

Guidance Note:

Birthday Allowances for Looked After Children in Full-Time Residential Care

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Document Author	Chris Mills, Policy and Commissioning	
Document owner	Children's Social Care, Bracknell Forest Council Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1xx Telephone: 01344 351767 Email: chris.mills@bracknell-forest.gov.uk	
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Please contact:

Children's Social Care

Bracknell Forest Council

Time Square

Market Street

Bracknell

Berkshire RG12 1JD

Email: chris.mills@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Telephone: 01344 351767

Fax: 01344 351521

Minicom: 01344 352045

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1 National Guidance

The National Framework Contract for the placement of children in children's homes includes a clear expectation that:

'Birthdays, name days, cultural and religious festivals, as appropriate, are celebrated and Children are involved in the planning of such celebrations. The Provider allocates sufficient resources to do so¹.'

2 Bracknell Forest Council Arrangements

At the time of writing this guidance Bracknell Forest Council's Children's Social Care provision does not include residential children's homes for non-disabled children. The only residential care directly provided locally is short break care for disabled children.

This guidance only applies to children looked after full-time by the Council in residential placements managed by external providers. Provision for birthday allowances and celebrations must therefore be made by the external provider in accordance with the National Framework Contract.

Where there is any concern about the proper provision of a birthday allowance for a child in a residential establishment this must be referred to and addressed by the external provider. It is the expectation of Bracknell Forest Council that the costs for this will be met from the charge paid by the Council for provision of the overall placement service.

Bracknell Forest Council does not make additional birthday allowance payments to children looked after in residential care over and above any payments agreed within the placement contract. If there is any perceived inequity of provision for a looked after child as a result of additional payments being made direct to children by other local authorities, the provider should be made aware of the unwelcome impact this is having on any Bracknell Forest child by the Social Worker and should be advised to take steps to resolve the inequity.

It should be noted that the Council does make a single payment of £50 to all looked after children on their eighteenth birthday.

3 References

- National Framework Contract for the placement of children in children's homes <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/search/IG00315/>

¹ Outcomes MP4, MP5, Service Requirements, No. 9, page 50. See <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/search/IG00315/> for copy of contract