



Our ref: 78453920
11 November 2025

[REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000

[REDACTED]

I can confirm that the information requested is held by Birmingham Children's Trust. I have detailed below the information that is being released to you.

Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I request the following information held by Birmingham Children's Trust or Birmingham Children's Trust in relation to Special Guardianship Order (SGO) allowances:

- 1) Whether the Council/Trust has at any time adopted a policy, guidance, administrative decision or practice to deduct the child element of Universal Credit from Special Guardianship Order (SGO) allowance/payments.**

Please see attached a copy of the Trust's means testing process.

- 2) If yes, on what date that policy/decision was approved and on what date it became effective.**

Birmingham Children's Trust is currently reviewing its process for SGO allowances including a review of the means test. This review is not yet complete.

- 3) Copies of any policy documents, guidance notes, officer delegations, minutes, emails, legal advice, or internal memoranda that record, authorise or explain the decision to deduct the UC child element from SGO payments.**

Please see attached a copy of the Trust's means testing process together with a worked example.

4) The administrative guidance or calculation template used when applying such deductions (for example, spreadsheets or worked examples used by SGO finance staff).

Please see attached a copy of the Trust's means testing process together with a worked example.

Birmingham's position historically has been to not make any deductions from carers in receipt of Income Support or Pension Credit. When our carers began moving from income support to universal credit, we adopted the position that for carers in receipt of universal credit only with no employment income we would not make any deductions.

For carers in receipt of employment or self-employment income we consider this within our means test and for those carers deductions for universal credit may be made. Carers in receipt of Pension Credit still have no deductions and receive full allowance. This position was in part influenced by training provided by DWP at the time of the transition to universal credits and in the absence of any updated guidance from DFE in this area.

5) (If available) The number of SGO cases in which the UC child element was deducted in each financial year since 2018/19.

It is not presently possible to provide the number of SGO cases that have had the UC child element deducted in each financial year as that would require a manual review of all payments.

I can confirm that the Trust has kept a manual record (i.e. outside of case management systems). The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) requires us to comply with a request, unless it would be too expensive to do so. Under s.12 (Cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit) of the Act, the cost limit for the Trust is £450 i.e. 18 hours at the rate of £25 per person per hour.

The cost limit allows us to consider when estimating the cost of complying with a request, time spent determining whether we hold the information requested; identifying, locating and retrieving it and extracting the information from the relevant documents.

We are unable to process your request as to do so would exceed the cost limit as set out in s.12 of the Act. In cases where the time involved in dealing with requests for information would exceed 18 hours, the Trust normally offers individuals the option to pay for the additional work over and above 18 hours, at a subsidised rate of £25 per hour. However, where the resources involved in dealing with a request would have detrimental impact

on the Trust's ability to provide its core services, the Trust is entitled not provide this option, and accordingly, refuse the request outright.

In this case due to the amount of work and resources required to comply with this element of your request, the Trust is of the view that the resources involved in responding to your request, even if you were to pay the subsidised statutory rate of £25.00 per hour, would interfere significantly with the Trust's ability to provide its core services, as such, the Trust considers that it is appropriate to refuse this part of the request on the basis of Section 12 of the Act.

However, we may be able to provide this going forward once our review of processes is completed.

Please quote the reference number **78453920** in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with our response to your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days from the date this authority issued its initial response. Please outline which part of the response you are not happy with setting out your reasons. This request should be addressed to:

Corporate Information Governance Team
PO Box 16366
Birmingham
B2 2YY
Email: infogovernance@birmingham.gov.uk

If you are still dissatisfied with the Birmingham Children's Trust's response after the internal review you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office

Website: www.ico.org.uk

I will now close your request as of this date.

Yours sincerely,


Disclosure Officer

Re Use of Public Sector Information

Where Birmingham Children's Trust is the copyright holder of any information that may be released, re-use for personal, educational or non-commercial purposes is permitted without further reference to the Birmingham Children's Trust. Where the re-use is for other purposes, such as commercial re-use, the applicant should notify the Birmingham Children's Trust in writing to seek approval or agree terms for re-use.

				SS873 (Apr 2025)		
		Name:		1 child over 11		
		Date of Review:		February		
INCOME ASSESSMENT TO ADOPTERS/CAO/SGO						
Calculation for Regular Weekly Payment						
PERSONAL ALLOWANCES						
Parent(s)			£144.65	EMPLOYMENT INCOME		
Children already in household	1 x	£84.66	£84.66			
Children Subject to Order						
Children: Under 5	x	£178.76	£0.00	Applicants Earnings		£300.00
5-10 Years	x	£197.06	£0.00			
11-15 Years	1 x	£233.10	£233.10	Applicants Earnings		
16-18 Years	x	£282.97	£0.00			
PREMIUMS				BENEFITS		
Family, Couple/Lone Parent		£19.48	£19.48	Child Benefit		£43.30
				Others		
				Universal Credits		£105.00
OTHER				Pensions (from work)		
				INCOME FROM LODGERS		
HOUSING COSTS				Gross	Net	
Mortgage						
Endowment				Capital	Tariff	
Rent		£120.00			Income	
				CHILDS INCOME		
			£120.00			

16-18 Years		x	£282.97	£0.00				
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TOTAL MAXIMUM

£233.10

The Allowance payable is the lowest of:-

DIFFERENCE

£195.59

and

TOTAL MAXIMUM

£233.10

equals

ALLOWANCE PAYABLE

£195.59



SGO MEANS TESTING – FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

Documentation is requested from carers.

Checks are completed on received documents to ensure accuracy of information and governance.

Information requested can include:

- Payslips (3 months, or if salaried 6 weeks)
- Rent
- Mortgage statement of payments
- Benefits / universal credit confirmation
- Council tax bill

1. Calculation document

All calculations are entered at a weekly amount, therefore if monthly figures are provided, they need to be multiplied by 12 and then divided by 52 to reach the required figure for the spreadsheet

e.g. Mortgage payment of £578 per month x 12 months = £6,936 per year, divided by 52 weeks = £133.38 per week amount included in means test.

Personal Allowance (parents)	This figure is determined by central Government
Children already in household	This is birth children living in the household under the age of 18. Enter number of children
Children Subject to order	This is subject to age bands, enter number of children subject to orders at each age band if applicable, Allowance age band amounts are prepopulated on the calculation document – These are the age related fostering maintenance rates
Premiums, Family, Couple/Lone Parent	This is determined by central Government
Other Housing Costs:- Mortgage Endowments Rent	Other - Enter as applicable If carer is receiving Universal Credit, the housing benefit information will be included in the Universal Credit information from the carer. <u>Do not include service charges</u> in the amount entered onto the calculation sheet. There maybe an amount entered onto the original form completed by the carer, always check the universal credit information to ensure no service charges are included in the calculations.
Weekly Council Tax	Monthly payments are usually 10 a year, therefore the monthly payment to be multiplied by 10 and divided by 52 to arrive at the weekly payment to be entered.
Employment Income	Enter all applicants gross income (calculated as weekly), minus income tax, NI and 50% of any pension contributions.
Benefits:-	Enter total amount of child benefit received for all children



<u>Child Benefit</u>	These figures come from Government figures and amount for oldest child will be different to subsequent children
Pensions (From Work)	Enter any work pensions that are received, again calculate this weekly, therefore if the sum provided is monthly multiple by 12 and divide by 52 to arrive at the figure that should be input into the document
Others	If Carer is in receipt of any other types of benefits such as Universal Credit this needs to be entered in this section (weekly calculations)