

## **Pupil Premium Grant for Norfolk's Looked After Children – Frequently Asked Questions 2021-22**

### **What is Pupil Premium Grant funding?**

Pupil Premium Grant (otherwise known as PPG or PP+) funding for looked after children is intended to raise the academic attainment of looked after children to reach their full potential. The funding is managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH) in each local authority, to support children looked after by that authority.

Children in the care of a local authority in school years Reception to Year 11 are eligible for PP+ funding. With effect from April 2021, each eligible child is entitled to a notional sum of £2345 for the 2021-22 financial year.

### **Is a student who is held back a year entitled to pupil premium funding when they reach Year 11?**

Schools will still receive the funding for children that have been back-classed and are now outside of the normal age range for pupil premium funding.

### **Do Yr 11 pupils receive the termly funding in the summer term?**

Pupils in Yr 11 will only automatically be allocated the termly funding of £600 if the PEP takes place before May half term. If the PEP takes place after May half term, school will need to complete an exceptional funding application in order to request the funding. As Yr 11 pupils generally finish school before the end of term, it is harder for schools to be able to evidence the impact of any spending if the PEP takes place later in the term.

### **Does the Virtual School Head have to give £2,345 to schools or can they give a higher or lower amount?**

The conditions of grant state that the fund must be managed by the Virtual School Head. There is a strong expectation that VSHs will pass pupil premium funding onto a child's education setting to be used to meet additional needs set out in the Personal Education Plan. It is for the VSH to decide whether to provide £2,345 to a school for a looked after child or a higher or lower amount and this will be based on an individual child's needs. Funding retained centrally by the Virtual School can be used for projects to benefit looked after children.

Any PP+ funding not passed down to schools by the end of the financial year will have to be returned to the Department for Education. No money can be carried forward to the

next financial year by the Virtual School. Individual schools which have received PP+ funding are able to carry forward any unspent funding.

### **Can the Virtual School Head pool funding for some of the authority's looked after children?**

The Department for Education expects Virtual School Heads to manage the pupil premium to ensure that it promotes the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the authority. It may be appropriate to pool some pupil premium for activities to benefit the authority's looked after children more holistically. For example, it might be appropriate to provide training for a group of designated teachers across the authority or a group of Teaching Alliance schools. Equally, a VSH might negotiate with a school regarding pooling pupil premium plus funding for looked after children with the school's pupil premium to provide an enhanced and more intensive package of support for disadvantaged children generally.

### **How do I apply for funding for any pupils on my school roll who are in the care of another local authority?**

Pupils educated in Norfolk but 'Looked After' by another authority will have their pupil premium paid by that authority. Each authority will have their own guidance which may differ from Norfolk Virtual School and you should contact the Virtual School Head of the relevant authority for clarification on the process.

### **What happens if a pupil new to care joins the school during the term?**

The statutory guidance states that the PEP should be initiated within 10 working days of a child or young person coming into care. Subsequent to the meeting taking place and the PEP documentation being completed and signed off by the Virtual School team, the £600 will be allocated to the school to assist with the transition and any targets within the PEP.

### **What happens if a pupil moves school within a school term?**

Any payments of £600 made as a result of completion and sign off of the termly PEP will not usually be recouped where a child moves within a school term. However, if the school has received additional funding as a result of an exceptional funding application, the Virtual School reserves the right to recoup any monies not utilised for the benefit of that looked after child. Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis.

The receiving school can apply for exceptional funding, based on the targets set and evidenced within the new PEP.

### **What happens if a pupil moves to a different care placement?**

It is expected that any equipment purchased using PP+ funding, that can be taken home, for example, laptops, should remain with the young person and be taken with them to their new placement.

### **What happens if a pupil has more than one PEP in a term, at the same school?**

There will only be one automatic allocation of £600 per term.

### **What happens in the event of a further national or local lockdown and schools are forced to close as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Schools will be able to request funding to support their pupils where it is needed, but we may review our policy of automatically allocating funding.

### **How do I access the exceptional funding application form?**

An application for exceptional funding must be discussed with the Virtual School Adviser allocated to the individual child. They can be identified on the top right corner of the home page for the PEP, or by contacting the Virtual School. The Virtual School Adviser will send the application form to the school. Exceptional funding application forms are not publicly available.

### **When should I apply for exceptional funding?**

Termly deadlines are set out below, but it is best practice to apply for exceptional funding as soon as possible and always before the intervention is put in place, where possible, as there is a risk that the application may not be approved.

- Summer Term – Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021
- Autumn Term – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021
- Spring Term – Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Retrospective applications for funding will not be accepted.

### **How will the impact of the funding be monitored?**

All use of PP+ funding, including the termly allocation, should be recorded within a target in the PEP. The impact of the funding should be reviewed and recorded at the next PEP. Funding should be itemised by intervention so that it can clearly be seen how all PP+ funding has been spent. Please only record termly funding or exceptional funding that has been agreed with the Virtual School. Funding cannot be requested through the PEPs.

It is a condition of exceptional funding that a case study template is completed at the end of the intervention, to help us to monitor impact. Anonymised case studies may be shared on our website.

The Virtual School may also follow up allocation of termly Pupil Premium Plus funding and **review impact on a random sample basis**, to ensure that funding is being used cost-effectively and to enable us to develop case studies showing best practice which we can share with schools. The Virtual School will contact the Designated Teacher if a case is identified for a random check.

Schools should be prepared to evidence PP+ spend and impact on request.

### **Can money be spent on 1:1 support for an individual child?**

In exceptional circumstances, 1:1 funding may be agreed for a reasonable period. In most cases, this will be for a **maximum of one and a half terms**. Funding will only be agreed when there is a clear plan detailing why the support is required, what the expected impact will be and a clear exit strategy. We will also expect schools to consider SEN High Needs funding and apply where appropriate. A deduction for Element 3 SEN funding will be made, whether schools apply or not.

In the first term, the Virtual School Adviser will work with the school to explore next steps, such as an EHCP request or suitability of placement. The Adviser should also attend all PEP meetings.

It is important to note that pupil premium is central funding and therefore cannot be relied upon to cover staff costs beyond the specified period for which it has been agreed. The Virtual School accepts no employer liability and all employment responsibilities lie with the school.

Where it is envisaged that 1:1 support is required for an extended period, a member of the Virtual School Senior Leadership Team will discuss with the Adviser and the school and an impact statement will be required.

Where funding is approved for 1:1 support, a deduction will be made for the termly allocation of £600, across both terms, as it is assumed that this will be prioritised for this intervention.

In requesting 1:1 funding, it will be important to consider implications if the young person becomes no longer looked after, or where they are due to transition to a different setting where 1:1 support may not be available.

### **How do I calculate 1:1 funding?**

We are introducing a standard calculation, as follows:

£19,312 TA Scale D annual salary  
Equates to £14,855 term-time +2wks  
£4951 termly cost

In all cases we will deduct EHCP or Element 3 termly funding, as well as the termly £600 PP+ funding, paid when the PEP is signed off. It is expected that these funds will also be prioritised for the 1:1 cost. A deduction will still be made for Element 3 funding if a child is eligible, but school have not applied.

This is the maximum amount we will pay. If the cost to the school is less than the total calculated using this formula, then please let us know at the time of your application.

### **Can I spend PP+ funding on Designated Teacher time?**

No, the school has a statutory responsibility to ensure that the Designated Teacher has enough time available to carry out their role effectively, including time away from timetable commitments where necessary, for duties such as preparing for and attending PEP meetings or training events.

### **Can money be spent on laptops or tablets?**

Schools can request a laptop for a looked after child through their Virtual School Adviser. The device will include a one year licence for Microsoft 365 and Windows 10. Renewal costs for the software will need to be met by the school or carer. The device is also covered by a one year warranty for normal wear and tear or faults. Technical support is also available for these devices.

If schools prefer to source a laptop themselves, they can do this from their termly allocation of £600. In that case schools are responsible for ensuring ESafe monitoring software is installed and this is a condition of all PP+ funded devices. Where termly funding is used to purchase a laptop, school should contact our enrichment co-ordinator, Jennifer Moss at [Jennifer.moss@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.moss@norfolk.gov.uk) in order to request E-Safe, **before the laptop is handed over to the child.**

We do not encourage the purchase of tablets as ESafe monitoring software cannot be installed. Where a tablet is considered the most suitable device, schools are responsible for monitoring the use and ensuring that an appropriate monitoring agreement is in place with carers, if the device is taken home.

In all cases, schools are responsible for ensuring that the child or young person has received appropriate E-Safety training. Schools are also responsible for maintenance of the laptop.

It is expected that the device stays with the child or young person if they move to a different educational setting or have a change of residential placement.

### **Can money be spent on school trips or clubs outside of school?**

Schools are automatically allocated £600 per looked after child on completion and sign off of the termly PEP by the Virtual School. It is the school's responsibility to allocate this funding to the interventions that they prioritise for the child, for their educational benefit and educational needs, based on the targets listed in the PEP. All use of PP+ funding needs to be recorded within the targets section of the PEP, to demonstrate the impact of the intervention.

The DfE encourages schools to use robust evidence in making decisions about how to spend the funding to support previously looked after children. It is up to each individual school to decide how to spend the initial allocation although it is good practice to discuss how funding is spent at the PEP.

Where schools have allocated termly funding to school trips or clubs, the cost may be deducted from any exceptional funding applications subsequently received.

Exceptional funding is unlikely to be agreed to fund school trips.

**If a looked after child is achieving well academically, how can the school spend the PP+ funding?**

Consider whether the funding can be used to provide an extra stretch or challenge in order to help the child achieve their full potential academically.

Funding can also be used to support social and emotional needs, where appropriate, or for other enrichment activities when there are no other academic targets requiring funding identified in the PEP.

Whilst any PP+ funding should be used with the needs or interests of the eligible child in mind, there is no reason why other pupils can't also benefit. For example, using the funding to pay for an Author school visit, if this is something that will engage the eligible child and they have reading or writing targets.

The views of the child or young person should be considered regarding the use of the funding, e.g. have they got interests that could be pursued?

**Is there anything PP+ should not fund?**

Pupil Premium for looked after children should not be used to cover interventions which should be funded elsewhere. This includes the entitlement set out in the *SEND code of practice: 0 – 25 years*, published in June 2014.

When an exceptional funding application is received, we will review how the termly allocation has been prioritised and **may deduct an amount** from the exceptional funding requested. Similarly, when alternative funding (e.g. SEN High Needs Support (Element 3) funding) is available, a **deduction may be made** from the amount requested if this has not been accessed. PP+ funding should not be requested when alternative funding is available.

If a school would usually expect to fund an intervention or activity for all other children on roll, a charge should not be made for a looked after child.

Specifically, PP+ funding should not be used for school uniform, school meals or transport to school.

### **Can the foster carer be given the PP+ funding to spend?**

The Virtual School Head manages pupil premium funding to support the education of looked after children as set out in the Personal Education Plan. It should not be used for activity the local authority would normally be expected to fund as the corporate parent, such as support for foster carers. Foster carers however, have an essential role in supporting the education of the children for whom they care and can therefore make a valuable contribution to decision making.

### **Are Looked After Children entitled to free school meals (FSM)?**

In Norfolk, the position regarding FSM is as follows:

1. Entitlement to FSM was frozen at 1.4.18, anyone who had free school meals before this point will continue to receive them until 31.3.22 regardless of any changes in circumstances including becoming looked after, but they will no longer be eligible for the FSM6 element of Pupil Premium funding. Instead they will be eligible for the looked after children element of the funding.
2. Children who become eligible for free school meals will similarly continue to receive them until 31.3.22. Foster carers are subject to the same eligibility criteria as all other parents and carers and can apply in the same way.
3. Looked after children do not have an automatic entitlement, however if they qualified as in point 1, they would continue to receive free school meals until 31.3.22. In those circumstances, carers may be asked to complete some paperwork
4. Any pupil no longer eligible as of 31.03.22 will keep eligibility until end of the current phase of education (so FSM won't stop part way through a year or keystage)

PP+ funding should not be spent on school meals.

### **Does the Virtual School offer any other opportunities for looked after children and young people?**

The Virtual School runs a variety of free study programmes and enrichment activities over the course of the year, covering a range of interests for different age groups. A calendar of events for our enrichment programme is available on our website.

### **Does the Virtual School oversee pupil premium funding for children adopted from care or who have left care?**

**No, this grant is outside the remit of this policy.** The pupil premium for the 2021-22 financial year will include pupils recorded in the October 2020 school census and alternative provision census who were looked after by a 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 referred to as post-LAC and £2,345 funding **is paid directly to schools** where the adoptive parents or carers have disclosed the legal status of the child and schools have completed this information on their October Census return.

Further guidance regarding pupil premium funding for post looked after children is available on our website, or from our Post Looked After Children Adviser, Harriet Tunncliff [harriet.tunncliff@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:harriet.tunncliff@norfolk.gov.uk).

***You can contact us on:-***



**01603 307769 or 01603 303323**



**[clare.farrant@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:clare.farrant@norfolk.gov.uk) (Pupil Premium Manager)**

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***You can also find out more on our website at:-*** [www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/virtualschoolac](http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/virtualschoolac)



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