

Previously Looked After and Children Looked After Pupil Premium Policy



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Contents

Previously Looked After and Children Looked After Pupil Premium Policy	1
Introduction	1
What is Pupil Premium for Children Looked After?	1
Components of Pupil Premium	1
Eligibility for PP+ funding and Early Years Pupil Premium	2
Administration of Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium funding	2
Use of Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium for Children Looked After	3
PP+ funding can be spent on the following areas - over and above the school's/setting's normal core offer:	3
PP+ funding cannot be spent on:	3
Request for Additional Pupil Premium Plus	4
Reviewing impact: Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium for CLA	4
Eligibility for Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium	5
- Administration of Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium	5
- Use of Previously Looked After Pupil Premium	5
- Reviewing impact of Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium	5
Funding to support Post-16 education and training	6
- How to claim the Post-16 bursary	6
Appendix 1 - Useful documents and websites	7

Introduction

Whilst some of our Children who are Looked After achieve well, the educational outcomes for children and young people who are looked after generally remain low compared to their peers. Many children entering the care system or who are in the care system and starting school do so with low entry levels, a history of trauma and with special educational needs. It is intended that the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding outlined in this policy will address this issue by providing the resources for targeted support and intervention.

This policy sets out how Worcestershire Virtual School will distribute and monitor Pupil Premium Plus funding for our Children Looked After.

This policy should be read alongside the following government guidance:

- [Pupil premium: overview - GOV.UK](#)
- [Pupil premium: conditions of grant for the 2025 to 2026 financial year - GOV.UK](#)
- [Pupil premium: virtual school heads' responsibilities - GOV.UK](#)
- [Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)

This Policy and associated practice will be reviewed annually and approved by the Virtual School Governing Body to reflect any change in DfE policy or funding arrangements.

What is Pupil Premium for Children Looked After?

Raising the attainment of Children Looked After is a key priority and it is a responsibility shared by the Local Authority, schools, and their partners in the community. Children facing disadvantage are eligible for Pupil Premium. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is specifically for Children Looked After. This is a key resource, and used effectively, it will diminish the difference in outcomes between disadvantaged children and their peers. Pupil Premium Plus provides additional funding for virtual schools to support and help raise the educational attainment and progress of their pupils who are Looked After.

The Virtual School devolves the majority of this funding to our pupils. It works, through the Personal Education Plan process, with designated teachers, social workers, and carers to target and utilise this funding effectively to improve educational outcomes. The Virtual School also centrally retains a portion of PP+ to fund projects to benefit all of Worcestershire's CLA.

Schools are entitled to claim up to £1,650 per annum (£550 per term) for each Child Looked After, through the Personal Education Plan process. This funding is attributed against agreed, termly SMART targets and is sent to schools on a termly basis.

Schools may apply to Worcestershire Virtual School for additional PP+ funding to meet the needs of an individual Child Looked After, or to raise the achievement of all Children Looked After in their school, to improve outcomes. Equally, some clusters of schools or early years providers may have a proposal for using PP+ for the benefit of Children Looked After in the locality.

PP+ funding can be used to facilitate a wide range of educational support for CLA. It is important that interventions supported by **PP+ should be evidence-based and in the best interests of the child.**

Components of Pupil Premium

There are several components within Pupil Premium funding that relate to CLA or Previously Looked After Children (PLAC):

- Pupil Premium for CLA is known as **Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)**. For Worcestershire CLA this is distributed via Worcestershire Virtual School, in arrears at the end of each term.
- Pupil Premium for 'rising 3-year olds' is referred to as **Early Years Pupil Premium**. For Worcestershire CLA this is distributed via Local Authority Finance Team, in collaboration with the Virtual School, directly to Early Years settings through the Nursery Education Fund Payment.
- Pupil Premium for children who have **left Care** via Adoption Order, Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order is known as **Previously Looked After Pupil Premium**. This is paid directly to schools. (See 'Eligibility for Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium').

Eligibility for PP+ funding and Early Years Pupil Premium

Eligible pupils who are looked after by Worcestershire are identified by the local authority on the DfE return SSDA903 in March of each year:

- The overall grant allocated to each LA is calculated on a per capita basis. This is based on the census of the previous year. However, it does not have to be distributed on a per capita basis, given that children and young people in care have differing levels of need at different stages of being in care
- The grant must be managed by the Virtual School Head and used to improve outcomes and “narrow the gap” as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) in consultation with the Designated Teacher and Social Worker.
- Children Looked After are eligible to receive PP+ from the first day that they enter care.
- Children and young people between the ages of four to sixteen years are eligible for PP+ funding. (Worcestershire Virtual School will continue to fund until the end of Y11).
- In the statutory school years, Children Looked After attract £2630 PP+ annually from the first day of care between Reception age through to and including the summer term of year 11. In Worcestershire, up to £550 per CLA, per term can be allocated to schools via the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process. Additional funding requests can also be made.
- At Post 16 (Y12 & Y13) - Virtual Schools have the flexibility to direct funding to support cohorts in wider post-16 settings, or those who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- The 16-19 Bursary is the main additional funding allocated for Post 16 students (see section 12).
- Worcestershire Virtual School does not ordinarily allocate Pupil Premium Plus to Independent Schools and education providers where the child's education placement is funded by the Local Authority via an Education Health Care plan (EHCP). Children's needs should be met and fully funded through the LA's payment for the school place. Unless the Virtual School receives confirmation that PP+ is needed in addition to the funding already paid and identified within an EHCP, it will not be made available.
- If the child/young person is attending an independent setting, PP+ would not ordinarily be allocated as this is provided through the SEND provision and/or care contract funding agreement. This ensures there is clarity about the additional impact expected from this funding, over and above that expected from the specialised provision already commissioned.
- For Previously Looked After Children, schools are entitled to receive £2630 per annum, directly from the government. To qualify for Previously Looked After Child status children need to have been in the care of a Local Authority, before a new order of permanence; that is Adoption, Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Child Arrangement Order (CAO) (previously Residency Orders). Schools can access this funding by ensuring parents provide the necessary information and selecting the correct codes during the autumn census collection.
- The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) for looked-after children is £570 per year and is for children who have been in care for one day or more, from the school term after their third birthday until they start in Reception class accessing their free entitlement through the universal offer
- You may also get Early Years Pupil Premium if your child has left care in England through adoption, special guardianship order, a child arrangements order. Contact the Local Authority EY Funding Team for further details.

Administration of Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium funding

Local authorities receive a PP+ grant allocation based on the number of Children Looked After for at least one day and aged 4 to 15 on 31 August, as recorded in the latest Children Looked After data return. The Virtual School centrally retains £980 (37%) of the annual £2630 grant for each Children Looked After to fund resources, delivery and strategic interventions to benefit all of our Children Looked After, including those placed outside of Worcestershire. Expenditure of the centrally retained funds is planned strategically by the Virtual School team.

Worcestershire Virtual School administers payment of the PP+ for Worcestershire Children Looked After to the education provision where they are on roll. A payment will be made at the end of each academic term to the education provider, reflecting the SMART educational targets and funding agreed within the termly

PEP process. If funding is required, it must be allocated on the PEP document in order for it to be released to the setting. If no funding is allocated on the PEP document, the setting will not receive funding.

The Local Authority in which the child is educated has the responsibility to pay the Early Years Pupil Premium to the early years providers that educate Children Looked After, who are taking up the Universal Nursery Education Funding (NEF) entitlement for 3 to 4-year-olds, including Early Years providers or any other organisation that receives NEF from the local authority for children aged under 5, including nurseries and childminders.

Use of Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium for Children Looked After

The PP+ can be used to facilitate a wide range of educational and emotional support for Children Looked After. When deciding on how to use PP+ to support a child, views should be sought from the Designated Teacher in conjunction with carers, the child/young person, teachers, the SENDCo, pastoral staff and other professionals working with the child/young person, including the Social worker and the Virtual School representative. It is important that interventions supported by PP+ should be evidence-based and in the best interests of the child.

PP+ and Early Years Pupil Premium (for Children Looked After) should not be used for activities that the Local Authority should normally be expected to fund as the Corporate Parent.

PP+ funding can be spent on the following areas - over and above the school's/setting's normal core offer:

- Academic provision, both lower and higher attaining young people, to include 1:1 support, peer mentoring, collaborative learning, resources, and tuition.
- Use of interventions to prevent internal exclusion, suspension, and permanent exclusion (where schools can demonstrate that they have exhausted their universal offer).
- Reintegration strategies/activities/plans.
- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider.
- Improving attendance.
- Developing social, emotional, and interpersonal skills (emotional intelligence, building self-esteem) through 1-1 key worker support, nurturing approach, mentoring, where they are a barrier to learning and can be directly linked to under-achievement.
- Small group work where the impact is clear for the individual Children Looked After.
- Promoting engagement.
- Extracurricular activities, including sport, outdoor activities, arts, culture and trips. In exceptional circumstances, additional PP+ funding can be requested to contribute to the cost of a residential trip, **if** it reflects an area for development in the targets within the PEP and the full amount cannot be met through Foster Care Allowances.

PP+ funding cannot be spent on:

- Anything a school would normally provide for **all** its pupils.
- Anything a carer would provide from their Foster Carer Allowances.
- Trips that are part of the curriculum, or specifically related to exam coursework.
- Transport costs to events or clubs.
- Services that would ordinarily be funded through the SEN Notional budget.
- The support set out in an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) – settings should utilise their SEN Notional and EHCP Top-up funding for this support.
- Interventions that have no additional cost and where the school or education providers' funding covers the cost.
- Basic equipment that the child or young person needs to participate or for lessons including school uniform, stationery, school lunches, or equipment for practical lessons. This also includes access to a computer and the internet for completion of homework or private study.
- Contributing to the salaries of substantive staff (as interventions should be time-limited).
- Reduced class sizes.

Request for Additional Pupil Premium Plus

Schools may apply for additional funding to meet the needs of an individual child or to raise the achievement of Children Looked After in their school, to improve their outcomes. Equally, some clusters of schools or early years providers may have a proposal for using PP+ for the benefit of Children Looked After in the locality. Any proposals should be discussed and agreed in writing with Worcestershire Virtual School.

If additional PP+ or Early Years Pupil Premium is required, to support a CLA in crisis or for support requiring more funding than the termly payment, this should be discussed with the allocated Virtual School Learning Advocate. An 'Additional Funding Request' form should be submitted, in agreement with their Learning Advocate. The identified SMART target and funding should also be recorded in the PEP 'targets section' by the Designated Teacher. The request must include clear timescales and will be time limited. Any request should identify evidenced based interventions to address the current needs of the young person, along with well-defined outcomes, and should clearly outline why extra funding is required for that young person, before payment will be considered. The Learning Advocate will discuss the application with the Virtual School Deputy Headteacher. Should further information be required, the Learning Advocate will contact the Designated Teacher. If no further information is required, the request will be processed by the Virtual School and if the application is successful, the Designated Teacher will be notified by the Learning Advocate.

Reviewing impact: Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium for CLA

For the PEP to be purposeful and have a positive impact on the child it must set clear SMART targets for the child/young person. The PEP review should include an evaluation of the impact of the PP+ or Early Years Pupil Premium for Children Looked After in aiding their progress towards the targeted areas. Progress against the targets and impact of PP+ must be clearly evidenced.

The Designated Teacher or early years setting manager will be accountable to the headteacher and the school governing body for the efficient expenditure and effective impact of the Pupil Premium Plus grant and the progress of the children in care on roll. The headteacher of the school must be aware of the amount of funding received by the school for Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After, how effectively it is spent and the impact on learning. Each Designated Teacher should outline this in a report for their Governing Board on an annual basis. A report template is available on the Worcestershire Virtual School website and enables Designated Teachers to provide details of how they have used the funding to support our young people in raising their attainment and improving outcomes in relation to their peers and other disadvantaged groups.

Worcestershire Virtual School collates information, on a termly basis, regarding the use of both the issued and the retained portion of the PP+. The Virtual School Headteacher is accountable for managing the efficient use of Pupil Premium Plus in line with the purpose for which it has been provided and will produce an annual report including information on how Pupil Premium Plus has been managed and evidence on how the spending has supported improving outcomes for Children Looked After. Schools remain accountable for the educational attainment and progress of their Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After.

Pupil Premium Plus for Children and Young People from other Local Authorities

Different approaches will be adopted by different Local Authorities, as the contexts vary so much in terms of number of school-aged children in care, the size of each Virtual School team and the existing operational budget for the Virtual School team (both vary enormously between Local Authorities). Worcestershire schools who have children in care from other Local Authorities on their roll must contact the Head of the relevant Virtual School to request their Pupil Premium Plus policy, as nationally all Heads of Virtual schools

are responsible for the allocation of Pupil Premium Plus for all school aged children and young people in the care of their Local Authority, even if the child/young person is educated in a different Local Authority.

Eligibility for Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium

Eligibility is those children from Reception to Year 11, who have left care because of adoption, a special guardianship order, or a child arrangement order. (Residence orders were replaced by Child arrangements orders on 22nd April 2014). This may also include children who are supported in a Kinship Care arrangement.

From 1 April 2023, Pupil Premium eligibility for pupils who have been adopted from care or have left care will include children adopted from outside of England and Wales.

It is for those with parental responsibility (adoptive parents, special guardians and carers of former children looked after, child arrangement orders) to decide if they wish to self-declare their children's status to schools. Schools should ensure parents and carers are aware of the funding available and therefore can make an informed decision. The designated teacher for children previously looked after can then ensure this cohort of children is fully supported and the school accesses the entitled pupil premium.

Parents are to provide supporting evidence, for example, a photocopy of the adoption order.

Declarations are voluntary, and confidentiality should be respected if parents and carers do not wish to declare their status.

N.B – this funding does not apply to Previously Looked After Children who have returned home to the care of their parents and the care order has been revoked.

Administration of Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium

In the academic year 2025-2026, the funding rate per child, per year is £2630.

To ensure schools receive funding for each Previously Looked After Child that attends their school, education settings must ensure they record each pupil's status in the October school census every year. Please note that if this census is missed, young people cannot be added to receive the funding until the following years census.

Use of Previously Looked After Pupil Premium

PP+ funding for Previously Looked After Children is allocated directly to and managed by their school.

It is not a personal budget for individual children; however, schools may choose to allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs. Funding should be used to improve the educational attainment and progress, and to support the SEMH needs of Previously Looked After Children and to narrow the gap between them and their peers. Schools may find it useful to utilise the 'Inclusion Plan' document, which can be found on the virtual school website.

It is good practice for parents/carers to be consulted and involved in decisions regarding the child/young person's needs and agree on strategies to support their development.

Reviewing impact of Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium

School Senior Leaders are responsible for reviewing the impact of Pupil Premium (FSM ever6, Service Personnel and Previously Looked After Children) as a whole school and complete their

reports for governors under their own Pupil Premium Policy. Schools can update their policy to make exceptional provision for Previously Looked After Children Premium and 'ring fence' the funding, or part thereof, for the child who generates the Premium. Schools will need to provide evidence to their governing board and Ofsted regarding the use and impact of Previously Looked After Children Pupil Premium.

Funding to support Post-16 education and training

A bursary is available to help with education-related costs if the student is aged 16 to 19 and:

- studying at a publicly funded school or college in England - not a university
- on a training course, including unpaid work experience

A publicly funded school or college is one that does not charge for attending it. A bursary is money that the student, or the education or training provider, can use to pay for things such as:

- clothing, books, and other equipment for the course
- transport and lunch on study or training days

Any young person meeting the above requirements, who is in or who has recently left the care of the Local Authority, will be eligible to apply for the bursary.

Please note, there is variation in how Post 16 Providers administer the bursary, so please liaise with your current provider for clarity.

How to claim the Post-16 bursary

Any Year 11 school leaver who has made an application to a Further Education college or a Training Provider may apply for the 16-19 Bursary. Applications can be made regardless of whether the young person has a conditional or unconditional offer for the following academic year. The young person will have received a student number which was generated when they submitted their application, and this will be required for the bursary application. The bursary is worth up to £1,200, depending on the young persons' circumstances and benefits.

The application is made directly to the college/training provider's Finance Team that the young person will be attending at the start of the academic year. The application form can be found on the website for each college/training provider under Student Services or Student Finance.

The Virtual School will continue to support the young person through the Post-16 Personal Progression Plan (PPP) process, although the bursary will be administered by the Further Education or Training provider.

Appendix 1 - Useful documents and websites

[Pupil premium: allocations and conditions of grant 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

[Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

[Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)

[Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

[The Virtual School | Worcestershire County Council](#)

[Pupil premium 2025 to 2026: technical note - GOV.UK](#)

[Pupil Premium Guide Apr 2022 1.0.pdf](#)

[Inclusion Plans for Previously Looked After Children | Worcestershire County Council](#)