

# Understanding Pupil Premium Funding for Previously Looked-After Children

**Surrey Virtual School**



## Introduction

This guide has been produced by Surrey Virtual School and aims to provide clarity surrounding Previously Looked-After children and Pupil Premium Plus (PPP) funding. The information contained within this guide is based on the current Department for Education (DfE) Pupil Premium Conditions of Grant 2020-2021 along with a handful of other documents for which references can be found at the end of the guide. This document is correct as of November 2020 and will be regularly updated to reflect ongoing changes as they come through government.

This summary is informed by the three key Department of Education (DfE) documents that detail the policy and practice arrangements for the Pupil Premium Plus for Previously looked-after Children (PLAC) for 2020-2021.

- Promoting the Education of looked-after Children and Previously looked-After Children (DfE 2018).
- Pupil Premium Plus Conditions of Grant 2020-21 (DfE 2020)
- Pupil Premium and the role of the Virtual School Head (DfE 2014)
- Pupil premium: effective use and accountability (October 2019)

## Eligibility

The Department of Education defines Previously Looked-After Children as:

Children who are no longer looked after by the local authority in England and Wales because they are the subject of an Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order. (This currently does not include children who have been returned home to parents after being in care by the Local authority.) The child/young person must have been in care in England and Wales to qualify for Pupil Premium Plus funding.

Any child attending school from the start of reception to the end of Year 11 (summer term) is eligible to receive PP+. Children who are electively home educated or are post-16 students are currently not eligible for post-LAC PP+.

The Pupil Premium grant per PLAC Pupil for 2020-2021 is £2345.

## Why is there Pupil Premium Plus for Previously Looked-After Children?

The DfE takes the view that many children who are previously Looked-After will have “experienced grief and loss and will have had traumatic experiences in their early lives. 72% of those adopted in 2013-14 entered care due to abuse or neglect. Their needs do not change overnight, and they do not stop being vulnerable just because they are in a loving home. Their experiences in early life can have a lasting impact which can affect the child many years after adoption. We therefore believe that teachers and schools have a vital role to play in helping these children emotionally, socially and educationally by providing specific support, to raise their attainment and address their wider needs”.

## Differences between LAC and PLAC Pupil Premium Plus Funding

Surrey's Virtual School Head is responsible for managing arrangements for Looked After Pupil Premium. This includes making decisions about the amount that is sent to schools, together with the frequency of payments. This is not the case for the post-LAC PP+, which is paid directly to schools. It is schools, and not the Virtual School who are responsible for ensuring that the post-LAC premium is spent in accordance with the conditions of grant. For further details, please refer to end of document for guidance.

## Applying for Pupil Premium Plus for PLAC

### Department of Education Guidance Change – December 2020

From April 2021, Allocations for children in mainstream and special schools will be decided based on the number of eligible children recorded in the **October census**. As a result of this, data from the October 2020 census will be used to allocate the funding that schools will begin to receive in April 2021. For alternative provision and pupil referral units, the January census will still be used.

Schools apply for Pupil premium plus for PLAC students through the October census. Census Codes for Previously Looked After children can be found in the [School census 2017 to 2018, Department of Education Guidance – Page 89](#). Schools receive £2,345 (2020-2021 funding) for each Post- LAC child recorded on the October census. This is paid in the following financial year. For example, eligible pupils recorded on the October 2020 school census will qualify for PP+ funding from April 2021 to March 2022 (i.e. 2021-22 financial year).

Schools can, however, use the £2300 already sent in the previous financial year for another child to support more than one post-LAC child and do not have to wait until the next financial year to put in any additional support a child may need. Once a parent or guardian has written to the school to declare their Child's post-LAC status, they will not need to do this again unless the child moves school. For further information on how to inform the school of a post-LAC status, please refer to [Children adopted from care and the pupil premium: template letter - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

It is important to give careful consideration as to how and to whom parents and guardians will provide the relevant documentary evidence in school. The information is sensitive and confidential, and it helps if procedures are clear, efficient and timely. The Virtual School will provide advice and support to schools and families in circumstances where parties are unsure how to proceed.

Additional Department Of Education Guidance around completing the School census can be found [Complete the school census - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

# Allocation of Funding to Schools

## Mainstream Schools

*(which for this purpose includes infant, junior, primary, middle, secondary, high schools, all-through, special school and pupil referral units. It does not include general hospital schools or other alternative provision.)*

Surrey will pay Pupil Premium to schools as a funding allocation each June/July for that financial year. If you are unsure or have questions around pupil premium plus funding. Please contact the Schools Funding team: [schoolsfunding@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsfunding@surreycc.gov.uk)

## Academy Schools

Academy's receive their pupil premium funding straight from the ESFA as opposed to the Local Authority. If you are unsure or have questions around pupil premium plus funding. Please contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency through their General Enquiries Form.

## Non - Maintained Schools and independent schools

Education, Skills funding Agency allocates Pupil Premium funding to local authorities post-LAC pupils in general hospital schools and alternative provision settings not maintained by the local authority but where the local authority pays full tuition fees. This does not include non-maintained special schools, who will receive PPG direct from ESFA.

## Additional Information

Post-LAC PP+ cannot currently be claimed for children who are home schooled unless this arrangement is being funded by the local authority. Pupils who attend independent schools are only entitled to claim PP+ if the local authority is funding the tuition fees. There are no plans to change this currently.

Please Note: It is up to the school to ascertain that a pupil is post looked after and to ensure that the LA is aware of their status before the date of the October census. Otherwise the school (if Non-maintained school) or the LA will not receive Post LAC pupil premium for the following financial year.

# Spending PLAC Pupil Premium

Like other types of PP, the purpose of PP+ is to raise educational attainment and close the gap between post-LAC children and their peers.

Although the main aim of the pupil premium is to raise attainment, you can spend your pupil premium on:

- non-academic outcomes, such as improving pupils' mental health
- non-academic improvements, such as better attendance
- activities that will also benefit non-eligible pupils

Although this funding is not ring-fenced to individual children, Schools should be aware that the needs of FSM, Service Children and PLAC children are different and therefore pooling all pupil premium together is not always the most effective way of

meeting their needs. Previously Looked-After children are generally disadvantaged due to their early life experiences and therefore this funding should be used to address some of the subsequent difficulties they face within education. This is typically academic under achievement, social and emotional difficulties and school awareness of trauma and attachment needs.

Unlike Currently Looked-after children's Pupil Premium, Schools are not expected to spend the PLAC grants entirely on individual children. The DFE states: "The pupil premium is additional funding given to schools to improve the educational and personal outcomes for pupils who have been adopted from care, including (but not limited to) their attainment. It is not intended that the additional funding should be used to back-fill the general school budget nor is it the policy intention that the funding should be used to support other groups of pupils, such as (for example) those with special educational needs or who are low attaining. The funding is not ring-fenced and is not for individual children – so the Department would not necessarily expect the school to spend £2300 on every child adopted from care on roll at the school. This is partially because a child may have left the school and new pupils may have joined but also because a school is best placed to determine how the additional funding can be deployed to have the maximum impact. For example, a school may decide to train their staff in recognising and responding to attachment-related issues; or that a particular adopted child needs tailored support that is in excess of the £2300 the school has received."

There is a growing body of research and guidance to support schools. The DFE "encourages all schools to use robust evidence when making decisions about how to spend their Pupil Premium. Schools may contact their LA and national organisations such as BAAF and Adoption UK for support and guidance. The Sutton Trust-Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit is also a useful source of information schools can draw on. The characteristics of formerly looked after children do not disappear overnight. Schools may also find Virtual School Head, Virtual School Staff and the Designated Teacher at the school a valuable source of information".

Pupil Premium Plus is an opportunity to address the learning needs of previously looked-after children through the provision of **additional** interventions and learning resources tailored to the individual need of the child. It is **not** intended to replace services, support or resources that the local authority, schools, early year's providers, parents/carer's or other agencies working with previously looked-after children already provide, **or** that is provided to all children in the area as a universal service or as part of their educational entitlement.

**The department of Education recommend Pupil Premium Plus should be used to improve outcomes for Previously Looked After children in the following areas:**

- Acceleration of academic achievement and progress;
- Wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is more able;
- Improving school attendance e.g. in cases of School refusal
- Reducing internal and external exclusion;

- Developing social, emotional and interpersonal skills where they are a barrier to learning and can be directly linked to under-performance;
- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider.

## Accountability

Ofsted inspections look closely at the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and the gap between them and their peers. At the end of each academic year, there is a legal requirement for schools to publish information online about their PP funding allocation, how it has been used and the impact this funding has had on disadvantaged pupils. The school are not required to provide a breakdown of costs per pupil who attract PP+ as this funding is not seen as a personal budget per child.

## Role of parents and guardians

The DfE takes the view that: “The role of parents and guardians in their child’s education is crucial and we expect schools will want to engage with them about the education of the pupils on their roll, irrespective of whether they attract the pupil premium. However, we would hope that schools would want to take advantage of this relationship with regards to formerly looked after children as the school may have only become aware of the child’s status when they are told this by the child’s parent ahead of the School Census. They may be unfamiliar with the detail of any barriers to learning individual children may be facing as a result of their history. Schools should, of course, be mindful of the sensitivities that may exist around the child’s history and ways in which their experiences prior to leaving care are affecting the child currently.” Parents and Carers are welcome to contact Surrey Virtual School if they wish to seek advice or further information.

## Parents/Carers, Social Workers, Designated Teachers, – what questions should we be asking?

- What is the current level of attainment?
- Is the pupil at Age Related Expectations (ARE)? (that is the expected point for their age in the core subjects)
- If they are not at ARE, what is being done to address any gaps in core subjects?
- What progress is being made in core subjects?
- If they are not making good progress, what interventions can be offered?
- Are there any additional special educational needs?
- Has an Education Plan for Adopted Children (EPAC) been written and needs assessment undertaken? What are the pupils & parent/carers views?
- Are there any long-term needs? Or requirements for therapeutic support?
- What extra support or interventions can be put in place using Pupil Premium?

# Role of Surrey Virtual School regarding Pupil Premium Plus

Although SVS is not accountable for the allocation or spend of PP+, our statutory remit does include providing information, advice and guidance to schools, parents and carer's around pupil premium funding for Previously Looked-after children in line with the current government guidance.

If you have a questions or concerns around PP+ for Previously Looked After children, please contact our PLAC Education Support Officer  
Email: [ellie.bissell@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.bissell@surreycc.gov.uk)  
Phone: 07970 411 002

## Further Information, Advice and Guidance

[DfE Pupil premium conditions of grant 2020 -21](#)

[Pupil premium: effective use and accountability \(October 2019\)](#)

[The pupil premium: How schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement \(Ofsted 2013\)](#)

[Education endowment foundation toolkit](#)

[Stuart Guest's Blog on Pupil Premium Plus funding in Schools](#)

[School census 2017 to 2018 Guide, version 1.8 \(Page 89 - Post looked after arrangements\)](#)

## Acronyms

CLA – Currently Looked-After  
Post - LAC – Post Looked After Children  
PLAC – Previously Looked-After Children  
PPP/PP+ - Pupil Premium Plus  
EYPP – Early Years Pupil Premium  
SVS – Surrey Virtual School



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