In all cases, a Personal Adviser will be allocated, who will work with the young person to complete an assessment of need, which will be used to inform a report to the Service Manager.

APPENDIX A

YOUNG PEOPLE 16-18 IN EMPLOYMENT (INCLUDING APPRENTICESHIPS)

Calculation to determine contribution from/to young person

Formula

- a. Average weekly take Home Pay
- b. Less fares to/from work, union subs, other work deductions
= Net take home pay
- c. Less 1/3rd (33%) disregard of the above
= Total assessable income
- d. From the above figure deduct relevant personal allowance

A	B
In own accommodation (Paying own food/bills) Personal Allowance = £57.35	Living with Supported Lodgings Carer/Other Carer (Most meals/costs of household bills provided) Personal Allowance = £36.80

(Note: the above amount(s) should be adjusted if other additions such as maternity have been added)

Then :-

If answer is a **positive** amount - *young person to pay this amount for their accommodation (not to exceed actual cost of accommodation) Dept to reduce its contribution accordingly*

If answer is a **negative** amount – *department to `top-up` your persons income by paying personal allowance*

Example 1 – Young Person in own flat

- a. £100.00 Take Home Pay
- b. - £10.00 less work related expenses

- = £90.00 Net take home pay
- d. – £30.00 Less 1/3rd disregard
- = £60.00 Total assessable income

Compare with:-

- f. £57.35 Less Personal Allowance (as in own flat)
- = +£2.65 As positive amount, young person has to contribute toward accommodation (Either paid to accommodation provider direct or to department)

Example 2 – Young Person in Supported Lodgings or with Carer

- a. £50.00 Take Home Pay
- b. - £5.00 less work related expenses
- c. = £45.00 Net take home pay
- d. – £15.00 Less 1/3rd disregard
- e. = £30.00 Total assessable income
- f. £36.80 Less Personal Allowance (as in supported lodgings)
- g. = £6.80 As positive amount, Young person contributes toward accommodation (Either paid to accommodation provider direct or to department)

APPENDIX B

ITEMS THAT MAY NEED TO BE PURCHASED FROM THE LEAVING CARE GRANT.

This list is an example of what needs to be considered, it should not be seen as exhaustive or as compulsory.

operty will not require all the items on the list.

- TV LICENCE – ESSENTIAL
- CONTENTS INSURANCE – ESSENTIAL
- SMOKE ALARMS – ESSENTIAL
- COOKER
- FRIDGE FREEZER
- WASING MACHINE
- IRONING BOARD & IRON
- VACUUM CLEANER
- TEA TOWELS
- OVEN GLOVES
- KITCHEN SET – Washing up bowl, drainer, and sink tidy
- SET OF PANS
- CUTLERY SET
- KITCHEN KNIVES
- UTENSIL SET
- POTATO PEELER
- OVENWARE (Pyrex type)
- GLASSES
- DINNER PLATES, SIDE PLATES, BOWLS & MUGS
- CHOPPING BOARDS
- KETTLE
- TIN OPENER
- DISH CLOTHS
- PAN SCRUB
- FLOOR MOP & BUCKET
- SALT AND PEPPER SET
- BREAD BIN
- BROOM
- DUST PAN & BRUSH

- DUSTERS
- SUITE
- COFFEE TABLE
- TELEVISION
- STEREO
- TABLE AND CHAIRS
- STORAGE UNIT
- WASTE PAPER BIN
- SET OF TOWELS
- BATHROOM CABINET
- TOILET BRUSH
- BATHROOM BIN
- BED BASE & MATTRESS
- WARDROBE
- ALARM CLOCK
- CHEST OF DRAWERS
- DUVET
- BEDDING (TWO SETS)
- COAT HANGERS

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Electrical items must either be new or have a valid electrical test certificate.

Gas cookers must be new or have a valid safety certificate.

Furnishings e.g. Three Piece Suite, Beds must have fire tags.