

# Leaving Care Financial Policy

## Updated: July 2019

Support and Entitlements



Find us online



[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>GUIDANCE NOTES</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Eligible young people</i>	3
<i>Relevant young people</i>	3
<i>Former Relevant young people</i>	3
<b>NOTES AND IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SECTION 1</b>	<b>5</b>
ELIGIBLE AND RELEVANT CHILDREN AGED 16 & 17 WHO ARE LIVING IN SEMI-INDEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT PLACEMENTS (SECTION 31 OR SECTION 20)	5
<b>SECTION 2</b>	<b>10</b>
FORMER RELEVANT CHILDREN AGED 18 TO 25 YEARS WHO ARE LIVING IN SEMI-INDEPENDENT, INDEPENDENT PLACEMENTS OR STAYING PUT ARRANGEMENTS	10
<b>SECTION 3</b>	<b>14</b>
FURTHER EDUCATION (NON-ADVANCED COURSES I.E. GCSE, A LEVELS & BTEC)	14
<b>SECTION 4</b>	<b>15</b>
HIGHER EDUCATION (ADVANCED COURSE'S I.E. DEGREE LEVEL)	15
<i>Maintenance Loan</i>	15
<i>Tuition Fee Loan</i>	15
<i>Loan Repayment</i>	16
<i>Support from Individual Universities</i>	16
<i>Access To Learning Fund</i>	16
<i>Maintenance Grant</i>	15
<i>Equipment/Books Grant</i>	15
<i>Computer Grant</i>	16
<i>Grant Repayment</i>	16
<i>Universal Credit</i>	16
<i>Immigration status and eligibility of student loan application will need to be confirmed prior to any agreement of funding from CBC's Leaving Care Team (see section 9)</i>	16
<b>SECTION 5</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Eligible And Relevant Children Who Are 'Detained' Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Section 23A (3) Paragraph (2)</i>	17
<i>Former Relevant Children Who Are 'Detained'</i>	17
<b>SECTION 6</b>	<b>18</b>
<i>Eligible And Relevant Children Living At 'Home' With Family</i>	18
<b>SECTION 7</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Qualifying Children And Young People Over 16 Section 24 (Advice And Assistance) Of The Children Act 1989 As Amended By The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.</i>	19
<b>SECTION 8</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) Eligible &amp; Relevant Children</i>	20
<i>Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) Former Relevant Children</i>	20
<i>Access To Public Funds And Universal Credit</i>	21
<b>SECTION 9</b>	<b>22</b>
<i>Post Eighteen Placements – Staying Put</i>	22
<b>SECTION 10</b>	<b>25</b>
SETTING UP HOME ALLOWANCE / LEAVING CARE GRANT	25
GUIDANCE ON HOW TO UTILISE SETTING UP HOME ALLOWANCE / LEAVING CARE GRANT	26

## Guidance notes

This policy provides guidance for practitioners working with care leavers on all aspects of eligibility for financial support available from Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC) Leaving Care Team. The policy sets out the type and amount of allowances that care leavers are entitled to receive based on their status and circumstances.

The figures given refer to the financial year 2018/19 and will be updated in line with National changes. This will be annual and include consideration of changes in the cost of living.

For the purpose of this document, entitlements to services are based on the following categories:

### Eligible young people

Young people aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 [including their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday] and are still looked after. Services are designed to help them prepare for leaving care.

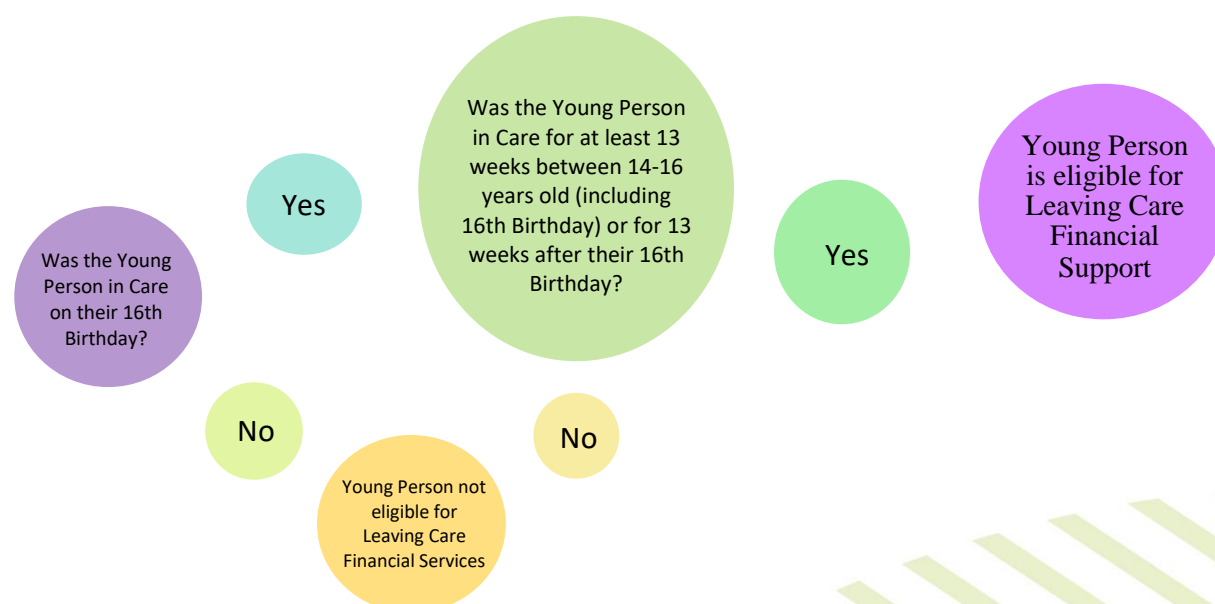
### Relevant young people

Young people who have left care and are aged between 16 and 17 years old and were previously eligible.

### Former Relevant young people

Young people aged between 18-25 years old, dependent on a need's assessment.

Below is a chart to see whether a young person is eligible for Leaving Care Financial support





## Notes and Implementation Issues

All allowances should be based on an assessment of needs and the Care Leaver supported according to those assessed needs. Discussions should take place with the young person and set out in the young person's Pathway Plan.

Care Leavers who are in receipt of benefits, will be assessed based on their overall weekly benefits and other income before any additional entitlements are given to them from CBC's Leaving Care Team.

Care Leavers who are also unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are entitled to the same allowances as any other care leaver. However, allowances to this group of young people once they are over 18 may be affected as a result of their immigration status.

In addition to £2000 from the Leaving Care Grant, savings and possessions should be accumulated during time in care. These funds and items should be taken with care leavers when moving to help them set up their new home.

Social Workers and Personal Advisers should ensure that all young people have a bank account and where possible pay all allowances to young people through their account.

This policy has been produced following consultation with young care leavers, social care staff and finance staff.

The allowances set out in the following sections apply to all 'Eligible', 'Relevant', 'Former Relevant' and 'Qualifying' young people dependent on their legal/immigration status and an assessment of their needs.

In addition to the above the care leaver can request a set of targets which will be incentivized. The targets can be tailored to the care leaver to take into consideration the characteristics and circumstances of the individual.

## Section 1

### Eligible and Relevant Children Aged 16 & 17 who are living in Semi-Independent and Independent Placements (Section 31 or Section 20)

Categories marked with asterisk are not paid to young people in foster care.

ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES		
Looked after children and care leavers aged 16-17yrs old living in Independent and Semi Independent Accommodation are entitled to the following payments.		
Accommodation	Local housing rate of residing area	<p>Placement &amp; accommodation costs to be met in full for young people up to the age of 18.</p> <p>Where young people are moving into independent living the rent level must be within the local Housing Benefit Reference Rent, this can be ascertained via a pre-tenancy determination.</p> <p>Any requirement to provide a deposit and rent in advance must be clarified prior to the tenancy agreement being authorized. CBC's Leaving Care Team may help with deposit and rent in advance.</p> <p>If the young person decides to rent accommodation higher than Local Housing Rate, they will need to discuss this with their PA to see if they can meet the shortfall.</p>
Weekly Living Allowance (WLA)	<p>Equivalent to national government rate</p> <p>£57.90</p>	<p>This is provided to all young people aged 16-18 years</p> <p>Young people who are undertaking paid training will get the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider</p>
Clothing Allowance	<p>£20.00 per month Clothing Allowance</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>One off £120.00 Winter clothing allowance</p>	<p>This is a £20 per month clothing allowance, which can be paid weekly, monthly or quarterly and can be paid directly to the young person or be spent by the Leaving Care Social Worker in the company of the young person. The arrangements for providing and spending the clothing allowance should be set out in the young person's pathway plan.</p> <p>Young people must produce receipts for clothing purchases.</p> <p>A one off £120.00 for winter clothing allowance from September until the end of February, via the Social Worker. The £120.00 winter clothing allowance is paid</p>

	<p>£50.00</p> <p>£120 – clothing set up grant</p>	<p>to young people who are under the age of 18 before 30<sup>th</sup> Sept of that year.</p> <p>£50.00 one off payment for job interviews. Proof will be required.</p> <p>Young people entering care for the first time who do not have suitable clothing will receive an initial £120.00 as a clothing set up allowance.</p>
Birthday Money	<p>17<sup>th</sup> £50.00</p> <p>18<sup>th</sup> £100.00</p>	Birthday money should be given as a gift either by present or by gift voucher to the young person.
Christmas/Festivals Allowance	£50.00	Young people who do not celebrate Christmas will be given a choice as to when their festival allowance is to be provided.
Mobile Phone	£100	<p>Young people who became looked after before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday should have a suitable smart phone. All young people looked after aged 16-17yrs should have a Smart Phone with a reasonable range of functions</p> <p>For those young people who do not have a smart phone, a Pay As You Go phone will be purchase up to £100.</p> <p>In the event of loss or damage to this phone the Leaving Care team will contribute up to £50 for a replacement with management agreement depending on circumstances.</p>
Social activities & Leisure	£20 per month up to 18 <sup>th</sup> Birthday; or total of £240 per year	<p>Young people should be encouraged and assisted to explore the local leisure facilities.</p> <p>This will include purchase of required equipment to support the social/leisure activity.</p>
Bicycle	£200	<p>Young people who became looked after before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday should have a suitable bicycle, safety equipment and appropriate certification (eg Bikeability)</p> <p>For those who became looked after aged 16yrs+ and don't have a bike - a bike, one bikeability session, a lock, a helmet and high visibility jackets will be purchased.</p>

Driving lessons	<p>1 Provisional License</p> <p>1 Theory Test</p> <p>10 Driving Lessons</p> <p>1 Practical Test.</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Motor Cycle</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Scooter test</p>	<p>CBC's Leaving Care Team will provide the funding for a provisional driving license, one theory test and the cost of 10 (1 hour) lessons to introduce young people to driving. This is available to young people aged 17-21 years old and is conditional on the young person matching the cost of the 10 driving lessons provided by the CBC's Leaving Care Team. This will enable the young person to have 20 [20 hours total] trial lessons.</p> <p>Young people must pay the cost of the 10 lessons to their social worker, PA, foster career/keyworker who will then book the 20, one-hour lessons. In general, by paying for lessons in a block, driving schools may provide extra lessons.</p> <p>Additionally, CBC's Leaving Care Team will pay for one practical driving test. This is dependent on an approved driving school recommending that the young person is ready to take the test.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need the 'Introduction to Driving' equivalent funding can be transferred to a Certificate in basic Training/Forklift Truck Driving course if it does not attract funding from elsewhere.</p>
Course Equipment	Dependent on assessment of need	<p>Young person will need to apply to the Learning Support Fund during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of enrolment on courses for equipment costs. Late applications should be made to the college administrators.</p> <p>Learning support fund will cover such things as equipment, uniform and travel.</p> <p>If funding is refused on evidence of this, then CBC will consider supporting with equipment costs for education</p>
Computer/Laptop	£250	<p>Young people who become looked after before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday should have access to a PC or their own Laptop.</p> <p>Young people who do not have an appropriate laptop and require it for study should be provided with one.</p> <p>For young people in fostering and residential care, this cost will be met by their placement allowances.</p> <p>For young people aged 16-17yrs old in other (semi/independent) accommodation who require a laptop for education they will be provided with a one off computer grant of up to £250 . The course must be an academic course and require the use of a computer which will need to be confirmed by the course tutor.</p>



		This to include anti-virus software and Office software for 1 person for life. (Young people may top-up this amount to purchase a higher specification machine).
16-18 Years Vulnerable Learners Bursary	Up to £1,200.00 Per Year Dependent On Attendance	Young people who are undertaking a full-time education course or unpaid training courses (12 hours study/training and contact time) are eligible to apply for a Bursary Fund via college or training provider. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) with refugee status or DLR are eligible to apply. Young people will be paid weekly, dependent on their attendance at college.  These funds will pay for all essential course costs, any travel costs required and a healthy meal on each day of attendance.
Additional Travel support from CBC	Discretionary	In principal the LA will consider on a case by case basis requests for transport costs for such matters as attendance at religious services, contact with family and attendance at job/college interviews.
Personal Luggage	£40.00 (one off)	All young people moving to independence or between placements must have appropriate personal luggage.
Initial benefit claim	£57.90 x 6 weeks	CBC's Leaving Care Team will provide up to 6 weeks subsistence payments to assist young people whilst they wait for their initial benefit claim to be processed. Young people must sign the 'Agreement to Share Information Form' so that Social Workers can liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions regarding the progress of their claim. If a young person has not complied with the requirements of the Department of Work and Pensions the subsistence payment may be reduced or food parcels will be provided.
Emergency Payments/Food Vouchers/Exceptional Circumstances	£10.00	CBC's Leaving Care Team will in exceptional circumstances provide emergency payments or food vouchers. These payments will be dependent on an assessment of need and will not exceed £10.00 per payment. Food vouchers and emergency payments will only be given on 3 consecutive occasions and only 6 times in one year.
Key Documents	£100.00	CBC's Leaving Care Team will purchase a passport & 1 birth certificate for each young person.



		CBC's Leaving Care Team will meet the full cost of the nationality and citizenship process, if the young person meets the application criteria before their 18th Birthday
Counselling, Health & Therapeutic Needs	Dependent on assessment of need	CBC's Leaving Care Team will assist young people to access services to meet their health and development needs via the 'looked after' children health provision and via universal health services. Where appropriate and dependent on the assessment of need, CBC's Leaving Care Team may provide funds to secure additional health services via the CBC Resource Panel
Specific Needs i.e. Religious, Cultural or other Special needs	Dependent on assessment of need	CBC's Leaving Care Team will assist young people to access services to meet their special needs. Where appropriate and dependent on the assessment of need, CBC's Leaving Care Team may provide funds to secure additional services i.e. skin and hair care and dietary requirements.
Emergency financial support taking up employment	Sum equal to equivalent benefit.	To assist a young person with making a successful transition to Full Time Employment. A bridging grant of Universal Credit equivalent per week for a maximum of 6 weeks to be paid whilst waiting for their first salary payment. (This is for Full time only employment)

**All the payments outlined above are to be paid directly into the bank accounts of the Care Leavers**

In exceptional circumstances (eg newly arrived unaccompanied asylum seeking children/young people) payments are made onto pre-payments cards issued to young people. Even more exceptionally Cash Payments can be made.

Some supported accommodation providers make these payments on behalf of CBC.

### **Looked after children and care leavers aged 16-17yrs old living in Foster Placements are entitled to the following payments:**

16 and 17yr old Looked after Children/Young People living in foster placements receive the equivalent support outlined above through allowances paid to foster carers.

These are outlined in the document "Foster Carers Financial Guidance"

Foster Carers, The Young Person and their Social worker agree how much is paid directly to the young person and how much is administered by the foster carer.

## Section 2

### Former Relevant children aged 18 to 25 years who are living in Semi-Independent, Independent Placements or Staying Put Arrangements

ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES		
Accommodation	<p>Via Universal Credit</p> <p>Rent paid by young person if working</p> <p>If UASC and not eligible to apply for Universal Credit, then CBC's Leaving Care Team will pay for accommodation</p>	<p>Young persons over 18 are eligible to claim Universal Credit. They will need to use their Universal credit to pay for their accommodation.</p> <p>If young person decides to rent accommodation higher than Local Housing Rate, they will need to assess this with their Personal Adviser to see if the young person can meet the shortfall.</p> <p>Young people who remain in foster care placements/ Staying Put agreements are also eligible to claim housing benefits up to the level of the Local Housing Rate. This is dependent on the circumstances of the foster carers'. Further information can be found in the Staying Put policy.</p> <p>If the young people are not eligible to apply for welfare benefits, CBC's Leaving Care Team will pay for accommodation costs until the young person is eligible to apply for Universal Credit.</p> <p>Accommodation costs for ARE (All Right's Exhausted) young people will be covered by the LA until UKBA/Home Office take over responsibility for the young person.</p>
Weekly Living allowance	<p>Via Universal credit</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>If UASC and not eligible to apply for Universal Credit, then CBC's Leaving Care Team will pay for WLA at the same rate</p>	<p>Young people are eligible to claim Universal Credit.</p> <p>Young people who remain in a foster care placement post 18 are eligible to claim Universal Credit as they are defined as 'Independent in their own right'.</p> <p>Initial Benefit Claim bridging payment</p> <p>Leaving Care Service will provide up to 6 weeks Subsistence payments to assist young people whilst they wait for their initial benefit claim to be processed. Young people must sign the 'Agreement to Share Information Form' so that Social Workers</p>

	as Universal credit	<p>can liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions regarding the progress of their claim.</p> <p>If the young people are not eligible to apply for welfare benefits, they will be given £57.90 until they can apply for benefits</p> <p>ARE young people will be given £35.15 per week, for their food and expenses.</p> <p>If a young person has not complied with the requirements of the Department of Work and Pensions, a subsistence payment can be provided of £35.15 for up to 3 weeks. LA can also provide up to 3 food vouchers.</p>
Winter Heating Allowance	£10 per month of 1st Winter of Independent Living – total of £60.	Young people living in independent accommodation who are responsible for and pay variable utility and heating costs will be provided with a £60.00 winter fuel allowance. The allowance is available for Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb & March of the first winter they are living independently, (unless it is included in the overall placements costs). This could be provided as two payments of £30 one in September and one in December.
Birthday Money	19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> £50.00 21 <sup>st</sup> £100.00 22 <sup>nd</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> £50.00	Birthday allowance will only be paid to young people who engage in regular face to face contact with CBC's Leaving Care Team. Birthday money should be given as a gift, either by present or by gift voucher to the young person.
Christmas/Festivals Allowance	Once/year from age 18yrs to 24yrs £50.00	Young people who do not celebrate Christmas will be given a choice as to when their festival allowance is to be provided.
Driving lessons	1 Provisional License 1 Theory Test 10 Driving Lessons 1 Practical Test. <b>Or</b> Motor Cycle	<p>CBC's Leaving Care Team will provide the funding for a provisional driving license, one theory test and the cost of 10 (1 hour) lessons to introduce young people to driving. This is available to young people aged 17-21 years old and is conditional on the young person matching the cost of the 10 driving lessons provided by the CBC's Leaving Care Team. This will enable the young person to have 20 [20 hours total] trial lessons.</p> <p>Young people must pay the cost of the 10 lessons to their Social Worker, PA, foster carer/keyworker who will then book the 20, one-hour lessons. In general, by</p>

	<p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Scooter test</p>	<p>paying for lessons in a block, driving schools may provide extra lessons.</p> <p>Additionally, the CBC's Leaving Care Team will pay for one practical driving test. This is dependent on an approved driving school recommending that the young person is ready to take the test.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need the 'Introduction to Driving' equivalent funding can be transferred to a Certificate in basic Training/Forklift Truck Driving course if it does not attract funding from elsewhere.</p>
<p>Course Equipment and Enrolment fees</p> <p>See Section 4 for further information</p>	<p>Dependent on assessment of need</p>	<p>Young person will need to apply to the Learning Support Fund during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of enrolment on courses for equipment costs. Late applications should be made to the college administrators.</p> <p>If funding is refused on evidence of this, then CBC will consider supporting with equipment costs for education</p> <p>Enrolment fees will be based on assessment of need, future intentions and young person's attendance history at college</p>
<p>Higher Education Grant</p> <p>See Section 5 for further information</p>	<p>£4,500.00</p>	<p>Young people who are studying for Degree level or equivalent will be eligible for this grant.</p>
<p>Computer Grant</p>	<p>Up to £500.00</p>	<p>Young people will be provided with a one-off Computer Grant of up to £500.00. This will include anti-virus software and Office software for 1 person for life. (Young people may top-up this amount to purchase a higher specification machine)</p> <p>If employment or specialist non-university courses require a higher grade laptop, agreement from Head of Service can be sought to fund this.</p>
<p>Initial benefit claim</p>	<p>£57.90 x 6 weeks</p>	<p>The CBC's Leaving Care Team will provide up to 6 weeks subsistence payments to assist young people whilst they wait for their initial benefit claim to be processed. Young people must sign the 'Agreement to Share Information Form' so that Social Workers can liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions regarding the progress of their claim. If a young person has not complied with the requirements of the Department of Work and Pensions the subsistence payment may be reduced or food parcels will be provided.</p>



Emergency Payments/Food Vouchers/Exceptional Circumstances	£20.00 (£10.00 for food and £10.00 for gas and electric if living independently)	CBC's Leaving Care Team will in exceptional circumstances provide emergency payments or food vouchers. These payments will be dependent on an assessment of need and will not exceed £20.00 per payment. Food vouchers and emergency payments will only be given on 3 consecutive occasions and only 6 times in one year
Key Documents	£100.00	<p>CBC's Leaving Care Team will purchase a passport or renewal &amp; 1 birth certificate for each young person if they do not already have one.</p> <p>CBC's Leaving Care Team will meet ½ of the cost of the nationality and citizenship process.</p>
Child Care Costs	Dependent on assessment of need	<p>Lone parents, who wish to return to education, start a traineeship or take up employment opportunities, will be assisted to identify funds to cover or contribute to child-care costs.</p> <p>In the first instance, colleges, the Care to Learn Fund, E2E, Sure Start, the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and Department of Work and Pensions (benefits agency) must be approached as sources of potential child-care funding as lone parents are a priority group for their support.</p>
Additional Travel support from CBC	Discretionary	<p>Care Leavers aged 18yrs+ should have sufficient resources to meet their travel needs.</p> <p>The Leaving Care team will consider on a case by case basis requests for transport costs for such matters as attendance at religious services, contact with family and attendance at job/college interviews.</p>

## Section 3

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### **Further Education (Non-advanced Courses i.e. GCSE, A levels & BTEC)**

From the age of 18 to 20, young people who are studying full time (12 hours or more of 'guided learning') can claim Income Support and Housing Benefit on the grounds of being in 'Relevant Education'.

Dependent on an assessment of need, CBC's Leaving Care Team may provide assistance for specific grants and one off payments to young people, who are studying, for items such as books and equipment, if funding from the Learning Support Fund has been refused.

For 2018/19, there is a discretionary fund available from CBC Youth Support Service, to support raising the academic attainment and access to Education, Employment and Training of looked after children/care leavers, where other funding is not available. The funds must be used to:

Support young people to access education, employment or training that will lead to a long-term outcome i.e. short-term course once completed will lead onto further education, employment or training.

Have identified and measurable outcomes that are monitored

Cannot be funded through any other funding stream.

The funding will not pay young person's weekly allowance so please make sure that the young person will not be excluded from claiming benefits

If a young person is entitled to Universal Credit (Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Housing Benefit and Child Benefit/Child Tax Credits) he/she is not eligible for CBC's further education support as this is intended to replicate family and/or welfare benefit support.

Care leavers are a 'priority group' in terms of college 'Access Funds' which are sometimes called Learner Support Funds. Many colleges also have bursaries and specific welfare grants which care leavers may be able to apply for. The students' support service should be able to provide information on both the practical and financial support that may be available.

## Section 4

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### Higher Education (Advanced Course's i.e. Degree level)

The level of fees, loans, grants, and bursaries for higher education student's change each academic year. The most accurate and up to date information is available via the following links:

<http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/student-finance/undergraduate-student-finance#maintenanceloans>.

Student Finance England	CBC Leaving Care Team
<p>Student Finance England will offer loans to help you financially. Usually Care leavers are offered the highest amount of loan available for students. This varies from year to year. Please see above link for most accurate information.</p>	<p>Central Bedfordshire CBC's Leaving Care Team will offer a grant to help you financially.</p>
<p>The loan has 2 components</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintenance loan Up to £11,354 if going to a Uni in London Up to £8,700 if going to a Uni out of London</li><li>• Tuition loan Up to £9,250.00</li></ul>	<p>The grant consists of 3 components</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintenance grant £4250.00</li><li>• Equipment &amp; Books grant £450.00</li><li>• Computer Grant £500.00</li></ul>
<p><b>Maintenance Loan</b></p> <p>The maintenance loan is provided by Student Finance England and is paid directly to the student, normally in three instalments and is provided to help with living costs such as rent, food, bills, recreational/leisure activities, equipment and books.</p>	<p><b>Maintenance Grant</b></p> <p>The Maintenance grant is provided by CBC's Leaving Care Team and paid directly into the young person's account to cover accommodation, including vacation accommodation, food, bills, recreational/leisure costs. This will be paid this in 3 instalments per year Sept, Jan, April. It will be paid per annum for each year the young person is studying.</p>
<p><b>Tuition Fee Loan</b></p> <p>Your university or college sets your tuition fee, and the loan is paid directly to them. You have to pay it back.</p>	<p><b>Equipment/Books Grant</b></p> <p>Up to £450.00 (This grant is not transferable and will only be paid if the young person is not successful in securing funding from the University's</p>

### **Loan Repayment**

Graduates repay the combined tuition fee and maintenance loan when they have finished studying and are earning over £21,000.00 per year. After that, you'll pay back 9% of anything you earn over £21,000.

### **Support from Individual Universities**

In addition to the financial support provided by Student Finance England, most Higher Education Institutions will offer their own financial support. Each university will have its own eligibility criteria and any awards may only be available to a limited number of students.

### **Access To Learning Fund**

Most universities also have an 'Access to Learning Fund' which is available to students who are experiencing financial hardship. Some universities offer care leavers priority access to Access to Learner Funds.

Access to Hardship Funding). Young people will need to submit a list of books, equipment and receipts to their Personal Adviser. In general students undertaking practical courses such as Art, Design and Technology type courses would only require the maximum allowance.

### **Computer Grant**

Up to £500.00 (This grant is not transferable and only available following an assessment of need and the young person having previously not received the grant) young people may top-up this amount to purchase a higher specification machine.

Corporate Parenting Services will provide financial assistance to foster carers to cover the cost of a young person's initial move to university. Part of the CBC's Leaving Care Team Higher Education Grant should be used to fund vacation accommodation and moving expenses to and from university.

### **Grant Repayment**

It will not be expected that young people pay back the support grant to Central Bedfordshire Council but they will need to pay back the Student Finance England Loan

### **Universal Credit**

The majority of young people who undertake higher education courses are ineligible for welfare benefits such as Income Support and Housing Benefit. Certain limited groups of young people who undertake higher education courses such as lone parents and sick and disabled young people may remain/be eligible for welfare benefits while studying.

**Immigration status and eligibility of student loan application will need to be confirmed prior to any agreement of funding from CBC's Leaving Care Team (see section 9)**



## Section 5

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### **Eligible And Relevant Children Who Are 'Detained' Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Section 23A (3) Paragraph (2)**

Where a young person is 'detained' in hospital or custody or on 'remand', the majority of their financial allowances will be suspended. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, young people will receive a pocket money allowance of £10 per week, which is commensurate with the rules of the particular institution.

On release young people will have access to their 'Leaving Care Grant' and, where a young person has been 'detained' for more than six months, and dependent on an assessment of need, a Miscellaneous Payment for clothing etc. will be considered. The maximum clothing payment for 16 and 17 year old who are being released from detention is linked to the Clothing Allowance of £120.00.

The Pathway Plan for young people who are detained should set out the provision of all financial allowances. Financial support for young people who are detained in Young Offenders Institutes is governed by the rules of the particular establishment they are detained in. In general, young people are expected to undertake education or training and are provided with pocket money for engaging in these activities. Additionally, they will often be provided with clothing, or are able to bring clothing with them. As such they will not be provided with any allowances while detained.

#### **Former Relevant Children Who Are 'Detained'**

Whilst 'detained' in hospital or custody or on remand, young person can receive up to £20 per month.

On release young people will have access to their 'Leaving Care Grant' and will need to apply for Universal Credit, whilst looking for a job or applying for suitable educational course.

## Section 6

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### Eligible And Relevant Children Living At 'Home' With Family

Young people who return home as part of a planned reconciliation process and, are Eligible or Relevant Children will be given financial assistance that takes account of their family circumstances. In general, young people will be working, undertaking a traineeship, or a modern apprenticeship, or receiving an education maintenance allowance and/or, will be supported by their family who may also be receiving Child Benefit, Child Tax Credits and other welfare benefits. Where specific difficulties arise, and dependent on an assessment of need, young people may be provided with an allowance commensurate with the Job Seekers Allowance/Income Support – Usual Rate for 16 and 17 year old – Benefit rate.

In essence Eligible and Relevant young people living at home on a long-term basis should be supported by their family and do not receive leaving care financial support. The majority of Eligible young people are only eligible due to Section 31 Care Orders not being discharged. Financial support for this group of young people should come from education, training and employment opportunities as well as their families. Supporting this group of young people, as 'Standard Care Leavers' is not appropriate as it creates disparities within families, particularly in relation to siblings who are not, or have not been looked after.

Young people who return home on a short-term emergency basis will continue to receive the standard Eligible and Relevant young person entitlements.

If a Relevant young person returns home and remains at home for 6 months their status under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 is changed to that of a Qualifying Child and Young Person over 16. If an Eligible young person is placed at home, or lives at home as part of a planned reconciliation process for six months or more and his or her Care Order is discharged, their status is changed to that of a Qualifying Child and Young Person over 16.

If the young person becomes a Qualifying Child and Young Person over 16 and his or her situation at 'home' breaks down prior to his or her eighteenth birthday they become a Relevant young person.

If an Eligible young person is placed at home, or lives at home as part of a planned reconciliation process for six months or more and he or she reaches the age of eighteen he or she becomes a Qualifying Child and Young Person.

The young person and their family must be informed of any changes in entitlements which may arise, should the young person's status change to that of a Qualifying Child and Young Person over 16.

## Section 7

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### **Qualifying Children And Young People Over 16 Section 24 (Advice And Assistance) Of The Children Act 1989 As Amended By The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.**

Where appropriate, and depending on an assessment of need, Children and Families Social Care have a power to provide financial assistance to Qualifying Children and Young People over 16. Individual young people may be given financial assistance in “exceptional circumstances” (Children Act 1989 (Section 24A (5)) and Section 24B) with priority being given to support relating to education, training and employment opportunities. The presumption should be that such assistance should be provided where this is necessary to protect the young person’s welfare and it cannot be made available by any other agency. The Personal Advisers will assist to maximise financial support available from the employment opportunities, the benefits and tax system, college and university access funds etc.

## Section 8

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) Eligible & Relevant Children

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) are covered by the Children Act 1989 and the new provisions introduced by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 in exactly the same way as other children in this country. However, they will also have an immigration status, one of:

- Applying for asylum
- Accepted as a refugee
- Granted exceptional leave to remain based on
  - a) Humanitarian Protection
  - b) Discretionary Leave
- Indefinite leave to remain
- Refused leave to remain

Most Eligible and Relevant unaccompanied asylum-seeking children will receive the same entitlements as any other young person. However, there may be some differences in entitlement, which will need to be acknowledged in their Pathway Plan.

Lone parents who have an immigration decision pending and have no recourse to public funds cannot apply for Universal Credit. In these situations, CBC's Leaving Care Team will provide the same level of assistance.

When developing Pathway Plans with Eligible and Relevant Children (UASC), particular attention must be paid to their immigration status and contingency plans developed which take account of their possible status options at the of age eighteen.

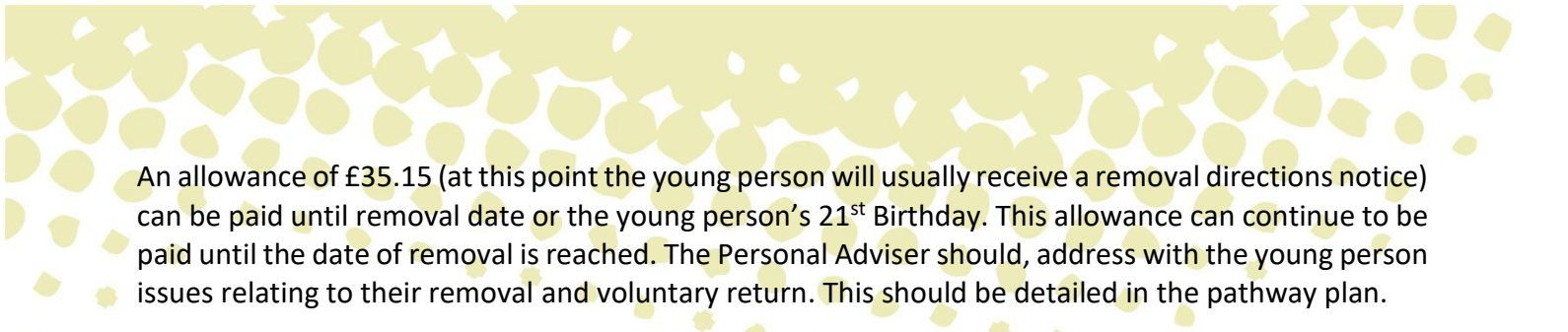
#### Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) Former Relevant Children

Where young people have an immigration status that permits them to work and access public funds they will be expected to work or claim benefits like other Former Relevant Children.

Where young people **do not** have indefinite leave to remain, they are **only** eligible for a CBC 16+ Higher Education grant for higher education courses that finish in the academic year **prior** to their status expiring.

Where young people have exhausted all rights to appeal an adverse asylum decision and/or are unable to extend exceptional leave to remain (ARE) the CBC's Leaving Care Team social worker will carry out a Human Rights Assessment to determine further support





An allowance of £35.15 (at this point the young person will usually receive a removal directions notice) can be paid until removal date or the young person's 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday. This allowance can continue to be paid until the date of removal is reached. The Personal Adviser should, address with the young person issues relating to their removal and voluntary return. This should be detailed in the pathway plan.

### **Access To Public Funds And Universal Credit**

Young people must apply to extend their leave to remain at least two months before their immigration leave status expires. If this task is completed by a young person's eighteenth birthday and they have proof that the Home Office has received their application the young person is eligible to apply for benefits. Personal Advisers should obtain a letter from the young person's solicitor that includes details of the young person's immigration status; the date of the application to extend the leave to remain was submitted. The solicitor submits the renewal/extension by recorded post. The recorded post item will have a tracking number that can be used to verify that the Home Office received the application. The letter from the solicitor and a print out of the Post Office tracking statement should be submitted with the young person's benefit claim

## Section 9

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### Post Eighteen Placements – Staying Put

CBC's Leaving Care Team recognise that there will be circumstances where young people will need to remain in their current foster placement once they turn 18. This section outlines the group of young people who have been assessed as needing a period of time to remain in their current foster placement beyond their 18th birthday.

From the age of 18, young people are no longer legally in 'care' and therefore fostering arrangements no longer apply. However, placements where young people were looked after under fostering regulations up to their 18th birthday may be able to transfer to the National Association of Adults Placement Scheme [NAAPS].

Young people who remain in placement after their 18th birthday and fit within the NAAPS regulations do so because they are:

Group	Amount
<b>1. Vulnerable Young people</b>  Where it is assessed that a young person (Former Relevant Child) has emotional delay/issues of mental health/learning disability, that fall outside the remit of the Adults Division	Young people who remain in a foster care placement post 18 will be able to claim Universal Credit, including Housing benefits  From this income the young person will be expected to contribute  £20 a week towards the cost of their food & household costs.  £64.05 (LHR) a week will be paid directly to the Carer by housing benefits (the carer needs to declare themselves as a landlord and arrange a tenancy agreement)  Travel to college is expected to be paid by the young person from their vulnerable learners bursary or from their learning support fund.  If the young person is working similar contributions will be expected from the young person.
<b>2. Young people remaining in placement whilst undertaking further or higher education</b>  Where a young person's (Former Relevant) 18th birthday has fallen early in the academic year	Young people who remain in a foster care placement post 18 who are in in a full time FE non-advance course, will be able to claim Universal Credit, including Housing benefits.  If young person is enrolled on a full-time HE course They will get a student loan and/or CBC maintenance grant of £4250 per year

<p>and they are completing a course and will need the stability of their current placement to support them in completing the course.</p>	<p>From this income the young person will be expected to contribute</p> <p>£20 a week towards the cost of their food &amp; household costs.</p> <p>£64.05 (LHR) a week will be paid directly to the carer by housing benefits (the carer needs to declare themselves as a landlord and arrange a tenancy agreement)</p> <p>If the young person is working, similar contributions will be expected from the young person.</p>
<p><b>3. Private arrangement between young people and foster carers where both parties wish to extend the placement.</b></p> <p>Where it is assessed that both the carer and young person wish to extend the arrangement, this will become a private lodgings arrangement. CBC's Leaving Care Team will cease to fund the placement and the young person, and their carer/s will need to agree both the level of payment and practical arrangements</p>	<p>Young people who remain in a foster care placement post 18 who are in in a full time FE non-advance course, will be able to claim Universal Credit, including Housing benefits.</p> <p>If young person is enrolled on a full-time, HE course They will get a student loan and/or CBC maintenance grant of £4250 per year.</p> <p>From this income the young person will be expected to contribute</p> <p>£20 a week towards the cost of their food &amp; household costs.</p> <p>£64.05 (LHR) a week will be paid directly to the Carer by housing benefits (the carer needs to declare themselves as a landlord and arrange a tenancy agreement)</p> <p>Travel payments to attend college will be paid by CBC's Leaving Care Team</p> <p><b>The specific arrangements above can be varied in response to exceptional circumstances by agreement of the Assistant Director as Chair of the Resources Panel.</b></p>
<p><b>4. Young people remaining in supported lodging placement whilst undertaking a course of higher education or returning to a supported lodging placement during 'vacation' time or weekends.</b></p> <p>Where a young person (Former Relevant Children) wishes to remain in their supported lodging placement whilst studying at university or is studying away from the placement and wishes to return to the supported lodging</p>	<p>Young people who remain in a foster care placement post 18 who are in in a full time FE non-advance course, will be able to claim Universal Credit, including Housing benefits.</p> <p>If young person is enrolled on a full-time, HE courses They will get a student loan and/or CBC maintenance grant of £4250 per year</p> <p>From this income the young person will be expected to contribute</p> <p>£20 a week towards the cost of their food &amp; household costs.</p> <p>£64.05 (LHR) a week will be paid directly to the Carer by housing benefits (the carer needs to declare themselves as a landlord and arrange a tenancy agreement)</p>

placement during vacation time.  
The young person and the  
carer/s will need to negotiate a  
rent level

Travel payments to attend college will be paid by CBC's  
Leaving Care Team



## Section 10

### ENTITLEMENTS AND ALLOWANCES

#### Setting Up Home Allowance / Leaving Care Grant

This is a £2000 allowance that is available for 16+ care leavers to spend with the support of their Social worker/Personal Adviser in order to buy household equipment, purchase home content insurance and TV license in order to furnish their new home.

**In addition to £2000 from the Leaving Care Grant, savings and possessions should be accumulated during time in care. These funds and items should be taken with Care Leavers when moving to help them set up their new home.**

Should a Care Leaver want to access their Allowance whilst at a hostel, private rented accommodation, semi-supported accommodation, or at university they can access the grant to buy the basic equipment/ furnishings that they require and equipment which they can take with them once they leave that placement. This grant can and should be utilised at the time most useful to the young person up to their 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday or as long as they are open to CBC's Leaving Care Team.

Items should be recorded on case notes and pathway plans so there is a clear record of what has been spent and what is available. Receipts should be scanned and uploaded onto the system and the young person should retain the original receipts for product guarantee purposes.

The following table offers examples of appropriate items on which the Leaving Care Grant could be spent and guide prices. These are not prescriptive. The Setting Up Home Allowance / Leaving Care Grant does not have to be spent on these items at these prices and there is not an entitlement to these items. The items purchased should be agreed between the young person and their Social Worker or Personal Adviser, the young person should lead this and the payments should reflect their needs.

## Guidance on how to utilise Setting Up Home Allowance / Leaving Care Grant

Item	Amount
Content Insurance	£40.00
TV License	£150.00
TV with aerial and free view	£150.00
Removal Costs	£100.00
Cooker & Connection	£180.00
Washing Machine	£170.00
Refrigerator	£150.00
Bedframe & Mattress	£200.00
Sofa	£200.00
Wardrobe and Chest of drawers	£120.00
Curtains	£50.00
Carpet/ Flooring	£400.00
Kitchen Pots /Pans/ Starter Kit with Cutlery/Crockery	£50.00
Kettle & Toaster	£40.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,000.00</b>

# **Central Bedfordshire in contact**

**Find us online:** [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

**Call:** 0300 300 6120

**Email:** [customers@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:customers@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

**Write to:** Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House,  
Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ