

LEAVING CARE FINANCE POLICY – 2024-2025

FORMER RELEVANT YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 18 TO 21/25



Accommodation	<p>If you are Staying Put you're your rent rates are explained in our Staying Put document. In supported accommodation, social housing or private sector housing, we will only approve and support rent amounts up to level of one-bed LHA rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Inner Southwest: £326.79 per week, shared room rate £157.64 • London Outer Southwest: £276.16 per week, shared room rate £136.13
Deposits and Rent in Advance	<p>Young People who decide to choose private renting for their settled accommodation can access support with deposits and guarantees. Information on this can be found 'Social Care Queue Applications and the Wandsworth Care Leavers' Guarantor Scheme (CLGS) - February 2022'. Rent must always be within LHA rates</p>
Subsistence –Young People with NRPF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) If you're responsible for all your own food and bills you get £71.70. b) If you don't have to pay for your utilities you get £61.70. c) If you are provided with utilities and food in your accommodation you get £51.70.
Emergency Financial support when you're waiting for your benefits (for a maximum of 5 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) If you're responsible for all your own food and bills you get £71.70. b) If you don't have to pay for your utilities you get £61.70. c) If you are provided with utilities and food in your accommodation you get £51.70. <p>This is only provided for five weeks whilst your first Universal Credit claim is being processed.</p>
Council Tax Exemption / Allowance	<p>Future First will pay your council tax bills until you turn 21. You need to provide your PAs with your bills for them to be paid. You need to make sure that you have claimed all of the discounts that you can (e.g single person discount). If you live with a partner, all exemptions and council tax support must be claimed, where there is a joint liability - 50% is paid by Future First.</p>

Travel	<p>We will support you to access 18+ Student Oyster Card and any discounted travel offer, both in London (if living in London) or wherever you are living.</p> <p>Young People on Universal Credit get travel discounts and all Care Leavers can get a 50% TFL discount on buses and trams with a Care Leaver Oyster card which we will pay the £20 admin fee for.</p>
Young People in Custody	<p>Up until age 21 you will get £15 per month for essential items. Subject to assessment, you can access a £20 per month activities and well-being allowance for wellbeing and hobby items. You can access your SUHG if you need to buy items like kettles whilst in prison.</p>
Qualifying	<p>All allowances and support can be available – subject to an assessment of need, principle is to facilitate access to universal services. See Page 31 & Appendix B</p>
Key Documents	<p>£100 – to ensure that you have a birth certificate and valid passport up to age 21.</p>
Enabling Affordable Transport	<p>£200 contribution towards the cost of a bicycle, hand-cycle or alternatively £200 contribution to membership of a London bicycle hire scheme.</p> <p>To support those who require a driving license for employment opportunities, Children's Services will pay for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 provisional driving licence; • 1 practical test; • 5 (1 hour) lessons. <p>The young person needs to match cost of 5 lessons for us to release the money. This will mean that you have 10 lessons, 5 of which we pay for. You must have passed your theory test first.</p>
Birthday Allowances	<p>£25 on your 19th and 20th birthdays and £75 on your 21st birthday.</p>

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Start Up Pack	All young people moving to semi-independent / independent accommodation – two suitcases, kitchen equipment etc. This costs over £250 each and is provided once to a young person.
Christmas and Festival Allowance	£25 for Christmas/ festival gift when aged 18, 19 and 20. £50 food voucher for festival of choice.
Digital Connectivity	You can get support with this from the Job Centre if you are claiming Universal Credit. Support is also available from the Care Leavers Covenant for cheap wifi and broadband. In exceptional situations, we can provide a budget SMART phone – subject to an assessment of need. There is allowance made in your Setting Up Home Grant for Wifi and Broadband payments.
Social Activities and Wellbeing Allowance	Up to age 21 you will get £20 per month that can be used for any hobby, activity or wellbeing activity. Can be paid directly to you if you provide evidence that you attend a gym/group/ activity. You can also use this money to purchase an 'Ask Jan' annual membership using a few months worth of this allowance. Scan the QR code for information. You can get 50% discount on leisure activities at Places Leisure – scan the QR code. If you don't live in Wandsworth, we'll help you find similar schemes if we can.
Winter Utilities and Heating Allowance	Future First will provide £15 per week, £390 in total – 1st winter (26 weeks) of independent living in a settled tenancy in your name (01/10 to 31/03).
Emotional Health, Counselling and Therapeutic Needs	You can access Future First Counselling Service, we also have a Specialist Mental Health PA for young people with significant mental health needs and we will support you to access universal services via your GP and local options such as Talk Wandsworth, Bambu and Kooth Online Counselling Service. You can also use some of your annual Social Activities and Wellbeing Allowance to pay for an 'Ask Jan' membership with the Rees Foundation which includes counselling and emotional wellbeing support. Scan the QR code for information.

Positive Experience Grant	Up to age 21 you will get £150 towards a Positive Experience activity per year. The plans for this need to be in your Pathway Plan and you can save the money e.g save for three years and spend £450 on something. The money is generally not paid to you directly but is used to buy tickets/ access passes etc via your PA.
Health	Support to complete HCl to obtain exemption certificate – support may be provided subject to an assessment of need. Future First have access to free prescriptions for Care Leavers Currently via pre-payment prescription certificate.
Special Needs Costs	We offer support to assist young people to access services/ support subject to an assessment of need.
Cultural Needs	We offer support to assist young people to access services/ support subject to an assessment of need.
Religious Needs	We offer support to assist young people to access services/ support subject to an assessment of need.
Further and Higher Education	See pages 37 to 49 of the Finance Policy for an overview of what we offer for Higher Education.
Education, Training, Apprenticeships, Employment – Related Support	Up to £200 per year for stationery, educational visits, books and equipment grant and I.T. grant; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £360 (if Net of VAT) computer grant (this is available once to a young person). • £75 Commencing work grant • £200 Prom activity
Positive Activity Incentive	This paid when you undertake Education, training, voluntary work – £10 per week, full time, £5 per week, part time (less than 12 hours) It has to be monitored by your PA and evidence of attendance provided.

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Higher Education	<p>See Universal HE Offer, page 43–46.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Access Offer; • Tuition fee loan – £9,250 • Maintenance loan – £13,031 per year (London) £9,977 per year (outside London).
Wandsworth – Higher Education Financial Support	<p>We will pay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £26.50 UCAS Application Grant • £2000 – HE Bursary – per course; • £250 (x two – £125.00 – Moving Grant) • Accommodation costs up to One Bedroom LHA rate during vacation • Termly Travel Grant – two x return journeys per term • £300 Graduation Grant • £300 (£360.00 if NET of VAT) Computer Grant if not used previously. <p>Available for four years. See page 46</p>
Higher Education Requirements & Payment Process	<p>See page 48.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of learner agreement • Liaison with personal adviser • Authorisation to liaise with university
Open University	<p>See page 47</p> <p>HE Bursary payments of £222.22 provided following completion of 40 course credits, 9 payments.</p>
Post Graduate Courses	<p>Assistance to identify external financial resources and support.</p>
Young People Returning to the Local Authority Aged 21 to 25	<p>Support to access universal services.</p> <p>Education & Training assessment of need, registration fees up to £1000 (FT) and £500.00 (PT). check if courses are Universal Credit eligible.</p>

Consultation with Young People	<p>When you are involved in consultation via Future First, we will pay you £10 per hour plus expenses. Paid in cash or vouchers.</p>
Direct Work Allowance	<p>Subject to an assessment of need, and agreed in advance – £15 (£7.50 each) to facilitate a keywork session/ activity.</p>
Exit Interview – Service Evaluation / Questionnaire	<p>£10 reward on completion of a service exit questionnaire.</p>
Emergency Payments	<p>Emergency food parcel £20, three in 12-month period.</p>
Exceptional Needs	<p>Depending on an assessment of need – one-off payments.</p>
Setting Up Home Allowance	<p>£3,159 – total. See page 51 – 53. Follow SUHA Guidance.</p>
Appendix A	<p>Categories of Care Leaver. See page 54.</p>
Appendix B	<p>Qualifying C&YP over 16. See page 55.</p>
Appendix C	<p>Young people who are detained. See page 56.</p>
Appendix D	<p>Eligible young people living or placed with parents. See pages 58.</p>
Appendix E	<p>UASC. See pages 64.</p>
Appendix F	<p>Consent to Share Information Form. See page 71.</p>
Appendix G	<p>Guidance on National Insurance Numbers. See page 75.</p>
Appendix H	<p>Standard Benefit Claim Letter – Template. See page 76.</p>
Appendix I	<p>Personal Finance Chart for Pathway Plan. See page 79.</p>