

St Helens Council
Virtual School Policy for Pupil Premium
For Looked After Children

2017

Pupil Premium Plus for Looked After Children

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Children and Families Act (March 2014) made Virtual School Heads statutory for Local Authorities, with responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of the Local Authority's Looked After Children (LAC). This role includes responsibility and accountability for managing the LAC element of the Pupil Premium Grant.

Please note, throughout this policy the Pupil Premium for Looked After Children will be referred to as Pupil Premium Plus, to distinguish it from other forms of Pupil Premium allocations.

- 1.2 Pupil Premium Plus (PPP) will be managed by the Virtual School Head based on the educational needs of the child as identified in the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP). The Virtual School Head must ensure PPP spend is linked to raising achievement for LAC pupils and closing the gap between their achievement and that of their peers. The Virtual School Head will manage the budget, oversee PPP spend for all LAC pupils and report on its impact.

Please note, the PEPs for St Helens Council LAC pupils are currently completed electronically and reference to the PEP in this document indicates this electronic PEP.

- 1.3 The Virtual School Head will be accountable to the Corporate Parenting Board and the Virtual School Steering Committee for setting up a transparent and rigorous allocation process and ensuring maximised impact of PPP.
- 1.4 Different approaches will be adopted by different Local Authorities, as their contexts vary so much, not only in terms of number of school age LAC pupils but also the size of the Virtual School and the existing operational budget for the Virtual School (the last two vary enormously between Local Authorities).
- 1.5 This policy only applies to LAC pupils in Primary, Secondary or Special Schools (reception to year 11). A separate policy will be issued for LAC Early Years Pupil Premium.

2. The utilisation of PPP

- 2.1 The following criteria will be used to determine the use of PPP:

- a) Academic achievement by closing the gap with the child's peers, with priority given to literacy and numeracy as these underpin many other subjects.

Data collected in the PEP, teacher knowledge and the views of the pupil, carer and social worker will be used to identify

- Where a pupil is working below age related expectations or is not on track to make expected level of progress.
 - Where there are gaps in learning or where additional learning support is required or requested.
- b) Improving attendance, if below 95% there should be consideration of strategies for improvement, which may be funded from PPP.

- c) Promoting Inclusion by reducing internal and external exclusion.
- d) Strategies/interventions to promote social and emotional well-being.

The effects of attachment and developmental trauma are a barrier to learning and factors causing instability (such as placement moves) can have a negative impact on behaviour and learning. Please note, the grant is not to be used to fund therapy/ counselling by outside providers, this should be addressed by Local Authority services.

- e) Wider academic achievement and developing particular talents, for example in an area the pupil has shown an ability, interest or talent they wish to follow.
- f) Key points of transition where additional support may be needed.
- g) Resources to promote learning and improved attainment.

For example, a pupil at Key Stage 4 may require a laptop and software to support their studies, a younger child may benefit from a tablet with educational applications which can be used at home or a child may need resources to promote physical development.

2.2 What PPP should not be used for

DFE guidance states clearly that PPP should not be used for an activity that the Local Authority would normally fund as a corporate parent. Foster carers and Residential Children's Homes are resources to act as a reasonable parent and to support the pupil in their education. Payments will have been made to cover expenses including, for example, packed lunches or a school dinner, the reasonable use of a computer and day trips.

There must be no expectation that a school residential trip will be automatically funded, especially if there are other sources of funding available. If such funding is not available and the school, in conjunction with the Virtual School, assess that by supporting the pupil to participate in a specific residential trip the pupil will better engage in learning (either curriculum or a particular subject), it may be appropriate for a proportion of PPP to be used towards the cost.

In addition, PPP should not be used to fund services that should be provided by the pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan or any enhanced SEN support as agreed by the SEN panel. Nor should it be used to commission services that are a statutory responsibility of the Local Authority.

3. Completion of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)

- 3.1 A PEP will need to be completed termly for each pupil, covering a full financial year. Two of these will be completed through a PEP meeting and the third through a desktop review (designated teachers may choose to involve the pupil, their carer(s) and/ or social worker during the desktop review).
- 3.2 PEPs will be moderated by the Virtual School Head and/or designated PEP Coordinators. The Virtual School will use PPP to provide capacity in the Virtual School to quality assure PEPs and provide schools with advice and support that ensures school raise the quality of learning targets within a pupil's PEP. The PEP, including the

PPP allocation, will only be approved where the grant is used to fund the interventions necessary to enable the pupil to achieve their learning objectives.

3.3 All PEPs must be completed within the term to which they relate. The Virtual School Head and/or PEP Co-ordinator will be required to approve the PEP before any funding is confirmed.

3.4 Who completes the PEP

Designated Teacher

The PEP is the key document that will be used to plan PPP expenditure and so the role of the designated teacher is key in ensuring that the PEP is of high quality and provides the following information:

- Prior attainment and current attainment data, detailing whether the child is on track to make the expected level of progress in key subjects and attendance data;
- Educational needs must be identified using above data and knowledge of the pupil's wider needs;
- Intended outcomes must be clear and quantitative targets for improvement must be set with clear quantifiable intended outcomes (SMART);
- Interventions should be detailed with clear timescales and costings, also specifying who is responsible for the intervention;
- Outcomes must be evaluated when the PEP is reviewed (without this funding may be held);
- Views of the pupil and how these will be addressed.

The pupil

It is important that the pupil is involved, particularly older pupils who are able to identify aspects of their learning where they feel they need additional help. This information will be gathered and recorded as part of the PEP process and, whether or not the young person feels able to actually take part in their PEP meeting, their views must always be included within the meeting and considered in any decision making process. If for any reason their requests cannot be met an explanation must be provided to them. This should also be recorded in the pupil's PEP.

Social Workers, Foster Carers and Education Coordinators

These officers have a valuable contribution to make via the PEP meeting. Whilst their view on PPP spend may be agreed, the overriding principle is that the funding must focus on improving educational outcomes and this will be based on the school's assessment of and understanding of what will best support the child to achieve well and pursue their aspirations.

4. PPP allocations and payment

4.1 The guidance from the DfE is very clear that schools may receive varying amounts depending on the identified needs of the child.

For some pupils a higher level of support may be required, for example:

- If the pupil is new into care with a fragmented home and education history, and are significantly behind academically and have unmet needs
- Pupils where there is a significant (and often delayed) reaction to abuse and neglect, which manifests in hard to anticipate behavioural 'spikes'; and
- Pupils with attachment difficulties where significant additional support is needed.

Other pupils may be in stable placement, have received a lot of interventions and/or additional support, which has helped them catch up. Whilst PPP is needed to continue to close the gap, they may not require a full allocation of PPP.

- 4.2 From 2017, all schools will receive up to a maximum of £1,600 per pupil, paid termly and based on the request for funding agreed in the pupil's PEP. Should the amount requested be greater than £1,600, a request for detailed information will need to be made to ensure St Helens pupil premium allocation for all pupils is sufficient for all requests made.
- 4.3 The Virtual School will not recoup PPP when a pupil moves during any term, as long as the school provides information that the pupil premium has been spent on the targets within the PEP. Where a pupil moves school without the PPP being spent, the school will be requested to return the PPP so that it can be used to provide support in the school of transfer.
- 4.4 The receiving school is accountable for the use of the PPP and may be required to provide evidence of expenditure for any pupil. The school is responsible for paying all costs associated with the interventions in the PEP and St Helens Council will not pay any invoices (either from the school or an external provider).
- 4.5 The Virtual School will have discretion over the amount of funding agreed for pupils in the term in which they become looked after and the term in which a pupil leaves care, bearing in the mind the need to support good outcomes for pupils. The Virtual School reserves the right to recoup funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the LAC pupil's needs.

What happens if pupils transfer between schools and different schools complete the pupil's PEPs? Would schools be expected to negotiate with each other for the transfer of grant?

Other LAs:

Hertfordshire – schools will receive £1,500 in termly instalments of £500 per LAC pupil. The remaining £400 to be retained centrally – schools are encouraged to bid for extra funding to meet the differing needs of the pupil.

Leicestershire – PPP will be transferred termly on receipt of a completed Pupil premium plan form linked to the PEP. No recoupment if move in term. No specified amount detailed.

Staffordshire - £500 per term at end of term, additional funding available. Pupils entering care after funding allocation date each term are able to apply for additional funding.

- 4.6 Proposals to pool PPP in a school to enhance services are acceptable, providing its use is directly linked to pupil's needs as identified through the PEP process.
- 4.7 Independent Schools – where a St Helens LAC pupil is attending an independent school which is named in their statement or Education, Health and Care Plan, pupil premium funding will not be allocated to the school. The decision has been made as the specialist provision provided by the school should be fully meeting the pupil's identified needs and thus, supporting them to achieve their full academic potential.

The effectiveness and suitability of this provision and the progress being made by the pupil will be monitored through the PEP process, the SEN review process and any schedule of contract meetings between the Local Authority and the provider.

5. Out of Borough pupils in St Helens Schools

- 5.1 St Helens schools who have pupils in care from Other Local Authorities on their roll must contact the relevant Virtual School to request their PPP policy. Nationally, all heads of Virtual Schools are responsible for the allocation of PPP for all school aged pupils in care within their authorities, even though the pupil is educated in a St Helens school. The name and contact details of other Virtual School Heads can be requested from the St Helens Virtual School.

6. Post LAC

- 6.1 For pupils who have left care under a Special Guardianship Order, a Residence Order or via adoption, schools will receive a post LAC allocation direct from the DfE based on the January census (the previous academic year). For these pupils the Virtual School Head no longer has responsibility for monitoring and promoting their attainment, this now falls to the school attended.

7. Pupil premium school strategy

- 7.1 You must publish a strategy for the school's use of the [pupil premium](#). You no longer have to publish a 'pupil premium statement'.

For the current academic year, you must include:

- your school's pupil premium grant allocation amount
- a summary of the main barriers to educational achievement faced by eligible pupils at the school
- how you'll spend the pupil premium to address those barriers and the reasons for that approach
- how you'll measure the impact of the pupil premium
- the date of the next review of the school's pupil premium strategy

For the previous academic year, you must include:

- how you spent the pupil premium allocation
- the impact of the expenditure on eligible and other pupils

Pupil premium funding is allocated for each financial year, but the information you publish online should refer to the academic year, as this is how parents understand the school system.

As you won't know allocations for the end of the academic year (April to July), you should report on the funding up to the end of the financial year and update it when you have all the figures.

The Teaching Schools Council has published [templates](#) to support schools in presenting their pupil premium strategies. Use of the templates is voluntary.

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>)

8. St Helens Virtual School contact details:

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