

Standard Operating Procedure for Implementation of Fee paid agreements

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that there is transparency and governance in relation to the implementation of fee paid arrangements and this follows an agreed process aligned to fee paid structures as laid out below. The agreed arrangements are that Family Placement Service staff should make representation to Senior Manager or HOS using fee paid agreement form and this should include some agreement as to rationale for the installation of a fee.

This will provide a clear rationale for fee agreements across FP teams and ensure smooth transitioning between teams. It also records clear information for both the benefit of foster carers and FP staff to avoid any confusion regarding historical arrangements.

Steps	Action
1.	Social worker making a placement or supervising a placement completes fee paid agreement form with full explanation as to why a fee is necessary and what proposed structure this falls under.
2.	Fee paid agreement form is considered by Senior Manager or HOS and agreed or in some cases not agreed
3.	Fee paid agreement if signed off should be shared with admin staff and saved on the carers folder.
4.	Admin staff to save under fee arrangements so full outline of fees being paid Trust wide can be readily accessible.
5.	Does this have any impact for PARIS? Do we currently let childcare social worker know?
6.	Any change in placement arrangements should be included in the Annual Review process and training needs be discussed in light of the increased complexity of any potential placement.
7.	A process will be in place whereby admin meet with Senior Management on an annual basis to review all fee arrangements. It would seem timely this would occur at end of financial year – march but can be bi-annual if required to avoid over-payment.

Current fee paid structures:

- £12,769.12** – This was created as a specific support to duty and support teams to alleviate the pressure for immediate placements and to allow time for planning. Ideally foster carers should be identified and specifically aligned to this scheme but in the event that other carers come forward to assist and support, this fee can be applied for children for whom we are experiencing challenge in identifying a placement. If the carer is already in receipt of an additional fee, the total fee cannot exceed £18,000 (equivalent to fee for ISS and up to three teenagers). In addition, if a carer is already getting paid a fee for up to three teenage beds but have a vacancy it is self-explanatory that this fee would not apply. This fee is temporary and ends after 28 days unless threshold is met for any of the fees below.
 - £12,769.12** – Recognition that there are some children who present with complex trauma or individual needs over and above the atypical child who enters foster care. This requires the foster carer to be increasingly available to the child, have a trauma informed understanding of needs, attend increased appointments/meetings and re-prioritise areas of their life. This child or sibling group does not meet the threshold for ISS. This fee can also be paid for children who need to be maintained as part of a sibling group for the preservation of bonds and to avoid separation into different homes but recognises the increased load associated.
- £18,000** – This can be implemented for a foster carer who provides placement for up to three teenagers, has more than one child who would meet the threshold for above £12,769.12 fee, is facilitating a mother and baby assessment placement or has a single child for whom the threshold for ISS has been met through presentation at TRP and consultation with ISS and Scaffold.
- £27,000** – This fee is reserved for more than one child for whom the threshold is met for ISS as agreed at TRP and consultation. It could also include if a carer has one child who has ISS fee and a

child on first fee as above (12,769.12). In specific circumstances whereby one child on ISS has needs that are such it prevents the carers from accepting and facilitating a second placement which they otherwise would, senior management can agree this fee for a single placement at their discretion. This should only be in extreme examples.

4. **£36,000** – This fee is reserved for highly specialised, complex placements for children who are placed under Bail Fostering arrangements or children who have warranted specialist, therapeutic, residential care and for whom the Trust are trying to achieve re-integration into family living arrangements. The new Step Down service from Edenvilla/Oaktree unit will fall under this category.