

# **Staffordshire Pupil Premium Plus Policy**

**Revised January 2023**

## 1 Introduction

The Staffordshire Pupil Premium Plus policy is informed by two key Department for Education (DfE) documents:

Pupil Premium DfE Conditions of Grant

[Pupil premium 2022 to 2023: conditions of grant for local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-for-local-authorities)

Pupil Premium Virtual School Head Responsibilities 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities>

Staffordshire Virtual School models relational and restorative practices and will refer to children in care in this document as 'our children'.

Throughout this policy, the Pupil Premium for our children will be referred to as **Pupil Premium Plus** to distinguish it from other forms of Pupil Premium allocation.

The changes are as follows:

- From 1 April 2022 Pupil Premium Plus funding to support children and young people in care at school will increase to £2410 per child.
- Children and young people will be eligible from the first day of the care episode, rather than the previous criteria requiring a child to be in care for six months.
- The Local Authority that looks after the child will continue to be responsible for distributing the Pupil Premium Plus payments to schools and academies.
- The Virtual School Head Teacher is responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus funding to benefit children looked after by their Authority.
- The funding must be managed by the Virtual School and used to improve attainment 'outcomes' and 'narrow the gap' as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP), in consultation with the Designated Teacher.
- As a result, the PEP will need to be monitored even more closely by the Designated Teacher, the Virtual School team, the social worker and Independent Reviewing Officers.
- The overall grant allocated to each Local Authority will be calculated on a per capita basis. However, the allocation of the grant must take account of the differing level of need for our children at different stages of their journey through care, managed through high quality PEPs.

## **2. Pupil Premium Plus policy**

### **2.1. Overall principles underpinning the allocation**

- Our children have needs that can change rapidly during their time in care and will need differentiated funding accordingly.
- Our children are now eligible for funding from the first day of the care episode.
- Up to £500 per term will be allocated to the schools they attend both in and out of the local Authority. How the funding is used must be linked to clear targets outlined in the e-PEP.
- Y11 funding for the Summer Term will be retained to enable the recruitment of 2 advisors to support the transition of children to Post-16 education. Additional funding can be applied for any children in Y11 requiring additional support over the summer term.
- The Virtual School Governing Body will agree the outline annual budget priorities for the use of centrally retained funding.
- The Head Teacher of the Virtual School will be accountable for managing the efficient use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding for the purpose for which it has been provided. Schools remain accountable for the educational attainment and progress of all disadvantaged pupils.
- Schools can apply for additional funding according to the needs of the child. This needs to be done in consultation with their local Virtual School Education Co-ordinator and linked to clear targets outlined in the e-PEP
- The Local Authority is not permitted to carry forward funding held centrally into the following financial year. The Virtual School will work in partnership with schools to ensure that any underspend is used to pilot new approaches to promote positive educational outcomes for looked after children.

### **2.2. How and why will the amount of Pupil Premium Plus vary?**

- Children may come into care in an emergency with a fragmented home and education history and who are below academically.
- Children may have to move into or out of county in an emergency.
- Children may be placed out of Staffordshire in other Local Authorities where the level of support from Virtual School teams may not be the same and who therefore will lose out without additional help.

- Children may have a significant, and often delayed, reaction to abuse and neglect, which manifests in episodes of challenging behaviour in school.
- In view of this, it is expected that there will be differentiation in the level of additional funding and it will be allocated on a 'needs-led' basis.
- Proposals to pool Pupil Premium Plus in a school or a school cluster to enhance services would be welcomed, providing the use is directly linked to the needs of our children as detailed in the PEP process.

### **2.3. Circumstances in which Pupil Premium Plus will not be provided**

Pupil Premium Plus will not be used to double fund or replace funding which has already been allocated to the school to support the child for example:

- To fund services that should be provided via an EHC Plan or an exceptional needs funding request.
- Other statutory work e.g., speech and language or occupational therapy, statutory assessment or other support from health, CAMHS or education.
- For interventions put in place that do not require any funding.
- When the PEP target does not meet requirements (see section 3.1).

Decisions about the use of the funding must be based on a justifiable rationale discussed during the Personal Education Planning meeting and common sense must prevail.

Pupil Premium Plus funding must be used for interventions above and beyond what would normally be provided by the school for other pupils.

Whereas in the past some schools have used the Pupil Premium Plus to fund interventions for other learners, interventions which have no link to the needs of our children will no longer be possible.

### **2.4. Activities covered by fostering allowances**

All children in care should be encouraged to participate in social and leisure activities to encourage them in their social and personal development as well as helping them build resilience within their own communities. Foster Carers receive a fostering allowance that should cover the expenses for caring for a child and it is expected that some leisure activities will be paid for from the allowance.

On occasions, there may be specific activities outlined in the e-PEP that improve self-esteem or social skills that would have a positive impact on educational attainment which foster carers will arrange beyond the school day. Where this has been agreed by all parties as an educational priority, Pupil Premium Plus funding may be used. The use of funding would

need to be clearly linked to the child's targets in the e-PEP along with how it will contribute to improved educational attainment and outcomes.

Foster carers allowance and contracts with Independent Fostering Agencies and Children's Homes include funding for school trips and residentials. In addition, there are arrangements to support one off 'life-time trips' through Children's Social Care.

Where carers are experiencing financial hardship, there are provisions through Staffordshire Foster Service and through commissioners for IFAs and Children's Homes to explore support as it is in the interests of our children to be able to participate in school and essential curriculum focused trips.

### **3. Management and accountability**

Local Authority level:

- The Virtual School Education Co-ordinators will approve expenditure for individual children up to £500 per term and up to £1000 additional funding in exceptional circumstances where it is clearly linked to appropriate and SMART targets in the e-PEP.
- The Virtual School Head will consider any additional funding request over £1000 for an individual child.
- The Virtual School head is able to approve expenditure in line with Virtual School priorities up to the value of £30,000. Any spend above this amount the VHT will seek approval in line with SCC scheme of delegation.
- The Virtual School Head will be accountable to the Virtual School Governing Body who will provide scrutiny for the expenditure of the centrally retained budget on an annual basis.

School level:

- The Designated Teacher will submit any funding requests linked to appropriate and SMART targets agreed as part of the e-PEP to the Virtual School for approval.
- The Designated Teacher should report annually to their school's Governing Body on outcomes for our children including the use and impact of Pupil Premium Plus.

#### **3.1. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

Pupil Premium Plus should be used to meet the needs identified in the e-PEP. This should accelerate learning with clear SMART targets for improvement, underpinned by well-targeted and identified support.

The Pupil Premium Plus must be used to improve outcomes for children in the following areas:

- Academic achievement and progress.
- Wider achievement e.g., in an area in which the child is gifted and talented.
- Attendance.
- Inclusion (by reducing internal and external exclusion).
- Social skills where they are a barrier to learning.
- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider.

Examples of the types of activities that Pupil Premium Plus might be used to support children include:

- Academic provision both lower and higher attaining young people to include 1:1 support, peer mentoring, collaborative learning, resources, and tuition
- Additional support in school aimed to build a child or young person's self-esteem, confidence or develop their learning skills e.g., Thrive and ELSA interventions, pyramid clubs, social skills intervention, nurture groups, peer mentoring.
- Promoting engagement.
- Aspiration raising activities that will benefit the child or young person's learning and development.
- Extra learning resources that may support the child.
- Additional support for vocational training e.g., equipment.
- Improving attendance
- Reintegration strategies/activities/plans.
- Prevention of internal exclusions, suspension, and permanent exclusion
- Alternative education packages.
- Revision courses.

See Appendix 1 for guidance developed in partnership with social workers, carers and Designated Teachers.

#### **4.0 Allocation of funding to Schools:**

**All Pupil Premium Plus funding for individual children should be applied for through the e-PEP system and be linked to appropriate and SMART targets agreed as part of the Personal Education Planning process.**

##### **4.1 Staffordshire Schools**

- Maintained schools will receive up to £500 per term. Payments will be made on a monthly basis following a request for funding linked to appropriate and SMART targets in the e-PEP approved by the Virtual School. Payments will be wired to the school's contingency line.

- Academies will receive up to £500 per term. Payments will be made on a monthly basis following a request for funding linked to appropriate and SMART targets in the e-PEP approved by the Virtual School as part of the monthly payments routine. Details of the payment will be provided to the academy at the same time.
- Additional funding from the centrally held resource to meet exceptional need should be discussed with the Virtual School before any application is submitted through the e-PEP system. The request for additional funding from centrally held resources must be approved by the Virtual School Team.
- Our children who enter care will be able to apply for funding through the e-PEP system. They are eligible up to £500 for the current term from day one of their entry into care.
- If there is a need to clarify what funding a school is providing from its own resources, the school may need to provide evidence to the Virtual School.
- We will not recoup Pupil Premium Plus where a child moves during the term.
- We reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the specific needs of the child looked after.
- Impact of the use of funding should be reviewed at subsequent Personal Education Planning meetings.

#### **4.2. Allocation of funding to Out of Authority (non-residential) Schools**

- The basic allocation of up to £500 per term will be paid to schools. Payments will be made on a monthly basis following request for funding linked to appropriate and SMART targets in the e-PEP approved by the Virtual School. Payments are made either to the Local Authority, where an agreement is in place for them to pass the funding onto their schools, or by a direct payment to the school either by BACS or cheque. Information on the payments will be emailed to either the LA or the school.
- Additional funding from the centrally held resource to meet exceptional needs should be discussed with the Virtual School before any application is submitted through the e-PEP system. The request for additional funding from centrally held resources will be approved by the Virtual School team.
- Our children who enter care will be able to apply for funding through the e-PEP system. They are eligible for up to £500 for the current term from day one of their entry into care.
- Where there is a need to clarify what funding a school is providing from its own resources, the school may need to provide evidence to the Virtual School.
- We will not recoup Pupil Premium Plus where a child moves during the term.

- We reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the specific needs of the Child Looked After.
- Impact of the use of funding should be reviewed at subsequent Personal Education Planning meetings.

#### **4.3. Allocation of funding Out of Authority independent residential providers who provide education**

- We will provide Pupil Premium Plus and additional funding to independent providers only in exceptional circumstances because these placements are already funded at a high level by central budgets in order to deliver a tailored education provision to meet the individual's needs. Any requests need to be discussed in advance with a Virtual School representative.
- Any requests will be reviewed by the VHT and the commissioner of the placement.
- We reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the specific needs of our child.

#### **5. Requests for additional resource from centrally held funding**

Children's needs vary greatly depending on their individual circumstances in their journey through the care system. In certain exceptional circumstances, schools may require additional funding from the Virtual School to overcome barriers to learning. Any applications for additional funding should be discussed with your Virtual School Education Co-ordinator

- An application for additional funding should be, wherever possible, discussed as part of a Personal Education Planning meeting and applied for through the e-PEP target setting section.
- The Personal Education Planning meeting is the opportunity to discuss and agree additional funding to meet the exceptional needs of the child. In an emergency, where a PEP planning meeting cannot be held quickly, please contact the Virtual School to discuss before completing the application.

#### **6. Pupil Premium Plus for Children and Young People from other Local Authorities**

- Different approaches to allocation of the Pupil Premium Plus funding will be adopted by other Local Authorities who have freedom to administer funds according to their own policy.
- Staffordshire schools that have Looked After Children and Young People from other Local Authorities on their roll must contact the Virtual School Head from that Local Authority to request their Pupil Premium Plus policy. The name and contact details



of Virtual School Heads in English Local Authorities can be found on the individual Virtual School website.

## **7. Promoting the best use of Pupil Premium Plus**

**Wherever possible, we promote evidence informed practice and strategies to underpin the use of Pupil Premium Plus funding.**

There is limited research available on strategies that promote the education of Looked After Children. There has been some research on the beneficial impact of 1 to 1 tuition by a qualified teacher and paired reading.

The Rees Centre, in partnership with Oxford University and the University of Bristol, published research in 2015 on 'The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data'

[http://reescentre.education.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/EducationalProgressLookedAfterChildrenOverviewReport\\_Nov2015.pdf](http://reescentre.education.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/EducationalProgressLookedAfterChildrenOverviewReport_Nov2015.pdf)

This outlined the importance of understanding the impact of care factors on education. The Virtual School will continue to deliver joint training opportunities for Designated Teachers, foster carers and social workers to support a greater shared understanding of the experiences of Looked After Children and how these impact on education. Good practice would show careful consideration of education and care perspectives to inform the use of Pupil Premium Plus to set targets for Looked After Children.

'What Works in Education for Children who have had Social Workers' is a re-analysis of data from 63 randomised controlled trials, funded by the EEF, to look at the impacts of educational interventions on the attainment of young people who have had a social worker. The documents highlight some promising interventions.

<https://whatworks-csc.org.uk/research-report/what-works-in-education-for-children-who-have-had-social-workers/>

Many children in care have mental health and wellbeing difficulties linked to their journey into care which can continue through their care experience. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) published guidance in November 2015 'Children's attachment: attachment in children and young people who are adopted from care, in care or at high risk of going into care'. This highlights the importance of supporting children with attachment difficulties in education settings.

## **8. Innovative and individual approaches to Pupil Premium Plus**

We understand that the best use of Pupil Premium Plus is based on a very individual approach, is flexible and aspirational. We would like to celebrate excellent practice where schools have shown outstanding and individually tailored approaches to the use of Pupil Premium Plus.

## **9. Voice of the Child**

Audits across all aspects of Staffordshire Social Care services consistently identify that positive outcomes for children and targets are more likely to be met where the voice of the child is listened to and informs their plans. Virtual School audits of Personal Education Plans and the use of Pupil Premium Plus have had similar findings: where the voice of the child is listened to and acted upon educational outcomes are more likely to be achieved.

PEPs are graded Inadequate where the voice of the child is not included in shaping their education plans.

## **10. Central Pupil Premium Plus allocation.**

The Governing Body has agreed the following principles for the use of the central allocation of Pupil Premium Plus.

- Additional support for individual pupils at particular risk of poor educational outcomes e.g. risk of exclusion, emergency school transition support.
- Central based whole or target population initiatives to promote attainment e.g., tuition for children not reaching age related expectations, Letterbox reading scheme, preparing for GCSEs.
- Out of school learning opportunities e.g., transition summer school for Year 6 and Year 11,
- Training focused on improving educational outcomes for our children for social workers, carers, Independent Reviewing Officers, education partners including Designated Teachers, school leaders and governors.
- Partnership working with groups of schools to develop innovative ways to support our pupils.
- Developing attachment aware settings and services for our children
- Initiatives focused on minimising risk factors including children placed out of the Local Authority boundaries and reducing child sexual exploitation e.g. out of county support, positive activities for unaccompanied asylum seekers, Year 6 transition support.
- Developing school use of self-assessment approaches to improve educational outcomes for our children.
- Opportunities to promote wider learning and engagement in education.

### **Pupil Premium Plus guide for our children.**

- Your school has up to £500 per term to support you to do your best at school.\*
- The funding is there to help you overcome barriers to your learning. Having good skills in maths, reading and writing are a priority.
- Your social worker, carer and Designated Teacher will work closely together to plan how the funding will be used to support you at your Personal Education Planning meeting.

- It is really important that your views on school, learning and what you want to do in the future are heard so that they can be considered carefully and help to shape your plan.
- It is really important that everyone works with you to support you to be your very best at school.
- You might be doing very well at school. The funding is still available and could be used to help you do even better, to develop new skills and have new experiences that may support you in the future.
- Sometimes, you may need additional support if things are not going so well at school. We will work with you, your social worker and the school to see if some additional Pupil Premium Plus funding will help you to get back on track.

\*If you attend an independent school, we will review whether the up to £500 per term is needed as you may already have in place a specialist education provision found for you to help you be your best. If Pupil Premium Plus funding is requested to help you, we will consider the request very carefully.

## **11. Pupil Premium for Previously Looked After Children**

From September 2018, the Virtual School Head Teacher was given new statutory functions relating to Previously Looked After Children. The functions are primarily advice and sign posting.

Pupil Premium Plus of £2,410 is available for Post LAC pupils. This is paid directly to schools as part of the general pupil premium allocation. Schools need to be aware that a child has previously been looked after so they can be included as such in the census.

The Virtual School will promote good practice in the use of Pupil Premium for previously looked after children.

Principles for allocating Pupil Premium for Previously Looked After Children where the Local Authority is arranging education provision can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2022-to-2023>

## **12. Early Years Pupil Premium**

There is an allocation of £342 per year for our children accessing Early Years provision for three and four year olds.

The use of the funding should be evidenced in the Early Years e-PEP and linked to SMART targets.

Payments will be paid to settings by the local authority that they are based in and is paid directly to the childcare provider as part of their normal funding claim. For Staffordshire settings, this is paid as a top up to the hourly rate.

For previously looked after children, the Early Years Pupil Premium is paid directly to the setting in accordance with their local authority arrangements.

The Virtual School will promote good practice in the use of Early Years Pupil Premium for previously looked after children.

## Appendix 1

### Pupil Premium Plus use

Dear Designated Teacher, social worker, parent and carers,

We are regularly requested to share information on the use of Pupil Premium Plus. This is not an exhaustive list, but a guide based on the experience of Designated Teachers, social workers, carers and the Virtual School Governing Body.

Pupil Premium Plus Areas of Spend	Agreed examples of expenditure	Excluded areas of expenditure
<b>Assessments</b>	<p>As part of early intervention, in consultation with the Virtual School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Psychology</li> <li>• Occupational Therapy</li> <li>• Speech and Language Therapy</li> <li>• Sensory Assessment</li> </ul>	Statutory Assessment should be completed by Local Authority Educational Psychology Services.
<b>Emotional wellbeing to support engagement in education</b>	<p>The commissioning of Tier 1 and Tier 2 emotional and mental health services such as counselling, mentoring, behaviour support that are not available through locally and centrally commissioned provision e.g. <a href="#">Staffordshire Connects</a></p> <p>Specific therapeutic support e.g. Lego Therapy, Play Therapy, Art Therapy.</p> <p>Extra-curricular clubs where they are identified to meet SEMH needs that are impacting on learning and engagement in the education setting. These would need to be reviewed termly and the impact on learning evidenced. Any on-going commitments longer than a term</p>	Giving access to pastoral support that is available to all pupils.

	need to be explored about how they will be funded outside of Pupil Premium e.g., foster carer allowances.	
<b>Attainment and Progress</b>	Tuition with a qualified teacher.	Funding education provision that is part of statutory education entitlement.  Reduced class size.  Giving pupils access to existing arrangements that all children have access to in school e.g., homework clubs.
<b>Gifted and Talented</b>	Language tuition, academic tuition to achieve higher grades. University visits and summer schools.	
<b>Wider Learning e.g. Sports and Arts</b>	Engagement with clubs and activities that lead to formal accreditation. e.g., referee qualification, Arts award, music lessons, Duke of Edinburgh Award.	Carers have allowances to support regular clubs e.g., swimming, football, Guides etc
<b>Equipment</b>	Necessary equipment for vocational training, as agreed by Education Coordinator.	School equipment should be paid for by parent/ carers e.g., DT equipment and essential stationery, e.g., school bag, pencil case, pens, pencil, calculator etc.
<b>Technology</b>	Laptops or equivalent, maximum of one in Primary years and one in high school years, it will remain the property of the child and follow them through their education. Up to a cost of £500.	
<b>Special Needs Equipment</b>	On an exceptional basis, where there is a clear educational need and is in addition to what an education or health provider would be expected to supply, in discussion with Virtual School Co-ordinator.	

<b>Transport</b>	None	To be explored in line with local authority transport policy and social care carer agreements.
<b>Clothing /Uniform</b>	None	To be covered by Parent/ Carers.
<b>Trips</b>	None	To be covered by carer allowances. For big ticket trips, discussion with social care about potential contribution to the cost.
<b>School Meals</b>	None	To be covered by parent/ carers.