



INTRODUCTION

My name is Jade Busby and I am the Previously Looked after Children Advisor within Worcestershire Virtual School.

E-mail: jbusby@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk (Tel: 01905 846125)
<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/virtualschool>

The Previous Looked After and Looked-after Children policy

This policy outlines schools Key Responsibilities and duties to promote the Educational Achievement of Looked after Children. This Policy applies to all looked after Children and Previously Looked after Children and it must be read in conjunction with government guidance documents.

Two new documents published by the Department for Education are extremely relevant to previously looked-after children. Both of these have the potential to influence how schools work with previously looked-after children and their families.

[The Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children – statutory guidance \(February 2018\)](#)

Key points to consider:

- The guidance is statutory – therefore schools MUST comply.
- The guidance recognises that previously looked-after children are likely to have significant barriers to their learning
- It requires that all schools identify a designated member of staff who will take responsibility for promoting the achievement of previously looked-after children; this person should be experienced, in a senior position with the ability to influence whole school decisions; they should also receive regular training ensuring other staff access training and are kept updated.
- In order to meet needs of previously Looked-after Children Social, emotional and academic needs are suggested as a priority.
- The importance of involving parents in decisions about their child's education and ensuring good home-school links are built this includes involvement about how pupil premium plus is spent .
- The importance of relationships between staff and pupils and the importance of enabling children to have voice is identified.
- There is recognition that previously looked-after children are more likely to have special educational needs and mental health needs
- Direction is given for schools to put in the right support so as to avoid exclusion of a previously looked-after child becoming necessary.
- Introduces the new requirement for Virtual School Heads (VSH) to make information and advice available to parents and schools in relation to previously looked after children.

The Guidance is clear about schools needing to ensure sufficient flexibility in their behaviour policy to meet the needs of previously looked-after children.

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

This is the main safeguarding document that schools need to be familiar with, in terms of previously looked-after children the guidance states:

“A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.” (Point 95).

Funding for Previously Looked After Children

Schools that have children who are:

- Previously looked after (the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order)
- Subject to adoption
- Special guardianship order or child arrangement order (known as 'previously looked after')

Are eligible to claim pupil premium plus funding

Special guardianship orders	Child Arrangement Order	Previously looked-after children
<p>A special guardianship order is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's 'special guardian'. It is a private law order made under the Children Act 1989 and is intended for those children who cannot live with their birth parents and who would benefit from a legally secure placement.</p> <p>It is a more secure order than a residence order because a parent cannot apply to discharge it unless they have the permission of the court to do so, however it is less secure than an adoption order because it does not end the legal relationship between the child and his/her birth parents. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 introduced Special Guardianship and Special Guardianship Orders.</p> <p>Advice from Family Lives</p>	<p>A Child Arrangement Order or Child Arrangements Order is in the UK an agreement concerning where a child lives and who a child can have contact with. They are usually sought following the breakdown of a relationship and replace 'contact orders' and 'residence orders'. Their legal basis is section 8 of the Children Act 1989.</p> <p>Wikipedia</p>	<p>Those who are no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. 'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.</p>

The pupil premium for 2019 to 2020 will include pupils recorded in the January 2019 school census, who were looked after by an English or Welsh local council immediately before being adopted, or who left local council care on a special guardianship order or child arrangements order. These are collectively referred to as post-LAC in these conditions of grant.

The grant is currently £2,345 per year and is for students from Reception class up to Year 11.

In order for schools to access the funding, parents and guardians must declare their child's adoptive, SGO or CAO status directly to the school before the school completes the January census. Parents and guardians must provide evidence, for example, a copy of the legal order, or a confirmation letter from the local council which placed their child. Parents should not need to declare their child's status again until the child changes school. Parents are not obliged to declare this information.

For the purposes of these conditions of grant, mainstream school means infant, junior, primary, middle, secondary, high schools, special school and pupil referral units.

Unlike the Pupil Premium that was accessed through the Virtual School when the child was still legally in care. Pupil Premium money for previously looked after children comes directly from the Local council to the school and is not ring-fenced for the individual child. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers. All pupil premium spending should take account of the specific needs of previously looked after pupils. The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by previously looked-after children. It is good practice for schools to include parents in discussions around the most effective use of Pupil Premium Plus and it is important that interventions supported by pupil premium should be evidence based and in the best interests of the child.

For further clarification, please see the guidance: [Pupil Premium: allocations and conditions of grant 2018 to 2019](#)