
Supporting Parents with Learning Disabilities in Shared Lives

Guidance for professionals in Scotland
2023





To skip to the section you're looking for, press CTRL and click to jump straight to it!

Guidance for professionals in Scotland 2023	1
About this guidance.....	2
1. Shared Lives Background	2
About Shared Lives	2
Differences between Shared Lives and other forms of care	2
Shared Lives in Scotland	3
2. Supported Parenting in Shared Lives.....	3
Developing the model	2
3 Parents with learning disabilities in Scotland.....	0
The number of parents with learning disabilities.....	0
The expectations of parents	0
The lived experience of parents with learning disabilities	1
4 The need for Shared Lives.....	1
The rights of parents with learning disabilities.....	1
The needs of children.....	1
5 Referrals.....	1
Types of Referrals	1
Pre-birth.....	1
Parent and child.....	2
6 Working with Shared Lives schemes.....	1
Shared Lives carers.....	1
Training for Shared Lives carers.....	3
7 Funding	1
8 Accommodation requirements.....	2
9 Useful resources	1
Easy Read Resources	1
Organisations	3



Resources for professionals	3
Appendix A	4
Pricing for Shared Lives Supported Parenting Arrangement	4
Anonymised funding agreement.....	4



About this guidance

This guidance is based on the [Supported Parenting](#) approach, which recognises the human rights of the children and parents within a family that needs support. The Supported Parenting approach affirms that parents have gifts as well as support needs. It asserts that support should be tailored to build on parental capacity as well as addressing deficits.

This guidance is for both adult and children's services; for commissioners of social work services, for service providers, and for professionals working with parents with learning disabilities and their children. A key aspect of good practice is multi-agency working and this guidance is concerned with social work, health and education services and with the role of both statutory and independent sector services.

There is additional **Guidance on the Law relating to child protection in Scotland**, published by the Scottish Child Law Centre (2023), which has been specifically written with Shared Lives arrangements in mind.

1. Shared Lives Background

About Shared Lives

Shared Lives is a highly personalised form of care that supports people with a wide range of needs to live safely and comfortably in a home and community of their choosing. Care is provided by professional carers - either individuals, couples or families - in their homes and as part of their local community.

Shared Lives arrangements are set up and supported by regulated Shared Lives schemes and can support people with the following needs or conditions:

- Mental ill health,
- Learning disabilities,
- Dementia,
- Care leavers,



- Supporting people to leave hospital,
- Victims of domestic abuse or modern slavery,
- Stroke recovery or acquired brain injury,
- Young people (aged 16+) in transition to adulthood,
- Shared Lives schemes can also support **parents with learning disabilities** to continue to look after their children.

Shared Lives care is flexible, and support includes:

- Long term accommodation and support,
- Short breaks,
- Day time support or respite,
- Rehabilitative or intermediate support.

Shared Lives schemes are regulated by the Care Inspectorate in Scotland. Schemes are run by local authorities or are independent (profit making or non-profit making). They are responsible for recruiting and training Shared Lives carers, matching people with suitable Shared Lives carers and providing ongoing support and monitoring of Shared Lives arrangements.

A **Shared Lives scheme manager** manages the scheme, which is registered with the Care Inspectorate, and has overall responsibility for the quality and safety of care and support of all Shared Lives arrangements within their scheme. The scheme manager has legal accountability for the final decision on approval (and continuing approval) of new Shared Lives carers.

Shared Lives workers are individuals employed by a Shared Lives scheme and are responsible for, among other things, recruiting, assessing, training, and supporting Shared Lives carers, matching and making arrangements for people with Shared Lives carers and supporting and reviewing those arrangements.

A **Shared Lives carer** is a person who, under the terms of a Shared Lives carer agreement, provides, or intends to provide, personal care, using their own home and, where necessary, provides accommodation there. They are self-employed and must be approved by the local Shared Lives panel to work with a given scheme.



A **Shared Lives panel** provides independent scrutiny and a quality assurance process for Shared Lives schemes, regarding assessments for new Shared Lives carers, as well as the ongoing approval of existing carers.

A **Shared Lives carer agreement** is an agreement between a Shared Lives scheme and Shared Lives carer for the provision of personal care and support for someone using or living in a Shared Lives arrangement. The agreement is a contract between the carer and scheme and outlines the role and responsibilities for both parties. It also sets out the terms and conditions for carer(s) approved by the Shared Lives scheme.

A **Shared Lives arrangement agreement** is a written agreement made for each individual Shared Lives arrangement, between the person receiving care, the Shared Lives carer, the scheme, and anyone involved in commissioning the service (care manager, social worker, or family member).

The agreement details the responsibilities and expectations of all those involved in the arrangement and includes the plan of care for the person using the service. It must be signed by all relevant parties before the start of the Shared Lives arrangement.

Differences between Shared Lives and other forms of care

There are differences between Shared Lives care and domiciliary or supported living. The relationship with the person receiving domiciliary or supported living would be entirely 'professional' and would not involve any of the carer's family.

Domiciliary carers follow a rota to visit and support people, with specific tasks to be performed. Similarly, supported living carers may provide varying degrees of support, but only in or from the recipient's own accommodation.

As part of any Shared Lives arrangement, a Shared Lives carer would carry out their support in their home, in much the same way that any close family member would. Therefore, **Shared Lives can support parents in a unique way, as it is, by nature, relationship-based support.**



Shared Lives in Scotland

In Scotland, 572 people were supported within a Shared Lives arrangement during the 12 months to April 2022. Of the people supported:

- 15% receive help due to dementia or a need associated with old age,
- 47% because they live with autism or a learning disability,
- 3% because they live with mental ill-health,
- and 35% were transitioning from the care system.

There are 519 Shared lives carers providing support in Scotland, associated with 15 Shared Lives schemes. The schemes employ 37 staff to support the Shared Lives arrangements. The most recent Care Inspectorate reports show that:

- 40% of schemes received a grade of 6 (Excellent),
- 33% received 5 (Very Good),
- and 27% received 4 (Good) for the care and support they deliver,
- No scheme was graded lower than 'Good'.

Shared Lives remains a highly cost-effective form of adult social care. An independent review found that Shared Lives resulted in an average saving of between £8k and £30k per annum, depending on the person's support needs and local alternative services.

There is further information on our website: [Scotland - Shared Lives Plus](#)

2. Supported Parenting in Shared Lives

Parents with learning disabilities have the same rights to family life as anyone else, but in practice they face a myriad of challenges when they become parents. They are disproportionately likely to be represented in care proceedings, due to the presumption that they will lack the ability to care for their child effectively. Between 40-60% of parents with a learning disability will have their children removed.



With the **right support** and a **whole-family approach**, parents with learning disabilities can provide loving and stable homes for their children. As a service that respects and promotes **human rights**, Shared Lives is uniquely well-placed to provide this support. The Shared Lives model enables parents with learning disabilities to realise their **right to a family life**.

As a person-centred and asset-based service, Shared Lives is naturally aligned with established **principles of good practice** when working with parents with a learning disability. The **Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting Parents with a Learning Disability** (SCLD, 2015) sets out five key features of good practice in working with parents with learning disabilities:

- Accessible information and communication,
- Co-ordinated work,
- Support based on assessments of parents' needs and strengths,
- Long-term support,
- Access to independent advocacy.

In Shared Lives, the supported adult retains parental responsibility for their child. The role of the Shared Lives carer is not to care for the child, but to **enable** and **support** the parent to do so. As such, Shared Lives is also aligned with the good practice principle of providing 'supported parenting' (rather than 'substituted parenting', which supplants and replaces the parent).

The following animation gives a snapshot of a Shared Lives Parenting arrangement:



Watch the film here: [Supporting parents in care - Shared Lives - YouTube](#)

Schemes who wish to offer parent and child arrangements in **Scotland** should refer to the relevant good practice guidance is published by the Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities: **Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting Parents with a Learning Disability** (SCLD, 2015) and the Department of Health/Department for Education and Skills **Good Practice Guidance on Working with Parents with a Learning Disability (2021)**.

Developing the model

With one year of funding from **The Promise**, Shared Lives Plus led a project to develop Shared Lives for parents with a learning disability, enabling them to care for their child and live well within a Shared Lives carer's family home. This guidance draws together the findings and good practice from previous development work at Shared Lives Plus, supporting parents in England. It also incorporates the lived experience of parents in Scotland, input from the health and social care sector in Scotland, and Shared Lives schemes in Scotland who have supported parents.



3 Parents with learning disabilities in Scotland.

The number of parents with learning disabilities

There is a lack of clarity over the number of parents with learning disabilities in Scotland (SCLD, 2016; MacIntyre and Stewart, 2016). The most current data available focuses on England in the following information, put together by the Working Together for Parents Network: [Facts and figures about parents with learning disabilities in England \(bristol.ac.uk\)](http://bristol.ac.uk)

There are thought to be around 27,218 adults with learning disabilities known to Scottish local authorities, however, the number of parents within this group is not recorded (SCLD, 2016). English data (Emerson and colleagues, 2005) suggests that there may be around 5,000 parents with a learning disability in Scotland.

Many parents and pregnant women may be reluctant to accept the label 'learning disability' for fear of discrimination and negative assumptions around capacity to parent.

The expectations of parents

According to the Scottish Government (2008), being a 'good enough' parent requires parents to be able to provide basic physical care, love and affection, security, guidance, boundaries, and age-appropriate responsibility and independence. Some parents with learning disabilities require support to develop some of these 'good enough' parenting skills including:

- The ability to provide a safe home environment, adequate nutrition, and positive and nurturing interactions,
- Being able to recognise and treat medical emergencies,
- Having a basic understanding of child development (Feldman, 2004).



The lived experience of parents with learning disabilities

Parents with learning disabilities are more likely to:

- Live in poverty,
- Be isolated and victimised,
- Experience literacy and communication difficulties,
- Have experienced poor models of parenting,
- Have difficult relationship histories,
- Have insufficient social support,
- Suffer increased psychological distress,
- Not have access to accessible birth control information and services.

Shared Lives takes a holistic approach in supporting people. When planning support for parenting Shared Lives will consider intersectionality and acknowledge that factors other than learning disability impact on parenting capacity. Shared Lives supports people to redress some of these experiences by:

- Supporting people with claiming benefits and managing money,
- Connecting people to community assets,
- Supporting people with literacy and communication difficulties,
- Modelling healthy, nurturing relationships,
- Linking parents with local health and support services,
- Providing love, care, and support in a safe home.

4 The need for Shared Lives

The children of parents with a learning disability are more likely than any other group of children to be removed from their parents' care: between 40-60% of parents with learning disabilities will have their children removed (Wilson S, McKenzie K, Quayle E et al (2013). There is often an assumption that parents with learning disabilities will neglect their children. However, research demonstrates that



parents with learning disabilities can and do become good parents. However, they may require additional support to become the best parents they can be.

The rights of parents with learning disabilities

There is a range of legislation that supports the right to a family life, for all individuals across the UK:

- Under the **Human Rights Act 1998** everyone has the right to marry and have children (Article 12); get support for your right to private and family life (Article 8); and be involved in decisions and important meetings about your child.
- The **Equality Act 2010** require public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Where a parent has a learning disability, legislation places a duty on local authorities to assess their needs and, where eligible, provide services:

- Local councils have a duty under the **Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968** to assess a person's community care needs and decide whether to arrange any services.
- Part 12 of the **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014)** places a duty on local areas to provide supported parenting where a child is at risk of being removed from their parent's care.

The needs of children

Shared Lives recognises that in working with Children's Services, the primary consideration is the safety, health and wellbeing of the child. Shared Lives schemes will understand that:

- The **welfare of the child is always paramount** in a Shared Lives arrangement,
- There are no exceptions to this rule,
- The parent's mental health and wellbeing must be supported to support positive outcomes for the child.

5 Referrals



There are low levels of awareness about Shared Lives within Children's Services in local authorities. As a result, schemes report instances of Children's Services trying to set up arrangements at the last minute with little notice. This can make it very difficult to get a good match. It is important that Children's Services understand that a **Shared Lives parenting arrangement can only support the parent**, and that carers cannot be held legally responsible for care of the child.

This underlines the need for Children's Services teams to build relationships with their local Shared Lives schemes, helping them to understand the Shared Lives offer, so that they can make appropriate referrals and allow enough time for the matching and placement to be successful.

Early intervention is key to success for supporting parents. It is recommended that services that wish to refer to Shared Lives for a parent and child arrangements should:

- Meet with the local Shared Lives scheme before identifying referrals to discuss how their scheme operates. Each scheme is unique and will have different processes,
- Make referrals as far in advance as possible allowing enough time for matching with the best placed carers to support people's needs,
- Clearly communicate the support needs and legal situation of parents so that schemes can assess the whether the referral is appropriate,
- Include Shared Lives schemes in multi-agency work around parents with learning disabilities.

Types of Referrals

Pre-birth

Referrals for parent and child arrangements can come from the **start of pregnancy**. In these cases, referrals will come from adult services. Referrals that are received when the mother is expecting a baby have the benefit of enabling an **early intervention** approach, supporting the mother within Shared Lives while she is pregnant. The Shared Lives carer can then support the mother with accessing appointments, healthy



eating, wellbeing, finances, accessing benefits, and even birth partnering. This approach gives the parent the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to working towards positive outcomes for themselves and their child.

Parent and child

It is more common for referrals to come when the child is already with their parent. Referrals may come through children's or adults' services or via legal representatives once the child is born. If referral is via a legal route, it will usually be at short notice, with a very strict timetable and may be contentious.

In keeping with the **Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting Parents with a Learning Disability**, the different agencies involved in supporting families where parents have learning disabilities, should have joint local agreements about referrals, assessments and care pathways. The processes for joint working between children's services and adults must be transparent and well set up for effective partnership.

Upon receiving a referral, the scheme will wish to collect detailed information about the parent, child, relevant issues and any court proceedings:

- The parent, including their support needs, living situation and financial situation,
- The parent's partner,
- The child and their specific needs,
- Details of any legal proceedings,
- The parent's legal representative.

If the scheme has a suitable carer, a package of introductory visits should be arranged to help with the matching process. To avoid later difficulties, **fees and funding arrangements should be agreed between Children's and Adult Services before introductory meetings.**

If all parties are happy with the match, a care and support plan would be written and agreed with the parent and others to consider needs, aspirations and preferred choices in day to day life. This will include details of what support is needed for the parent to enable them to be a good parent to their child and set out the roles and responsibilities of all parties.



6 Working with Shared Lives schemes

Shared Lives schemes that provide parent and child arrangements will work with a wide variety of professionals, including children's services, adult services, and legal professionals. This can present challenges: for example, where different services have conflicting views on how an arrangement should be funded, or even on the suitability of a Shared Lives arrangement for the parent and child.

Schemes have reported instances where there was a lack of clarity around funding arrangements. For example, once a mother had delivered a child; and even in cases where the mother's future placement was not supported despite a positive experience in Shared Lives during pregnancy. When the funding or future of the parent's Shared Lives arrangement is in question post-birth. It is essential that:

- All **professionals act in accordance with their local protocol for joint working** to support disabled parents and their children.
 - The Resources section of **Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting Parents with a Learning Disability** includes the contact details of some agencies that have agreed joint protocols and are willing to share these.
- The **parent is supported to realise their right to independent advocacy** as well as legal advice, if necessary.
 - See Voiceability's **Guidance to support advocates in challenging decisions or actions with or on behalf of individuals** - which is intended to help advocates to develop a 'tool-kit' of different approaches to take, dependent on the person's views and the situation.

Shared Lives carers

The Shared Lives scheme put their potential Shared Lives carers through a thorough application, assessment, and approval process. This is to ensure that they have the skills, knowledge and abilities to support each person effectively. The assessment process typically takes three to six months to complete and includes personal, employment references and PVG and house checks. Completed assessments are



presented to an approval panel for consideration. Shared Lives carers will also complete pre and post approval training.

Once a Shared Lives scheme receives a referral for a person to be supported, they look at their support and accommodation needs and wishes. They also consider any identified risks and matches them to an appropriate Shared Lives carer. This will be an approved carer, who lives in an appropriate house, has the right skills and experience, and preferably some interests or hobbies in common. They provide both parties with information about each other, to help them decide if they want to meet.

If both parties agree, the Shared Lives scheme sets up a series of introductory visits for the person to be supported and the Shared Lives carer to get to know each other. If these are successful, and both parties wish to continue, a Shared Lives arrangement is established.

Shared Lives schemes have regulatory responsibility for ensuring that people receive safe and effective care and support. Shared Lives carers will have the opportunity to continue to develop their knowledge and skills through ongoing training, regular monitoring, and support visits from their Shared Lives Worker and through an annual review of their work, which will include an individual learning and development plan.

In addition to the comprehensive assessment, disclosure checks and reference requests that all Shared Lives carers undergo, there are likely to be a number of specific considerations for carers who wish to support parent and child arrangements:

- Shared Lives carers will have a clear understanding that **the safety and needs of the child are always paramount**,
- Shared Lives carers will support the parent to work with many agencies and a **wide range of professionals**, including Health Visitors and Children's Social Workers,
- Shared Lives carers do not take over the parenting role but **support the service user to be a parent**. Understanding that the **child's attachment to their parent is maintained** and does not transfer to the Shared Lives carer,



- At the start of the arrangement, the Shared Lives carer and parent jointly decide on a '**working agreement**', which the Shared Lives scheme will help to prepare. This sets out expectations in terms of behaviours, boundaries, and house rules. This will help ensure that the parent has a clear understanding of when issues must be reported to their Social Worker.

Coming from family services I was aware of my role and the nature of the support I needed to give Abby. I am not a mum, grandma, or babysitter - I am someone that can offer practical support and suggestions.

Mel, Shared Lives carer, Shared Lives South West

Training for Shared Lives carers

There is no mandatory additional training required to the pre-approval and post approval training that Shared Lives carers would ordinarily undertake. However, Shared Lives carers who wish to support parent and child arrangements will need to demonstrate a grasp of child development, parenting skills, and knowledge. This can be through their own experience of parenting, or professional experience of caring for children.

Shared Lives carers who are interested in supporting parent and child arrangements will, where appropriate, attend **training and meetings with the person they are supporting**. This allows the carers to be best placed to target support and help with areas where the parent needs coaching.

Some Shared Lives schemes reported it being especially beneficial for the **parent to attend a parenting course together with their Shared Lives carer**. '**Mellow Futures**' for example, is a specially-adapted pre- and post-birth attachment-based programme for mothers with a learning disability. There are details for Mellow Futures in Section 12, [Useful Resources](#).



7 Funding

The exact cost of a Shared Lives arrangement will depend on a person's location, the level of care and support they need and the scheme's own banding criteria. There are also variations in the extent to which adult services and children's services contribute, depending on the location and arrangement in question. A framework for calculating the total fee could consist of the following elements:

- **The care and support component**, which is payable by the local authority and is based on an assessment of the adult's support needs. This is ordinarily funded by Adult Services. An additional fee may apply for developing and **maintaining parenting skills and the level of supervision and monitoring required** in the placement by the Shared lives carer. It is recommended this is funded by Children's Services.
- **The rent component**, paid by the service user to the Shared Lives scheme for their accommodation. The individual usually pays this from their Housing Benefit/Universal Credit. If a second bedroom is required for the child, additional rent is due.
- **The household costs component**, paid by the service user to the Shared Lives scheme for their utilities, and food. The individual usually pays this from their Universal Credit, and would be completely included in choosing food, shopping etc. The contribution may increase according to the age of the child, and any changes would be considered as part of the annual review.
- A **management fee** may apply, depending on whether schemes are independent of the local authority. For parent and child arrangements, this should be at an enhanced level, to reflect the higher amount of scheme worker time involved in supporting the arrangement and attending meetings with professionals.

Fairer charging would disregard anything related to the child e.g., Child Tax Credits and Child Benefit.

As an indication, average weekly costs for a live-in parent and child arrangement are likely to be in the range of **£500-900** per week. An independent evaluation found that for every £1 spent on Shared Lives parenting arrangements the return on investment



was £1.80. It concludes this is likely a conservative estimate as without Shared Lives the mothers might have required additional social and practical support.¹

The costs reflect that for Shared Lives scheme staff, supporting a parent and child arrangement will differ from supporting other arrangements, in several ways:

- Supporting the arrangement will be more intensive and demand a higher degree of the scheme worker's time. More active support is likely to be required.
- There will be the requirement to engage with a far wider variety of professionals – e.g., for school-age children, attendance at Person Education Plan meetings may be required.
- Scheme staff may be required to give evidence in proceedings and write court reports. For more information on the legal aspects of parenting arrangements please see our **Guidance on the Law relating to child protection in Scotland**, published by the Scottish Child Law Centre (2023).

See Appendix A at the end of this document for an anonymised example of how a parenting arrangement was funded. This is for reference only; each person will have their own unique support needs and circumstances.

8 Accommodation requirements

Shared Lives schemes will also wish to consider their policy in terms of the **room requirements** – e.g., whether Shared Lives carers who offer parenting arrangements are required to have two spare rooms, one for the parent and a separate one for the child. For arrangements intended as longer-term placements, this would be necessary. A pragmatic approach would take a case-by-case approach - e.g., a parent and baby may initially share a room, if the scheme knows that a second room is available if required later.

¹ Annette Bauer, "The economic case for early and personalised support for parents with learning difficulties", [Personal Social Service Research Unit](#) (2015) at the University of Kent



Schemes will also wish to be clear on who has responsibility for purchase of essential **equipment** including cots and stairgates. It is considered reasonable for these to be supplied by the parent.

9 Useful resources

Easy Read Resources

We anticipate any professionals working with parents and children to have their own resources on supporting parenting. The resources below can be used in the context of a Shared Lives arrangement.

Shared Lives Easy-Read Guidance

The Shared Lives scheme can use this guidance with people who move in. The Shared Lives scheme can provide copies so that professionals can reinforce people's understanding of their experience in Shared Lives.

- **Parenting in Shared Lives; Guidance for parents** is a resource to use with parents and their support network when looking to embark on a Shared Lives arrangement.
 - It can be used to provide a context of why they are receiving support, and the kind of things they may need help with and how Shared Lives may be able to support them.
 - You can access this through Shared Lives Plus.
 - This can be used by Professionals working with parents, as well as being used by the Shared Lives scheme.

The following resources are used once a referral has been made, when someone is preparing for, or living in a Shared Lives arrangement. These documents are part of the membership and can be accessed by schemes, and used for anyone in Shared Lives, and are not exclusive to parenting arrangements:

- **What is it all about** provides an overview of Shared Lives,
- **Making sure your needs are met** provides information about the assessment of needs, who will do this, and what they may consider,



- **Matching** is about making sure each person gets the Shared Lives Carer or Shared Lives carers that are right for them,
- **Safe Relationships** is about having friends and relationships in the context of a Shared Lives arrangement, and how a Shared Lives carer can support you to access these relationships safely,
- **Who pays for what** lays out financial responsibilities for people. It covers what people pay for independently, what costs are split between people and their Shared Lives carers, and what is the responsibility of the Shared Lives carer to pay for/ provide.

Other Easy-Read Guidance

- **Ready Steady Baby!** Public Health Scotland's guidance for health professionals. Including pregnancy, labour, birth, and early parenthood. This is a new Easy Read version, developed with and for parents with learning disabilities. There are 20 short booklets available online, which give expectant parents practical information and support throughout their pregnancy journey, from early pregnancy through to a baby's first two months.
<https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/ready-steady-baby-easy-read-guidance-for-health-professionals/>
- **CHANGE** is an organisation working for the rights of people with learning disabilities. They produce illustrated, easy read books for parents with learning disabilities: My Pregnancy, My Choice; You and Your Baby 0-1; You and Your Little Child 1-5 - <https://www.changepeople.org/>
- **CHANGE** also provides an Easy Read version of the Good Practice Guidance on working with Parents with a Learning Disability - https://www.changepeople.org/Change/media/Change-Media-Library/Project%20Media/CHANGE_good_practice_guidance_2006.pdf
- **Easy Health** has a directory of Easy Read leaflets on a variety of health and wellbeing topics, including pregnancy, sex and contraception - <https://www.easyhealth.org.uk/>
- **Pregnancy and me: From Bump to Baby** - http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/sps/documents/wtpn/PregBmpBby_1609.pdf
- **Staying Healthy in Pregnancy** - <https://publicdocuments.sth.nhs.uk/pil3187.pdf>
- **Parent Club** website has information for parents to be and parents who are raising children from through to teenage years. It is not easy read but it uses



plain English and is generally inclusive in its language and layout. It is a great resource for looking at supporting different age brackets and different areas of parenting. <https://www.parentclub.scot/>

Organisations

- It is recommended that schemes that offer parent and child arrangements join the **Working Together with Parents Network**, a virtual network of over 850 members run by the Norah Fry Centre for Disability Studies at the University of Bristol. We encourage teams working with parents to join this network, leading best practice. WTPN has a wealth of resources for supporting parents with learning disabilities - <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sps/wtpn/>
- **Mellow Futures** – training programme for parents with Learning Disabilities - <https://www.mellowparenting.org/courses/mellow-futures/> has been highlighted by several professionals involved in the development of the parenting work at Shared Lives Plus. They are based in Scotland.
- **Best Beginnings** – information for professionals about learning disabilities and pregnancy/parenting - <https://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/parents-with-learning-disabilities>
- The **BabyBuddy** app was co-created with the parents, health organisations and the Royal College of Midwives. Its literacy age of 9 means that it is designed to be easily accessible <https://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/baby-buddy>

Resources for professionals

- **The Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities** has a range of resources about supporting parents with learning disabilities - <https://www.sclld.org.uk/what-we-do/policy-issues/parenting/resources-working-together-parents-network/>
- SCLD (2015) **Scottish Good Practice Guidance on Supporting Parents with Learning Disabilities** - <https://www.sclld.org.uk/publications/scottish-good-practice-guidelines-for-supporting-parents-with-learning-disabilities/>
- Scottish Government has published non-statutory **National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021** - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Appendix A

Below is an anonymised funding agreement example, demonstrating how the cost of parenting arrangement might be divided. There are variations in the extent to which adult services and children's services contribute, depending on the location and arrangement in question. The Shared Lives scheme will set the overall cost and decisions around splitting these costs sit with the professionals and funders involved, not the Shared Lives Team.

Pricing for Shared Lives Supported Parenting Arrangement

Anonymised funding agreement

Name

	Fee element	Band level	Cost per week	Proposed split		
				Adult SC	Children SC	Service user



	Introductory Visits	Special	£20.40 per hour or £144.42 per night	100%		
A	Care & support to meet parents needs	Bands 1, 2, 2+, 3, 3+, 4 and special level	£127- £332 *	100%		
B	Specialist parenting support	Standard or High	£140 or £ 182		100%	
C	Organisational charge	Standard or high	£120 or £160	50%	50%	
D	Additional Support Hour					
E	Rent and household costs	Service User	£176.00			100%
F	Additional rent	Child	£50 **			100%
	Total weekly cost to the funder		A+B+C+D+E+F			

Introductory visits

A package of introductory visits should be arranged to help with the matching process to ensure everyone involved is happy with the potential placements. Introductory visits can be a selection of hours and overnight visits.

A: Care and support*

Shared Lives XXXXX scheme operates a banded system of fees charged for the care and support offered to meet the needs of the adult service user. This is based on all information available set against a set of published banding criteria. This is documented in a contract with XXXXX Council for the purchase of Shared Lives services for all client groups.

The cost of care and support to the Local Authority may be reduced if the service user is required to make a contribution under the local authority's Charging policy for non-residential services for adults. Shared Lives XXXXX scheme can undertake this assessment on behalf of the Local Authority.

B: Specialist parenting support

This element relates to the specific input required around developing and maintaining parenting skills and the level of supervision and monitoring required in the placement by the Shared Lives carer.

The higher rate will apply where there is a requirement for significant supervision during the day and/or night or where unsupervised contact is felt to be high risk; a high frequency of monitoring visits or reports involving the Shared Lives carers; specific support relating to disability or special needs of the child; high risk from other family members or other individuals.

The higher rate is applicable for the first 15 weeks of any service and then will be reviewed on a case by case basis. It can be changed by mutual agreement only.

C: Organisational charge

This element relates to the role of Shared Lives XXXXX scheme as the registered care provider. Shared Lives XXXXX scheme is registered with The Care Inspectorate for the provision of Shared Lives services for people aged XX+

The higher rate will apply where Shared Lives XXXXX scheme is required to do intensive monitoring and reporting on the service (more than once a month); where there are ongoing court proceedings for which written reports and attendance at court will be required; where there is a high level of risk of service breakdown or crisis; where there are two parents involved in the placement;

The organisational charge is always set at high for the first 15 weeks of the placement and payable from the date of commencement of the service. It may then be reviewed at any time and changed by mutual agreement only.

Shared Lives XXXXX scheme may also charge for the production of court reports, the management of visits to prospective carers, and attendance at multidisciplinary meetings prior to the commencement of a service, regardless of whether a service subsequently proceeds. This is individually negotiated.

D: Addition Support

Shared Lives XXXXX scheme can also provide additional support if required to support the placement. This may take the form of additional hours to allow time to meet peers outside of the family home or maybe support with contact visits etc. This would be charged at our introductory hourly rate.

E&F: Rent and household costs**

This part of the charge is paid by the parent to Shared Lives XXXXX scheme for their accommodation, utilities and food. Where a second bedroom is specifically required for the child, an additional amount of rent is due (E). The amount will be determined taking into account applicable benefits etc. but will not usually be less than £50.

Food for the child, baby care products, nappies, toys, clothes etc. are the responsibility of the parent.

Financial Wellbeing

Shared Lives XXXXX scheme will support the parent to claim all eligible welfare benefits, which should enable them to cover their rent and household costs. Shared Lives XXXXX scheme can also act as corporate appointee for the parent if this is an area of support they require and request

Where a parent is unable to meet this cost (for example where they are retaining a tenancy for future use and already claiming housing benefit at that address), the local authority should cover this element in part or full in order to secure the Shared Lives service

Invoicing

Prior to the placement starting, Shared Lives XXXXX scheme should be advised on how the invoicing should be applied e.g does the funding need to be invoiced separately or as one amount which can then be re-charged internally.

Additional information

Any queries regarding the potential service can be sought from our XXXXX Shared Lives Office on XXXXXXXXXXXX

Financial or contracting queries can be discussed by contacting XXXXXXXXXXXX at our office on XXXXXXXXXXXX



Shared Lives Plus

Eleanor Rathbone House, Connect Business Village

24 Derby Road, Liverpool

L5 9PR

0151 227 3499

info@sharedlivesplus.org.uk

www.sharedlivesplus.org.uk

www.homeshareuk.org

Reg Charity number (England and Wales) 1095562

Company number 4511426

Reg Charity No (Scotland) SC042743

