

Pupil Premium - Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Guardians of Previously Looked-After Children

Surrey Virtual School



Frequently Asked Questions: Pupil Premium

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.

Department of Education – Definition of Previously Looked-After Children

“Children... who were looked after by an English or Welsh local authority immediately before being adopted, or who left local authority care on a special guardianship order or child arrangements order (previously known as a residence order). These are collectively referred to as post-LAC”

DFE Pupil premium: conditions of grant 2020 to 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

“I am not sure if school is claiming pupil premium plus for my child, how do I find out?”

Schools should not be claiming pupil premium funding without the parent or carers knowledge. If you're concerned your child's school is not claiming pupil premium and should be, please speak with your schools designated teacher.

“My child has recently moved to /started at a new school, do I need to notify them that my child is PLAC and if so, how do I do this?”

If you declared your child was previously Looked-after when applying to the school, they may already be aware of their legal status, however it is important that you check this. You could notify the school in writing or speak to the designated teacher. You may be asked to provide the school with sight of the court order or certificate as evidence. The school does not need to keep copies of this. This information is not passed onto schools when a child moves, so it is important to notify each new school as soon as possible.

“My child is home-educated. Can I apply for Pupil premium plus for them if they are Post-LAC?”

Unfortunately, Children who are electively home educated are currently not eligible for post-LAC PP+. Pupil premium plus can only be applied for by schools or educational settings as it is claimed through the October census.

“My YP is starting at college/university, are they still entitled to Pupil premium Plus?”

Post-16 students are currently not eligible for post-LAC PP+, as the funding applies to statutory school aged children only. Any child attending school from the start of reception to the end of Year 11 (summer term) is eligible to receive PP+. Depending on the YP personal financial circumstances they may be entitled to apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

“As a parent or Carer, can I ask for the school to use the pupil premium plus to fund a specific activity, resource or intervention?”

The department of Education states *“The funding’s main aim is to raise attainment; however, it can be used to fund:*

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

Pupil Premium Plus for PLAC is aimed at children who have been disadvantaged due to their early experiences and the effect this has on their overall attainment, whether this be academically, socially or emotionally. The school should identify areas where a YP or PLAC Cohort may be struggling and aim to develop e.g. PLAC YP within the school have similar difficulty in understanding their feelings and regulate their behaviour, aim for pupil premium may be to develop their emotional literacy by accessing ELSA sessions.

The department of education guidance states *“Your designated teacher should: encourage parents and guardians to be involved in deciding how pupil premium plus is used to support their child and be the main contact for queries about its use.”* Therefore, schools should be involving parents in discussions around PP and taking opinions and suggestions of use on board. However, school do have the final say on how the funding is spent, as they are responsible in ensuring it is spent in accordance with the guidance provided.

“Can I ask the school to use Pupil premium to fund a Private Assessment?”

This is dependent on the type of assessment that is needed and whether it is more appropriate for other funding to be used. If it is linked with a SEND need, it should be funded through the school’s SEND budget. If the assessment is needed for a child who does not have an EHCP, the school can apply to the Local Learning Fund, which is a funding scheme applied for by the School.

If there is no other source of funding that can be relied upon to pay for a private assessment, and if it can be linked back to the conditions of the grant and agreed by the school then pupil premium in theory can be used.

“My child’s school feel that as my Child is making expected progress, there is no need to use pupil premium to support them. How can I encourage my school to reconsider?”

The Pupil premium Guidance states that *“Funding is not based on attainment and you’ll get the pupil premium if your pupils meet the eligibility criteria. Evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils with high attainment are especially at risk of under-achievement.”* Just because at YP is currenting achieving does not mean this will always be the case. Schools where children who are in receipt of pupil premium and are high achieving should be ensuring that they are benefitting from Pupil premium regardless of their attainment, taking into account their changing needs. The PP funding main aim is to raise attainment; however,

it can also be used to address social, emotional and mental health concerns which may affect progress and attainment. If a child has social difficulties e.g. difficulties with making friends – funding could be used to put in interventions around friendships or listening such as Lego therapy. Funding can also be used to help pupils progress further to above expected progress by funding resources, Programmes or skill development. We would encourage you to raise these issues with your child’s school and ensure they are aware of your child’s needs, considering their pre care experiences.

“What happens to the post-LAC premium if a child moves school?”

Schools are not obliged to pass post-LAC funding on to a new setting if a post-LAC child leaves the school. Any decisions about passing funding on take place between the two schools and an agreement needs to be made between them if funding is to be shared. The same rule applies to a dual-registered student who is on roll, for example, at a mainstream school, but receives education from an alternative provider such as a PRU. The home centre – i.e. the initial school – is responsible to liaising with the alternative provider and sharing funding as agreed. Parents and Carers should ensure the new school is notified of the child’s PLAC status so Pupil premium can be claimed. Schools however are held to account through OFSTED around the way’s pupil premium is used to improve outcomes of children eligible for this funding.

“Do schools have to spend the additional funding they receive on the individual child eligible”

Unlike LAC PP, the answer to this is No. The DFE states: *“The pupil premium is additional funding given to schools to improve the educational and personal outcomes for pupils who have previously been in 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 PLAC child needs tailored support that is in excess of the £2300 the school has received.”*

It should be noted that schools are responsible for ensuring that, although they are not expected to allocate the entire funding to individual children, they evidence that the child is benefiting from the funding. This, for example, could be paying for school-wide trauma and attachment training for all staff. This can in turn show that the child benefitted from this funding as staff are more aware of their early experiences and how to support them better in school.

“I don’t feel that my child is benefitting from the pupil premium funding the school is claiming, Can I request a breakdown of pupil premium spend in relation to my child?”

Schools are required to publish an annual pupil premium report on their website. This must detail the amount of PP Funding they receive – this includes FSM, LAC, PLAC and Service funding. Schools are not required to provide breakdown of funding for individual children as this funding is not ring fenced per child. If you have concerns around the use of the funding, we would suggest meeting with your School’s Designated Teacher to understand what the funding is being used for and how it is benefitting your child. Many schools use education plans for children previously looked after to help identify their individual needs, set targets and measure the impact of interventions and pupil premium funding. You can find an example of the Surrey Virtual School EPAC on our website or by contacting the SVS directly. Please note that these are not compulsory, however.

“My Child has an EHCP, are they entitled to PP+ and if so, how should it be used?”

PLAC Children with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) are entitled to pupil premium funding. Children with an EHCP should have a package of additional support put in place, in school, to enable them to access the core education offer, which is funded through their EHCP Plan entitlement. The Pupil premium should only provide for additional items or enhancement to this core provision, based on needs, for the pupil to achieve their full potential.

“Can the Pupil Premium be spent on a Computer / School Trip?”

What is the educational benefit? What are the identified needs and actions in the Education Plan for Adopted Children (EPAC) and how would this spending support these? If a pupil is not at age related expectations, then what is being done to address this? What extra support or tuition is being paid for from Pupil Premium? It is expected that a parent will provide the financial support for additional curricular activities. If a Parent / Guardian’s financial situation is unable to support the cost of a trip, then please discuss with your child’s school.

REMEMBER the pupil premium grant is for the educational benefit of pupils.

“Can the Pupil Premium be used for school uniform or school transport?”

It is expected that a parent would provide school uniform for their child. If the family is experiencing financial difficulties and are unable to provide a school uniform for their child, then they should seek advice from their child’s school.

“Can Pupil Premium funding be pooled within a School?”

Potentially it can, there may be circumstances where pooling PP will ensure maximum support and impact for the child and young person. Schools will still need to demonstrate

how any pooled funding has supported a child's educational progress and outcomes however.

“Can we use the funding to buy equipment so that all the children in the school benefit from it?”

As long as the school has identified how the child will benefit from the equipment purchase this is acceptable. However, schools need to carefully consider how the funding will be used.

“Can we use the Pupil Premium funding for PLAC to join out of school clubs?”

Can you identify how this benefit the child's academic progress and attainment? What are the identified needs and actions in the Education Plan for Adopted Children (EPAC) and how would this spending support these? If a pupil is not at age related expectations, then what is being done to address this? What extra support or tuition is being paid for from Pupil Premium? It is expected that a parent will provide the financial support for additional curricular activities. If a Parent / Guardian's financial situation is unable to support the cost of a trip, then please discuss with them as you would any other parent in a similar situation.

Useful links and references

[Pupil premium: conditions of grant 2020 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Pupil premium: effective use and accountability - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[The Pupil Premium - How schools are spending the funding.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Pupil Premium Guide | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF](#)

[Pupil premium – Why it can sometimes be difficult to get the right support for adopted children in schools – Schools, education and adoption... \(wordpress.com\)](#)

[School census 2017 to 2018: Guide \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Acronyms used in this document

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

EHCP – Education and Health Care Plan

EPPLAC – Education Plan Previously Looked-After children

YP – Young Person

