# Staying Put Policy

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<th>Service area</th>
<th>Looked After Children’s Services</th>
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<td>Date effective from</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsible officer(s)</td>
<td>Ian Walker, Head of Service, LAC and Care Leavers</td>
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<td>Status:</td>
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<td>☐ Mandatory (all named staff must adhere to guidance)</td>
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<td>☐ Optional (procedures and practice can vary between teams)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target audience</td>
<td>All Children’s Social Care staff Foster carers</td>
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1. **Legal Framework**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Staying Put: Arrangements for care leavers aged 18 and above to stay on with their former foster carers which is joint guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC). This provides more detail relating to many of the financial aspects of Staying Put arrangements.
- Staying Put – Good practice guide (the Children’s Partnership, 2014)

2. **What is a Staying Put Arrangement?**

2.1 The Care Matters White Paper contained a significant focus on improving the support for children preparing for adulthood including a pilot programme enabling young people to remain with their foster carers beyond the age of eighteen. This was introduced as formal guidance in May 2013 in order to emphasise a more graduated approach to planning transition to adulthood. The intention of the initiative was to ensure young people could remain with their former foster carers until they were prepared for adulthood, could experience a transition akin to their peers, avoid social exclusion and be more likely to avert a subsequent housing and tenancy breakdown. Initially, the duty was restricted to young people already in education, training and employment or to those who were assessed as vulnerable or disabled. Revisions to the law have removed any qualifying criteria beyond the requirement that a young person will have lived with a foster carer as a looked after child immediately before reaching 18 and was an “eligible child” entitled to leaving care services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. Our policy has recognised these changes and in addition provides a fair and equal level of funding to carers regardless of their status as either in-house or independent.

2.2 Staying Put arrangements should replicate as far as possible normal family life. Foster carers are required to care for any child placed with them as if they were a member of their family, and this expectation should carry through into Staying Put arrangements. Families all have different rules, expectations and ways of doing things, and Staying Put arrangements should take account of this and be sufficiently flexible to be tailored to individual circumstances and needs.

2.3 An eligible child is someone who:

- is looked after by a local authority;
- is aged 16 or 17, and;
- has been looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks since the age of 14

It is a term meaning that they are eligible for support as a care leaver, and does not refer specifically to Staying Put support.

2.4 Once they become 18 an eligible child is known in law as a ‘former relevant child’. Whenever a young person continues to live with their former foster carer in these circumstances, it is referred to as a Staying Put arrangement. Staying Put arrangements
continue until the young person becomes 21, or stops living in the household before then, or when the young person completes the agreed programme of education or training being undertaken on their twenty-first birthday, if continuously living in the arrangement since their eighteenth birthday.

2.5 Local authorities have a duty to monitor and support Staying Put arrangements, and these are reflected throughout this policy.

2.6 Local authorities have significant statutory obligations to support care leavers whether or not they participate in Staying Put, and these are explained in the Children Act 1989 statutory guidance already referred to. A former relevant child who is pursuing an agreed course of further education or training may be entitled to support until the age of 25.

2.7 It is important to understand that government departments have differing approaches to defining Staying Put within the statutory framework applicable to their area of responsibility. The definition given above comes from the Children Act 1989 and is the one which gives local authorities a duty to monitor and support, as explained in this policy.

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Staying Put arrangements will be most effective if they are underpinned by clear principles. This practice guidance is based on the principles listed below, but there may also be others which are important to local services.

3.2 Best interests

The best interests of the young person should be at the heart of decision making about Staying Put, enabling them to have the best possible opportunities to lead successful lives. Research informs us that a young person in a stable home environment is more likely to achieve well in employment, education and training. An increase in the number of Staying Put arrangements will reduce the number of young people not in employment, training and education and closes the gap between our young people and those in the wider community who tend to leave home when it is right for them to do so, rather than at a set age.

3.3 Support

Support to both carers and young people should be geared to their specific circumstances and needs. Carers should be enabled to develop the skills required to best help the young person to do well in life and keep safe from harm. Ideally, no young person should lose out due to lack of financial support to themselves or their carer so every effort will be made to find solutions to financial barriers.

3.4 Clear information

Foster carers and young people should be provided with clear information about the support available from local authorities and fostering services to help them to make choices about whether or not to enter into Staying Put arrangements. This will always include information about financial arrangements and implications for benefits and tax.

3.5 Early planning

Early planning for Staying Put is crucial and arrangements should be considered as part of the care and permanence planning process, from the time that a long term placement is
planned or any new placement is made of a young person aged 16+. Decisions in principle about whether or not Staying Put is an option should be taken as early as possible in the placement, and written into the young person’s pathway plan.

If a foster placement is considered permanent or long term, carers and young people should be informed that Staying Put is an option at the time that a decision regarding permanence is made. There is an expectation that

Discussion regarding the foster placement changing to a Staying Put arrangement when the young person reaches the age of 18 years should be included at all statutory review meetings for young people aged 15 and above. This will ensure that arrangements are in place well before the young person’s 18th birthday. This will ensure a smooth transition for the young person and mirror ‘normal family life’ as far as this is possible.

3.6 *Equality of opportunity*

In order to maximise the opportunity for young people to participate in Staying Put, fostering services – both local authority and independent agencies - should do everything possible to ensure that all foster carers have an equal opportunity to become Staying Put carers. This includes family and friends foster carers and foster carers approved by independent fostering providers. A young person’s immigration or asylum status does not affect their entitlement to enter into a Staying Put arrangement but may affect the duration. A Staying Put arrangement should be the norm, not the exception, and no young person should miss the opportunity to participate in Staying Put because the carer cannot afford to do so.

3.7 *Flexibility*

Arrangements should be sufficiently flexible to enable support to be provided over and above the minimum legal duty, recognising that the relationship between carer and young person will not always end at age 21 or when the Staying Put arrangement ceases.

4. *Criteria for Staying Put arrangements*

4.1 There are no eligibility criteria for entering into a Staying Put arrangement, other than the young person being an ‘eligible child’ for care leaver support. If on the day before their 18th birthday the young person was a looked after child placed with a foster carer, and had been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, then by continuing to live with their former foster carer this constitutes a Staying Put arrangement. This applies whether the foster placement was long term or short term, and includes placements made at any time up to the young person’s 18th birthday.

4.2 We have a general duty to do all we can to support care leavers into further and higher education, training or employment, but these are not preconditions for starting or maintaining a Staying Put arrangement. The legislation does not permit local authorities to introduce their own eligibility rules.

4.3 There is no reason to put foster carers through any sort of assessment or approval process to become Staying Put carers because the arrangements are made between adults and are not regulated.
4.4 Arrangements for disabled young people

Young people who have an enduring disability which is likely to have an impact on their ability to live independently, should be referred to RMBC Transitions team after age 14. If following assessment the disability meets the Fair Access to Care criteria, the former foster placement should convert to an Adult Services placement known as Shared Lives once the young person becomes 18, at which point case and financial responsibility transfers to Adult Services. A Shared Lives assessment will need to take place through Adult Services as the placement will be regulated.

5. Implications for Foster carers

5.1 RMBC and independent fostering services need to ensure that their carers are given clear information about how they can expect to be supported if they enter into a Staying Put arrangement, and how this may impact on their continued fostering.

5.2 Becoming Staying Put carers only

When foster carers plan to become Staying Put carers they will need to discuss with the fostering service whether or not they wish to remain approved as foster carers, either to continue with an existing placement or to take new placements. If they decide that they no longer wish to foster they should submit their resignation in writing to the fostering service, in which case their approval automatically ends 28 days after this is received. This is an opportunity for the fostering service to acknowledge and celebrate their contribution as foster carers. They will continue to support them as Staying Put carers.

5.3 Becoming Staying Put carers in addition to fostering

When foster carers wish to continue as both approved foster carers and Staying Put carers, the impact of the new arrangements will need to be considered. The young person who is Staying Put will no longer be considered as a foster placement once they become an adult, so the foster carer will be able to take another placement within any terms of their approval. This may not always be possible or appropriate due to lack of accommodation, the demands of the Staying Put arrangement, or other factors.

5.3.1 The change in the foster carer’s circumstances, including the looked after child becoming an adult member of the household, means that a review of the foster carer’s approval should be undertaken before a Staying Put arrangement begins. This will provide the opportunity to discuss the impact of the Staying Put arrangement on the role of the foster carer and to think carefully through all the implications of the change in the legal status of the relationship with the young person. The need for any further training or additional support needs should also be discussed. The review should be carefully planned at a stage which enables discussion of all the relevant matters and also allows time for the fostering service’s decision maker to consider its recommendations, including any changes to terms of approval.

5.3.2 Sometimes Staying Put carers are not able to take another foster placement whilst the young person remains living with them, but wish to remain approved as foster carers in order to resume fostering in the future. If the fostering service agrees that it is appropriate to continue approval then it must continue to meet the statutory requirements regardless of the
fact that no child is placed. This includes regular visits by the supervising social worker (including an annual unannounced visit); reviews of approval; provision of training, advice, information and support; and support for continuing professional development.

5.4 **DBS checks on young people**

5.4.1 Since the young person who is Staying Put becomes an adult member of the foster carer’s household, to comply with fostering regulations an enhanced disclosure must be obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This shouldn’t reveal anything of surprise to the fostering service or the carer, but may need handling sensitively, particularly with the young person themselves. It is appropriate to obtain the enhanced disclosure before the young person becomes 18, so that it may be considered at the review of the foster carer’s approval before the Staying Put arrangement begins.

5.4.2 There is no requirement to seek further DBS disclosures, however fostering services have a policy of updating checks at regular intervals through the DBS update service. If this is the case the young person will need to agree to this if their Staying Put carer remains a foster carer. The foster carer will also be bound by their foster care agreement to notify the fostering service of any circumstances which might make their household unsuitable to foster and this might include criminal offences committed by the young person who is Staying Put.

5.4.3 Known issues which may impact on the continued approval of the foster carer should be included in early discussions about Staying Put, as these will be crucial to the ability of the foster carer and the fostering service to make an informed decision.

6. **Preparation for a Staying Put Arrangement**

6.1 To ensure sufficient time is available to make the necessary planning arrangements for extending a placement beyond a young person’s 18th birthday, a professionals meeting should take place three months before a young person’s 16th birthday or 3 months after a young person becomes Looked After if this is after they are 16. The Staying Put meeting and needs assessment should include the foster carer/s, the carer’s supervising social worker, allocated social worker and leaving care social worker/personal adviser and should establish the viability, appropriateness and likelihood of a Staying Put arrangement occurring. The meeting should identify all key tasks and roles and responsibilities related to extending the former fostering arrangement. The meeting should explore the impact on the foster carers’ financial circumstances should the placement continue after the young person’s 18th birthday.

6.1.2 The Staying Put professionals meeting should be repeated when the young person reaches the age of 17 and should ensure any final arrangements and requirements are in place by the young person’s 18th birthday. A review meeting should be held 3 months before a young person reaches the age of 18 years to ensure that all requirements for the Staying Put arrangement are in place.

6.1.3 All meetings should make reference to the criteria and financial framework for extending the Staying Put arrangement and the National Insurance, Income Tax and Welfare Benefits issues for the foster carer/s and welfare benefit issues for the young person. The outcome of these meetings should be discussed at the subsequent statutory reviews.
6.2 Foster carer

6.2.1 A meeting to discuss the option of Staying Put should be arranged with the foster carer when their foster child has reached their 16th birthday. At this meeting the process and the funding should be explained to the foster carer. The expectation is that young people can remain with the foster carer up to their 21st birthday and that the foster carer is preparing the young person fully for independence and that they are supporting the young person in employment, education or training. This will be included in the care/pathway plan.

6.2.2 The carer should be fully informed of the implications of agreeing to a Staying Put arrangement and identify the differences between caring for a child and supporting an adult. Although there is an expectation of a seamless transition and the maintenance of existing rules and household/family norms carers should be encouraged to consider how they will react to impending adulthood and the young person's expectation of greater independence. For example, a young person may enter into contracts in their own right which in the case of default, could affect a carer's credit rating.

6.2.3 If the foster carer does not wish to sign up to the Staying Put arrangement then the Fostering Social worker will inform the young person's Social worker or Personal Adviser. A needs-led assessment will be carried out and formulated into a plan which will be drawn up in order to prepare the young person to acquire their independent living skills and included in the Pathway Plan. The move on options would be discussed and included in the Pathway Plan.

6.2.4 The reasons describing why a foster carer has chosen not to sign up to a Staying Put arrangement need to be clearly recorded and provided for the responsible service manager. This will allow for analysis and consideration of any changes that need to be made to support foster carers in feeling better able to move to a Staying Put arrangement for the young people in their care.

6.3 Young Person

6.3.1 A meeting to discuss the option of Staying Put should be arranged with the young person when they reach their 15th birthday by their social worker or personal adviser, or if supported by the disability team the transitions worker. At this meeting the changes and process should be explained to them. The expectation is that young people can remain with the foster carer up to their 21st birthday. Following this meeting, young people need to be given the opportunity to think about the options that may be available for them and to consult with other professionals or family members should they wish to do so. They should be provided with written information and where possible linked with other young people who have benefitted from a Staying Put arrangement who will be able to discuss on more of a peer level the pros and cons of the arrangement from the young person's perspective.

6.3.2 If the young person does/does not wish to sign up to the Staying Put arrangement then the young person's social worker, personal adviser or transitions worker will inform the foster carer if they were not part of that joint discussion.

6.3.3 A needs assessment will be carried out and formulated into a plan which will be drawn up, in order to prepare the young person to acquire their independent living skills, and included in the young person's Pathway Plan.
6.3.4 Young people who say they do not want to remain in a Staying Put arrangement should have the opportunity to revisit this decision at any time, and as many times as they need to, before their 18th birthday in discussion with the foster carer. Even where a young person may initially say they do not want to remain in a Staying Put arrangement, discussions need to be had with the young person’s carers to ensure that if the young person changes their mind, arrangements are already in hand to ensure the smoothest transition possible for when the young person reaches the age of 18 years.

7. Extending Placements

7.1 There are circumstances where placements can be extended beyond a young person’s 18th birthday without becoming Staying Put arrangements. It may be that alternative accommodation is not available as planned, requiring a brief extension. The financial terms and conditions of the extension will remain unchanged. Extensions should only be approved on a month by month basis. Payments to the young person and the carer/fostering agency should be maintained at the existing rates. A written agreement to this effect should be on file and approved by the service manager.

7.2 If a young person will be completing a course of education at the end of the academic year following their 18th birthday and regardless of whether a decision has been made that a Staying Put arrangement will be in place thereafter, consideration can be given to extending the current arrangement until 1st September. Payments to the young person and the carer/fostering agency should be maintained at the existing rates. A written agreement to this effect should be on file and approved by the service manager by the time of the 1st review following a young person’s 17th birthday.

8. Professional Roles

8.1 All Staying Put arrangements will be supported by a personal advisor, social worker and the Staying Put/Supported Lodgings Coordinator. In situations when the household continues to foster, a supervising social worker will remain allocated and should support the carer in their combined role as Staying Put carer and foster carer.

8.2 Fostering Supervising Social Worker

8.2.1 The fostering social worker will support the foster carer throughout the Staying Put process. Twelve months before the young person reaches their 18th birthday they will undertake a review of the foster carer and make any recommendations and present them to the fostering panel.

8.2.2 The fostering supervising social worker will provide support through regular supervision and identify any additional training that may be required in order that the carer has the skills to support the young person.

8.3 Young Person’s Social worker, Personal Adviser or Transitions Worker

8.3.1 The social worker, personal advisor or transitions worker will support the young person throughout the Staying Put process in keeping with leaving care legislation and guidance. They will assist the young person in applying for benefits or any other finance for which the young person is entitled to claim.
8.4 **Staying Put/Supported Lodgings Coordinator**

8.4.1 The Staying Put/Supported Lodgings Coordinator will be the first point of contact when considering Staying Put arrangements. They will provide:

- Information to young people and foster carers about how Staying put works in Rotherham
- The detail regarding payments to former foster carers and the young person’s contribution
- Advice, support and information. This may include advice about money, jobs, benefits, and employment, training and housing options
- Completing Housing Benefit applications
- The link between Children and young People’s Services and other agencies, such as Housing Benefit departments and Independent Fostering Agencies
- To lead on the development of the Staying Put arrangements, including consultation with interested parties
- Data regarding the use of Staying Put arrangements

8.5 **The Commissioning Team**

The Commissioning Team will ensure that a copy of this policy is made available to independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) at the time a foster placement is commissioned. There should be an explicit expectation that an IFA accepts the terms of this policy. The commissioning team should also ensure that payments to a Staying Put carer are made.

9. **Financial Issues**

9.1 **Funding**

9.1.2 The funding of the Staying Put arrangement is derived from a number of sources: housing benefit; the young person’s personal contribution; personalised budget and the local authority looked after budget.

9.1.3 Where applicable the young person will apply for the maximum housing benefit for which they are entitled.

9.1.4 The young person is expected to make a financial contribution from their personal benefit allowance towards the cost of food and utilities. This is currently set at a maximum of £20.00 per week; however the actual amount will be agreed between young person and the provider in advance of the Staying Put arrangement starting, incorporated into the Living Together Agreement and reviewed either when circumstances change or at the pathway plan review.

9.1.5 Where a young person is working, they will be expected to contribute towards their upkeep and in addition to the initial £20.00, the young person should be contributing an agreed % of their net earnings towards the household costs (this needs to be agreed between the carer and young person – with the support of the personal adviser and the Staying Put/Supported Lodgings Coordinator). These amounts should be reviewed at least annually and earlier if there are significant changes and should not be at a level that
prevents the young person from saving. This is to be paid by the young person directly to the carer. This will be laid out in the Living Together Agreement.

9.1.6 The Staying Put payment to the foster carer from RMBC’s children’s services is set at £189 per week. These payments will be reviewed annually. If a carer will not accept this level of funding, the matter is to be referred to the Head of Service for looked after children and care leavers.

9.1.7 The Staying Put payment covers all: accommodation, support, utilities, food and associated costs, it does not cover pocket money and clothing as this will be replaced by the young person’s personal benefit allowance or earnings.

9.1.8 Staying Put carers will continue to receive the above payment for 56 weeks of the year paid over 52 weeks. This will cover one week for Christmas/Festival, one week for birthday and two weeks for a holiday as the Staying Put Carers will continue to treat the young person as a member of the family, taking them out etc. This does not apply to the young person’s contribution.

9.1.9 As set out above all young people are required to claim a personal benefit allowance or be earning money to be able to fund their clothing and pocket money needs.

9.1.10 All young people are required to claim housing benefit. In situations where young people are working part-time, and do not claim a means tested personal benefit they will still need to claim housing benefit. Earnings over £57.90 will result in a reduction of housing benefit which will need to be made up by a contribution by the young person and RMBC (see finance policy. Housing benefit will be paid directly to RMBC children’s services.

9.1.11 When the carers are already in receipt of means tested benefits and that income is reduced should a young person claim housing benefit, RMBC Borough Council children’s services will become responsible for paying the equivalent amount based on the Local Housing Allowance rate.

9.1.12 When a young person has no recourse to public funds (NRPF) RMBC Borough Council children’s services will become responsible for paying the equivalent amount based on the Local Housing Allowance rate, provided that the young person is not in receipt of income which could be taken into consideration.

9.1.13 The Staying Put/Supported Lodgings Coordinator will help young people complete housing benefit applications. This will be laid out in the Living Together Agreement. If a young person does not claim benefits they are entitled to or pay their contribution, they will be in breach of their Living Together Agreement.

9.1.14 When housing benefit or the young person’s contribution is not made available to the carers a meeting will be called to review the Living Together Agreement. RMBC will compensate for a young person’s failure to pay their contribution or claim housing benefit for a period of three months from the start date of the arrangement. Thereafter the carer should decide whether they wish to continue providing the accommodation.

9.1.15 Housing benefit is now determined by Local Housing Allowance or Local Reference Rates based upon the area in which the applicant lives and may change each month. However, these rates are fixed in the month of application until the end of the financial year.
Up to date Housing benefit levels are published each month on the area LHA website: [directgov](http://www.directgov).

9.1.16 The young person's housing benefit application should be made by the young person with support from the Staying Put/Supported Lodgings Coordinator. To ensure that there is a smooth process the application should be made at least 4 weeks prior to the young person's 18th Birthday.

9.1.17 Carers receiving a Staying Put payment have a duty to inform the Local Authority of any changes in circumstances.

9.2 **Young People at University**

9.21 Young people at university are not normally able to claim housing benefit but can apply for student finance, out of which they are expected to pay the rent element of the Staying Put arrangement if they are living with their former foster carer while studying. Any contribution from RMBC should be in keeping with the finance policy.

9.22 If a young person is at university some distance from home and living in university accommodation during term time, a Staying Put arrangement can still be made to ensure that they can return home for the university holidays and weekends. However, different funding arrangements will apply to reflect the fact that the young person will not be at home for most of the year. If a young person will be returning to live at home during university holidays, we will pay the former carer the Staying Put rate for each week that the young person is at home. If the former carer is maintaining significant contact with the young person during term time in the form of weekly phone calls; contact as and when needed with the university; at least one visit each term to the young person; an open invitation to the young person to spend weekends at home - up to £100 per week can be paid (subject to negotiation based on the level of involvement).

10. **Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)**

10.1 Young people placed in Independent Fostering Agency placements will be considered against the same criteria as RMBC foster carer placements. The local authority will ensure that the process as detailed in sections 4 and 5 of this policy involves the IFA at all key stages.

10.2 Once a young person becomes 18, the fostering placement ends and thereafter the IFA is not a formal party to the Staying Put Arrangement. The financial arrangements for Staying Put are made between the local authority and the carers in keeping with that which a RMBC foster carer receives, not what the IFA carer is used to receiving. There should be no expectation that the IFA continues to receive a fee.

10.3 The post age 15 planning meetings, professionals meetings and child care reviews will be the medium by which all IFAs will be involved in the Staying Put process. There will be occasions where the decision by the young person and their carer/s to enter into a Staying Put arrangement will not follow the processes in Section 4, for instance the young person may have come in to placement post 15, however at whatever point discussions occur, the IFA will be fully involved. The local authority expects that those representing the IFA at meetings/reviews have the authority to agree with the decisions made by the carer/s and the young person when considering Staying Put arrangements.
10.4 Once the decision is made by the young person and their carer/s to enter into a Staying Put arrangement post 18, the IFA will be notified and asked to ensure that their carers formally notify the IFA of their change in circumstances. The IFA may be continuing to provide a supervising social worker where a child in care remains placed with the carers. In keeping with government good practice guidance, that same supervising social worker could provide support in the carer’s Staying Put role. If this is not possible, RMBC will offer the support of a supervising social worker.

10.5 It is expected that IFAs with whom the local authority commission placements will fully embrace the legislative and good practice guidance associated with the Staying Put initiative. A copy of this policy will be sent to the IFA at the point of commissioning a placement by the Commissioning Team.

11. Benefits for Young People

11.1 Young people remaining in a Staying Put arrangement can claim means tested benefits for their personal needs from their 18th birthday. These benefits replace the pocket money and clothing allowance previously contained in the foster carer’s maintenance allowance.

11.2 Personal advisers will be responsible for assisting care leavers in understanding their benefits and will assist them using the Benefit Adviser tool on www.gov.uk. As every case is different and there are different entitlements, this tool is vital in understanding the exact entitlement for that individual. Further benefits advice is available from Citizens Advice Bureau.

12. The Treatment of Benefits

12.1 Personal payments from Children’s Services to young people and carers under section 17, section 20, section 23, section 24 and section 31 do not count as income for benefit purposes.


13.1 Tax

13.2 All foster carers and Staying Put carers must register with HMRC as self-employed.

13.3 The Simplified Tax Arrangements apply and Foster carers and Adult Placement Carers will continue to be able to claim under their existing simplified tax arrangements. Full Tax details are provided in the HMRC help sheet 236.

13.4 Where young people remain living with their former foster carer/s under a Staying Put arrangement, the Income Tax and National Insurance framework and liabilities that apply are set out in the new “Shared Lives Carers” Guidance. The ‘Shared Lives’ - ‘Qualifying Care Relief Guidance’ sets out that Staying Put carers receive tax exemptions up to a given qualifying amount for each Staying Put young person living with them. The Staying Put qualifying rate mirrors the system and amounts that applied when the placement was previously a foster care placement.
13.5 The Staying Put exemption does not affect any income from other sources, for example, from employment or from investments. Such other income will be taxed in the normal way.

13.6 Staying Put carer/s as well as foster carer/s should note that they may be able to claim Working Tax Credit which is administered by HMRC. Fostering/Staying Put care is counted as work for tax credit purposes. The carer’s taxable income is used to assess the amount of tax credits that they are entitled to. So, where the carer receives less in Staying Put personal payments than the tax free allowance is, their income from caring for Working Tax Credit purposes is treated as nil, which means they get the highest rate of WTC.

14. National Insurance

14.1 The same Class 4 National Insurance contributions apply as for fostering.

15. Staying Put Arrangement Guidance - Living Together Agreements

15.1 Young people, Staying Put carer/s, leaving care personal advisers and supervising social workers should meet to develop a ‘Living Together Agreement’ prior to a young person’s 18th birthday. The agreement should set out the expectation of all personal advisers and clarify roles and responsibilities.

16. Health and Safety

16.1 The same health and safety principles including household/car insurance that applied under the Foster Placement will continue. The car must have a current MOT certificate.

17. Household Insurance

17.1 The Staying Put providers will continue to be covered by RMBC’s "All Risks Carer's Contents" policy. This insurance policy covers Foster Carers, Staying Put Providers and Supported Lodgings Providers against damage caused to home contents by the direct actions of the young person.

17.2 Claims should be submitted either via email to insurancesection@rotherham.gov.uk or in writing, marked for the attention of the Insurance & Risk Manager at the RMBC Riverside House address. The policy does not carry an excess but providers will subsequently be asked to produce documentation to support any claim made (e.g. purchase receipts; estimates).

17.3 Providers should ensure that they continue to maintain their own full household and liability insurance policy to provide cover against damage that is unconnected to the young person.

18. Monitoring and Reviewing Arrangements

18.1 The Staying Put Arrangements should be reviewed as part of the Permanence Plan, Pathway Plan, Review or Care Plan at least every six months. This should record any problems or difficulties that have emerged and what is working well in the arrangement. A
review can be arranged earlier if needed by agreement between the young person, the
carers and the personal advisor involved.

19. **Safeguarding Measures**

19.1 The same safeguarding measures that apply under the foster placement will continue to apply to a Staying Put Arrangement. In addition, safeguarding policies and procedures as they apply to vulnerable adults will also be observed.

20. **Ending the Staying Put Arrangement**

20.1 The Staying Put arrangement can be ended at any time before the young person reaches their 21st birthday, by either the young person or the carer by giving a minimum of 28 days' notice. This period can be shortened in exceptional circumstances.

20.2 When planning to end a Staying Put arrangement it is worth remembering that as the young person reaches their 21st birthday they may no longer qualify as having a "priority need" under housing legislation for social housing. Therefore it is essential that plans are made in advance in order to maximise the opportunity to be considered for social housing.

20.3 If the young person wishes to remain with the carer post 21 then it will become a private or informal arrangement and no longer funded by the Local Authority. However, funding may be considered to support an agreed course of education but not necessarily at the level agreed as part of Staying Put.

20.4 There will be circumstances whereby a planned move-on from a Staying Put arrangement doesn’t work and a return to the Staying Put arrangement is in the young person’s best interests. Subject to prior agreement and within an 8 week period a young person can return to their previous Staying Put household and the original payment arrangement will resume. In these circumstances the arrangement will continue to be considered as Staying Put.