



# **Pupil Premium Plus Policy for Children in Care**



**2025-2026**

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# Pupil Premium Policy for Children in Care

## Introduction

This policy is informed by key Department of Education (DfE) documents regarding the arrangements for Pupil Premium for Children in Care (CiC):

- Pupil Premium Overview <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>
- Early Years Funding 2025 – 2026 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-funding-2025-to-2026>

The DfE will publish initial allocations in March 2025 for all schools that complete the October 2024 census. Allocations will be confirmed in June 2025, before the first payment. The DfE will pay PPG to local authorities in quarterly instalments by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 & 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

The DfE allocates funding to each local authority to provide PPG+ for looked after children of statutory school age who are looked after to each LA. The funding for financial year 2025-2026 will be allocated on the basis of £2,630 for each Child in Care of compulsory school age in the LA's care. The conditions of the grant state:

- The CiC premium must be managed by the designated Virtual School Head (VSH) and used for the benefit of the looked-after child's educational needs as described in their personal education plan (PEP). The VSH should ensure there are arrangements in place to discuss how the child will benefit from pupil premium funding with the designated teacher in the child's education setting.
- The condition of grant continues to stipulate that the grant is to be managed by the Virtual School Head Teacher and must be allocated in response to identified needs of the child and to support educational progress for the local authority's cohort of looked after children as a group, and not just to meet individual need.
- The statutory guidance [Promoting the Education of Looked After Children](#) also states:

'All VSHs should publish a clear policy on their use of PP+, including the level and use of top-sliced funding.' This requirement provides transparency and clarity for schools, carers and families about how local authorities use and manage Pupil Premium Plus funding.

Throughout our policy, the Pupil Premium for CiC will be referred to as Pupil Premium Plus to distinguish it from other forms of Pupil Premium allocations.

The key policy points are:

- Children and young people between the ages of four to sixteen years are eligible for Pupil Premium Plus as soon as they enter care.
- The Virtual School Head Teacher is directly responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus funding to benefit CiC in their authority.
- The overall grant allocated to each Local Authority will be calculated on a per capita basis: 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 and used to **improve attainment, diminish the difference, and accelerate progress as identified in the young person's** Personal Education Plan (PEP) in consultation with the Designated Teacher. In April 2015, further development introduced the Early Years Pupil Premium.

The Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium funding will be allocated according to the following principles:

- Children and young people will be eligible from the first day of the care episode.
- The Local Authority that looks after the child is responsible for distributing the Pupil Premium Plus payments to schools, settings, and academies.
- The Virtual School Head Teacher is responsible for making sure that there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium funding to benefit children in care in their Authority.
- The grant must be managed by the Virtual School and used to improve outcomes and “diminish the difference” as identified for individual children and young people in the targets set within their Personal Education Plan (PEP) in consultation with the Designated Teacher or Designated Person in the setting.
- The PEP must be monitored and reviewed closely by the Designated Teacher, the Social Worker, and Independent Reviewing Officer for effectiveness.
- The PEP must be reviewed on a termly basis by the Designated Teacher.
- The electronic PEP through the ‘Synergy’ portal will be used for all Telford and Wrekin children in care.
- The electronic PEP, once fully completed each term, will trigger the payment of the Pupil Premium grant to the school or setting.

- All PEPs will be monitored for SMART targets that have a positive impact on the improvement of educational outcomes.

As a result of the above, the allocation of Pupil Premium Plus is a model driven by a child's needs, managed through high quality PEPs. PEPs will be monitored closely by Designated Teachers, the Virtual School, Social Workers, and Independent Reviewing Officers.

## **2. Pupil Premium Plus Policy**

### **2.1. Overall Principles Underpinning Our Child's Needs Driven Model**

The Virtual School Head Teacher is responsible for the use of Pupil Premium Plus to diminish the difference and realise the potential for all children in our care, wherever they live. Telford and Wrekin Council and the Virtual School Head Teacher are Corporate Parents, so the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?' is a central one in making decisions and evaluating the effectiveness of the use of Pupil Premium Plus.

- £1,350 per Child in Care will be allocated to schools. This will be paid in three instalments of £450. This applies to all schools with Children in Care to Telford and Wrekin whether they are in Telford and Wrekin or beyond.
- Allocation of the funding will be linked to clear Personal Education Plan targets for progress.
- The Virtual School Head Teacher is responsible for the allocation of the Pupil Premium to schools and settings and will hold the schools and settings that receive the funding accountable for evidence of the effective and efficient use for the purpose it has been provided. Schools remain accountable for the educational attainment and progress of all disadvantaged pupils in their setting.
- Schools should ensure that the funding is used to narrow the gap between the outcomes for children in care and all other children within the school as well as all children nationally.
- None of the grant will be used to pay for Virtual School management or grant administration.
- The Local Authority is not permitted to carry forward funding held centrally into the financial year 2025 to 2026. Grant held centrally that has not been spent by 31 March annually will be recovered.

The remaining £1,280 per CiC will form the PPG+ high needs fund and is utilised to:

- Supplement staffing in the Virtual School so that all schools have a designated Education Officer or Advisor who attends targeted PEP meetings and is available for consultation when needed.
- Provide additional funding support to school/education settings for pupils who have additional short-term needs identified, or a period of crisis that is impacting directly on

learning progress.

- Support the wider strategies and activities of the Virtual School to fulfil the Local Authority's statutory duties.

In line with all allocations of grant, it is expected that:

- High-quality PEPs are completed termly, with interventions that can be aligned to Pupil Premium Plus funding and SMART targets for improvement.
- Termly progress and current attainment data shared through the electronic PEP.
- Attendance data shared at least weekly through the electronic attendance form.
- Impact of interventions funded through Pupil Premium Plus are evidenced and recorded in the child's PEP.
- Pupil Premium Plus allocation must be spent in line with the Terms and Conditions of Grant as dictated by the DfE.

## 2.2. How and Why Will the Pupil Premium Plus Be Differentiated to the Needs of the Young Person?

Children's needs may vary over time and therefore a personalised approach is needed. For some children, a significant amount will be needed to fund the cost of the support they need e.g.:

- Children who come into care in an emergency, who are behind academically with a fragmented home and education history.
- Children who move into or out of Telford and Wrekin who may require additional support.
- Children with significant and often delayed reactions to abuse and neglect, which may present as complex emotional, social and/or challenging behaviour impacting on progress. For example, a person's behaviour can be defined as "challenging" if it puts them or those around them at risk or leads to a poorer quality of life. It can also impact their ability to join in everyday activities. Challenging behaviour could include aggression, self-harm, destructiveness. [NHS challenging behaviour](#)
- Young people who have experienced complex trauma often have **difficulty identifying, expressing, and managing emotions, and may have limited language for feeling states**. They often internalise and/or externalise stress reactions and as a result may experience significant depression, anxiety, or anger. [Trauma Types | The National Child Traumatic Stress Network \(nctsn.org\)](#)

To enable all young people to benefit from Pupil Premium Plus, all young people except those hitting the criteria in paragraph 2.3, will receive the base funding of £1,350 per year.

The difference between the base funding of £1,350 and the grant allocation of £2,680 will be used to provide differentiated support for those with the greatest need. This additional support will be identified by the Virtual School and the funding allocated accordingly. This additional support will be varied, but might include:

- One to one advice and support in school from Virtual School Team
- One to one tuition outside of school to meet specific needs or to prepare for public examinations
- Additional assessments of needs
- A package of intervention at an Alternative Provision
- Commissioning intervention packages

In addition, the Virtual School created a dedicated Educational Psychologist (0.4) post for Children in Care post based within the Virtual School (post currently vacant). The purpose of this is to:

- Provide consultations to support CIC.
- Provide systemic consultations with all stakeholders.
- To undertake specific assessments, advice and generate reports.
- To support with the training and development of all stakeholders.
- To support with the training and development of education establishments to become accredited 'Attachment & Trauma Informed' settings.

### **2.3. Circumstances in Which Pupil Premium Plus Will Not Be Agreed**

Pupil Premium Plus will not be used to 'double fund' or replace funding which should have or has already been allocated to the school to support the child. Specifically, it cannot be used to:

- Fund services that should be provided via an EHC plan.
- Fund SEN needs where the child is on School Support and the school's SEN budget should be used to meet these needs.
- Provide other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from health.
- Provide support which is provided for in other contracts. As such, it will not be paid to independent settings where this support is expected as a condition of contract.

Pupil Premium Plus will not be paid if:

- The interventions put in place do not require any funding.
- The school's own funding covers the cost of the interventions.
- The PEP for that term hasn't been completed.

- The PEP is deemed not to be of high quality, with SMART targets, through the Virtual School Quality Assurance process.
- The school is not sharing the relevant attainment, progress, and attendance data through the 'Synergy' portal.
- Pupil premium plus funding is not provided for pupils with an EHCP who are placed in an independent school setting, or any pupil placed in a residential setting with education will not usually receive PPG+ separately. The funding provided to commission the placement is based on meeting the full needs of the child. However, in exceptional circumstances based on evidence of need, PPG+ funding may be allocated by the Virtual School Head Teacher.

## **2.4. Use of PPG+ for Extra-Curricular Activities**

PPG+ can be used to support in school extracurricular activities if these can contribute to the outcomes above. For example, this could be used to fund music tuition for a student if this contributes towards 'wider achievement' e.g., in an area in which the child is gifted and talented.

The funding cannot be used to fund an activity which does not contribute towards these outcomes. For example, it may not be appropriate to fund a ski trip which takes place in school holidays, and this may well be an activity which the carers could be asked to support.

## **3. Management and Accountability**

The Virtual School Head Teacher (VSHT) will be accountable to the Virtual School Governing Body and the Corporate Parenting Strategic Board for setting up a transparent and rigorous allocation process and ensuring maximised impact of the grant.

The VSHT has responsibility for ensuring that Pupil Premium Plus is used in-line with the conditions of grant and this policy.

The Designated Teacher is responsible for proposing an appropriate, bespoke, needs driven spending plan. The Designated Teacher is accountable via the PEP meeting for monitoring and measuring the impact of the actions and interventions agreed. The impact will be reviewed in terms of diminishing the difference.

The Social Worker and Carer have a key role in supporting and informing the discussions at the PEP meeting for a proposal of how Pupil Premium Plus could be used. They also have a key role in supporting the young person in achieving their targets.

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

Telford and Wrekin Schools who have Children and Young People in Care on their roll from other Local Authorities should contact the Head Teacher of the relevant Virtual School to request their Pupil Premium Plus policy. The name and contact details of other Virtual School Head Teachers can be requested from the Telford and Wrekin Virtual School team.

#### 5. Pupil Premium Plus for Children Previously in Care

In addition, and through a separate process, children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, or a child arrangement order will have their entitlement to Pupil Premium Plus paid directly to the school. The school will need to work with the adoptive parents to ensure the status of the young person is recorded on the census return; the Pupil Premium Plus funding will then be received through the normal school funding routes.

There is no direct responsibility for the Virtual School Head to monitor the use of this Pupil Premium Plus and there is no expectation of a PEP. However, support and advice for previously looked after young people is available and schools should contact the Virtual School Extended Duties team or the Virtual School Head Teacher if this is required.

#### 6. Year 11 and Transition to Post 16 Provision

Pupil Premium Plus will **not** be paid to schools for any Year 11 student in the final (summer) term of Year 11. This funding will be pooled and used to support transition to post 16 provisions. This transition might include:

- Virtual School support to make the transition to post 16.
- Additional one to one tuition for any English or Maths exam retakes.
- Education package to support next steps in education (Post 16) e.g. Functional Skills.

#### 7. Early Years Pupil Premium

Studies show that there is a 19-month gap in 'school readiness' between the most and least advantaged children. The EYPP aims to reduce this inequality.

Introduction of the EYPP for three and four year olds in April 2015 was intended to support providers to bridge this gap with additional funding, approximately £300 for each eligible child. From September 2024, EYPP will now apply to children the term after they are 9 months old.

Early years providers have a key opportunity to maximise this additional funding to improve children's outcomes and to boost disadvantaged children's achievement. It will be



Ofsted's task to monitor the impact of the funding, and this is likely to become an important aspect of future inspections.

If your child attends any of the following childcare settings, they can claim this extra funding to support your child's needs in their setting:

- childminder
- childcare on domestic premises
- pre school/playgroup
- day nursery
- nursery class or sessions at a school
- nursery school.

## Appendix 1 - Appropriate and Effective Use of PPG+

The PPG+ is an opportunity to address the learning needs of a looked after child through the provision of additional interventions and learning resources, activities or support tailored to the individual child's need, and so raise achievement and increase rates of progress.

It is not intended to replace services, support, or resources that the Local Authority, schools, Early Years providers, carers or other agencies working with Looked After Children already provide, or that is provided to all children around universal services as part of the education offer.

In particular, funding should not be used to replace:

- Support set out in an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) or those attached to a school-based plan for additional special educational needs.
- Interventions that have no additional cost and where the Early Years setting, or school's own funding covers the cost.
- Resources that a Local Authority provides for through its allowance to foster carers or children's home fees. Carers have an allocation for clothing, uniform and (within reason) out of school activities.
- Trips and visits organised by the school as part of the curriculum. If these are part of the curriculum or specifically related to exam coursework, schools can only request a donation. It is expected that Social Care or the carer should provide resources for these activities.
- Basic equipment that the child or young person needs to participate in lessons, or for school uniform, school lunches or equipment for physical education lessons.
- Alternative education for Looked After Children subject to fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Before or after school childcare clubs.
- Funding covered by foster carers (as part of their own contractual funding agreement) such as out of school hours activities like sports clubs, theatre trips, etc.

On occasions, there are specific activities that improve self-esteem or social skills or are linked to raising aspiration. These must be clearly linked to the child's learning objectives recorded in the PEP, along with how it will contribute to improved educational outcomes.

There is an expectation that evidence of how this funding is being used to improve the educational outcomes of looked after children is produced termly at the PEP meetings. If the school are unable to evidence how the funding is being used to support the child to progress in line with their peers, the PPG+ may be withheld by the Virtual School.

Schools must make sure they consider the views of children/young people and their carers in the use of this funding.

A small proportion of the PPG+ for each looked after child is held by the Virtual School and managed by the Virtual School Head Teacher (VSHT). This funding will be used directly to support intervention work of the Virtual School team for those looked after children most at risk of under achievement or disengagement from learning.

Evidence suggests that pupil premium spending is most effective when used across three areas:

1. High-quality teaching, such as staff professional development.
2. Targeted academic support, such as tutoring.
3. Wider strategies to address non-academic barriers to success in schools, such as attendance, behaviour, and social and emotional support.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) recommend that schools particularly focus their pupil premium on supporting high-quality teaching.

[Using pupil premium | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

[Foundations - Evidence Driven Change Making](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

#### **Latest National data statistical release:**

[Education, children's social care and offending - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) July 2023

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-looked-after-children> April 2025

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2023-to-2024> November 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/outcomes-for-children-in-need-including-children-looked-after-by-local-authorities-in-england-2023-to-2024> April 2025

[Looked after children who are not in school | Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#) May 2023

## **Ofsted Findings**

The following comments relate to both PPG and PPG+ for CiC, as such this is a rather broader sweep than for just CiC PPG+:

What does not work in terms of effective interventions?

- Spending the funding indiscriminately on teaching assistants with little impact and not managing their performance well.
- Spending the funding on one-to-one tuition and booster classes that are unmonitored...and do not relate to class teaching...and are not audited or quality assured.

- Planning spending in isolation – not part of the school action plan.
- Assuming that pupils eligible for the PPG+ will have learning difficulties.
- Comparing the performance of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium with other eligible pupils nationally, rather than all pupils – lowering expectations.

What does work?

- Targeted tuition to include measuring impact (start and end of intervention).
- Homework support.
- TA appointment and targeted input for specific areas.
- Resources (e.g., revision guides, textbooks, equipment for particular lessons such as DT, Art, college / off site courses, sensory equipment, etc.).
- Group work intervention, with LAC as focus child (for both learning and pastoral areas).
- Online access to learning resources which require funding.
- Access to extra-curricular activities which will support or impact behaviour and, in turn, learning (e.g., Drama clubs).
- Reward systems (e.g., rewards for daily golden time) which will impact learning.
- Behaviour interventions.
- Opportunity to extend school time, in order to access learning.
- Summer school access.
- Staff training to enhance understanding of LAC related difficulties (for example, attachment).

## Typical use of PPG+

1. Focused and finite additional 1:1 or small group intervention. This should be focused on areas of weakness or gaps in learning. This intervention should have clear outcomes and its impact evaluated.
2. Additional supervision to enable the child to access activities which would otherwise not be possible, e.g., trampoline club, archery, resistant materials workshops.
3. Covering part of the cost of an Educational Psychologist report.
4. Rewards for achieving goals in behaviour for learning.
5. 1:1 intervention to re-engage a disaffected learner.
6. Short term 1:1 tutoring for a child on a temporary modified timetable.
7. Extending school time e.g., afterschool support with homework.
8. Specialist software or equipment beyond that normally provided by the school e.g., a graphics tablet, speech recognition software, a typing tutor programme.
9. Extra-curricular activities and clubs which will impact on wider learning goals such as behaviour or self-image e.g., dance, drama, martial arts, summer, or other holiday enrichment activities (these may be run by the school, LA, or other local providers)
10. Fees for national awards such as DofE

11. Summer / holiday school
12. Staff training to enhance understanding of LAC related difficulties e.g., attachment disorder.

Where the intervention is in small groups, the spend in terms of PPG+ should take account of this, e.g.

| Provision to meet outcomes            | Ratio (1:X) | Session length (minutes) | Cost per hour (including on-costs)* | Cost per pupil per session |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| TA: meet and greet, emotional support | 1           | 10                       | £10.00                              | £1.67                      |
| TA: small group literacy and numeracy | 6           | 120                      | £10.00                              | £3.33                      |
| Teacher: greater depth support        | 3           | 15                       | £25.00                              | £2.08                      |
| designated teacher support            | 1           | 10                       | £25.00                              | £4.17                      |

### What shouldn't the PPG+ be used for?

- Any expenditure which is not linked clearly to one of the PEP targets.
- Items which the foster carer is expected to provide such as:
  - Items of school uniform including sports kit
  - Standard textbooks or equipment (e.g. calculator)
  - A computer with internet access
  - School trips which are an essential part of the core curriculum
  - Playgroup or nursery fees
  - The cost of school lunches or packed lunch
  - School photographs
  - Day trips
  - Transport to and from school or bus pass
  - Musical instruments
  - Bike
  - Private music, dance, or drama lessons

Under some circumstances, additional funding for some of the items above may be available through the placement social worker.

Funding to carers may vary between T&W and private fostering agencies. In some cases, funds are available through the fostering agency for the cost of one trip abroad with the school for every young person during their secondary education - this trip can be taken at any point between year seven to eleven and will be paid in addition to the young person's two weeks' additional holiday allowance in that particular year. All other school trips abroad

will not normally be funded as these would fall within the normal expectation of activities funded by the carer. All school field trips required for GCSE courses should be funded by the school.

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