

To All Foster Carers

**Specialist Children's Services  
Fostering & Adoption**

Kroner House

Eurogate Business Park

ASHFORD TN24 8XU

Fax: (01233) 898500

Tel: 01233) 652172

Direct Dial: (01622) 694174

Ask for: Liz Totman

Our ref: mh/LT

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Dear Foster Carer

Re: Foster Care Payments 2011/12

I am pleased to advise you that the maintenance allowance payable to foster carers has been increased in line with the DfE recommended rates from April 2011. The reward element remains unchanged. These rates can be found on the KCC website "Rates and Charges".

You will be aware of the Kent Pledge, which represents an important part of Kent County Council's commitment as a corporate parent to help support and contribute to the over all development of its Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Kent County Council is currently spending £1.9m per annum.

The lead for delivering the Kent Pledge rests with Children Families and Education, although some aspects of the Pledge are delivered by other parts of the local authority (e.g. Freedom Pass by Highways; named nurses via Community Health Trust).

However, as a Local Authority we are required to make some significant savings over the next few years and three areas of savings in the Kent Pledge have been identified due to the reduction in Grant monies.

1. The removal of the Pledge commitment of £100 per annum invested in a savings account for every Looked After child. The payment of £100 per annum is ceasing to be a statutory requirement from April 2011. The monitoring of this payment has been difficult and costly in officer time. The effect of removal of this payment will be mitigated for Looked After Children, who are eligible for a Criminal Injuries Compensation allowance, which is invested for them in a savings account.

2. The removal of the commitment to fund foster carers for the cost of photo albums (£7k). Kent had set aside £7k as a one off payment of £50 to foster carers to help towards purchase of camera/ photo album. Most households now possess a camera and with changes of technology storage of photos are more efficiently undertaken on discs.

3. The removal of the commitment to fund foster carers £5 per week for out of school activities for Looked After children aged between 5yrs to 16 yrs. Enabling savings of £254k per financial year. Kent would be removing this payment in a financial climate were every family would need to limit some of their choices of activities that their children undertake. Foster carers will continue to receive the maintenance element of the fostering allowance, which will allow them to continue to fund activities for all Looked After Children.

The above reductions in spending will take effect from 1st April 2011

The Pledge will be reviewed again in September 2011/2012 to ensure that the Pledge is targeted on those areas that make a significant difference to outcomes for young people and are relevant to Looked after children.

I would like to thank all of you for your continued hard work and commitment to the Looked After Children in Kent.

Yours sincerely



Liz Totman  
Head of Corporate Parenting