

Derbyshire Virtual School

Pupil Premium Plus Policy for Children in Care 2024 - 2025

1. Introduction

There were significant national changes in the arrangements for Pupil Premium for Children in Care from April 2014 and our policy is informed by three key Department for Education (DfE) documents:

- Pupil premium 2024 to 2025: conditions of grant for local authorities - Updated 27 March 2024
- Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children – February 2018
- Pupil Premium: Virtual School Heads' Responsibilities - March 2015

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

The changes are as follows:

- From 1 April 2024 Pupil Premium Plus has seen funding to support children and young people in care at school increase by £40 per pupil to £2,570 per child.
- Children and young people will now be eligible following one day in care according to the SSDA903 social care census March 2024 and aged 4-15 August 2024.
- Local Authorities continue to be responsible for distributing the Pupil Premium Plus payments for Children in Care to schools and academies. However, in addition, Virtual School Headteachers are responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus funding to benefit children looked after by 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 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 outcomes and “narrow the gap” as identified in the Personal Education Plan [PEP] in consultation with the Designated Teacher.
- As a result, PEPs will need to be monitored even more closely by Designated Teachers, the Virtual School team, Social Workers team leaders and Independent Reviewing Officers.
- Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is additional funding (£387.60 per year) for Early Years settings to improve the education they provide for disadvantaged 2, 3 and 4 year olds. Children aged 2, 3 and 4 years who are looked after by Derbyshire County Council and who receive free early education will attract EYPP funding, even if they do not take-up the full free early education entitlement

In addition and through a separate process, children adopted from care will be entitled to £2,570 passed directly to the school. However, this grant is outside the remit of this policy. As a result of the above changes, our allocation of Pupil Premium Plus needs to move to a “**child’s needs driven model**”, managed through high quality PEPs.

2. Pupil Premium Plus Arrangements 2024 - 2025

2.1. Overall principles underpinning our child's needs driven model

- Pupil Premium Plus is to benefit the Child in Care and must be used to enhance and improve their education. The Child in Care's voice and their specific needs are of paramount importance in considering the use and impact of this money by schools and settings. The Virtual School Headteacher is responsible for the use of Pupil Premium Plus to improve outcomes for all Children in our Care, wherever they live.
- The funding will be provided according to the needs of the child. This will be documented on the PEP, through the targets, timescales and costs involved in delivering the intervention, and reviewing the effectiveness of the spend.
- Part of the grant will be used to fund Virtual School led interventions These will be subject to review on an annual basis.
- Proposals to pool Pupil Premium Plus in a school to enhance services, providing its use is directly linked to individual Children in Care's needs are acceptable.
- Derbyshire County Council and the Virtual School Headteacher 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.
- A proportion of the grant £575 per capita will be retained to enable flexible and differentiated support as child's needs dictate. Therefore the funding will be split to a maximum claim of £665 for each of the three terms, (Summer, Autumn and Spring).

2.2. How and why will the amount of Pupil Premium Plus passed on to schools vary?

- Children's needs vary and can change significantly.
- Children in Care may move schools more frequently and not at natural transition points.
- Termly allocations of Pupil Premium Plus.
- Some Local Authority's may keep money back for funding of Virtual School teams.

2.3. Circumstances in which Pupil Premium Plus will not be provided

- Pupil Premium Plus will not be used to double fund or replace funding which should already have been allocated to the school to support the child and specifically:
 - To fund services that should be provided via, SEN support plan or Education Health and Care plan
 - To fund other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from Health
- The interventions put in place do not require any funding.
- The school's own funding covers the cost of the interventions.
- The PEP does not meet requirements (see section 3.1).
- To fund clothing/uniform, holidays outside of term time and travel.
- School trips are an important part of school life, and the development and inclusion of Children in Care. Requests for residential trips can be considered within Pupil Premium Plus, however, this should be viewed as a shared responsibility between Carers, School, Virtual School and Social Care. The use of Pupil Premium Plus

towards educational visits must be considered alongside children's other learning needs and the benefits/costs of the trip itself.

- ICT Grant for Children in Care – grants for ICT can be requested through the child's Pupil Premium Plus allocation, but this must be considered alongside other learning needs and benefits. The question must be "What will have the greatest learning impact?"

3. Management and accountability

The Virtual School Headteacher will be accountable to the Virtual School Governing Body for setting up a transparent and rigorous allocation process, ensuring that effective use and impact of the grant is monitored, evaluated, supported and where necessary challenged.

Use and impact of the Pupil Premium Plus will be clearly recorded in the child/young person's PEP and in other evaluative documentation held by the Virtual School. Impact will also be measured against termly progress data and returns from schools.

Schools and settings are accountable for ensuring the money is used appropriately and effectively to enhance and improve the Child in Care's educational achievement. Targets will be submitted termly by the school/setting via the PEP process. Schools will be expected to review the previous terms target and the effect of the Pupil Premium spending.

The Virtual School Headteacher will produce an annual report on how Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium has been managed and evidence on how the spending has supported improving outcomes for Children in Care including how any retained funding has been used.

3.1. Personal Education Plans [PEPs]

- School will be asked to review and evidence the impact of the Pupil Premium Plus on each PEP.
- Virtual School will allocate to each school with a Derbyshire Child in Care on roll a termly Pupil Premium Plus grant on receipt of a completed PEP, identifying how the school will use the Pupil Premium Plus for the 2024/2025 period, the intended outcomes and making clear the links to the child/young person's PEP targets.
- Pupil Premium Plus must be used to improve educational outcomes for Children in Care to Derbyshire in the following areas:
 - Academic achievement and progress
 - Social and emotional support
 - Wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is gifted and talented
 - Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider
- The Pupil Premium Plus will **only** be provided to meet the needs identified in a high quality plan in the PEP with clear quantitative [and exceptionally qualitative] targets for improvement, underpinned by well-targeted support.

4. Allocation of grant to Derbyshire Children in Care placed in Independent provision.

- Pupil Premium Plus is not offered to children placed in independent settings. If schools wish to apply for exceptional circumstances, they may do so.

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- The Pupil Premium Plus allocation will have to be approved by the Virtual School Headteacher, on receipt of a high-quality PEP.
- Virtual School reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is no evidence that the funding is being used to address the Child in Care's needs.

4.1. Pupil Premium Plus for Children in Care attending Derbyshire schools and settings placed by other Local Authorities.

- Different approaches will be adopted by different Local Authority's and schools should discuss arrangements with the placing Local Authority's Virtual School Headteacher. A request for the Pupil Premium Policy should identify how the Pupil Premium Plus will be paid – it is the responsibility of the Virtual School Headteacher to ensure that Pupil Premium Plus is allocated for all their school aged children and young people in care no matter where they are educated.
- The name and contact details of other Virtual School Headteachers can be requested from Derbyshire Virtual School.

4.2. Allocation of funding and recoupment policy to Schools which Derbyshire Children in Care attend

- The Pupil Premium Grant will be transferred directly to school the month after the PEP is fully completed via the Derbyshire Finance Team.
- Payments will be based on a fully costed high quality PEP. Requests for additional funding, will be considered in exceptional circumstances. These must be submitted within the target and actions module of the PEP.
- Where there is a need to clarify what funding a school is providing from its own resources, the school may need to provide evidence before Pupil Premium Plus can be allocated.
- Virtual School will not recoup Pupil Premium Plus where a child moves during the term.
- Virtual School reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the Child in Care's needs.
- Applications for emergency funding can be submitted at any period and will be considered on an individual basis with funds transferred as soon as possible.

Making Payments

Accountancy will make payments on a termly basis, once the PEP and funding request are received and approved by the Virtual School

| PEP Term | Final date for Pupil Premium Plus claimed to be submitted via PEP system |
|-----------------|---|
| Summer | 31 July 2024 |
| Autumn | 31 December 2024 |
| Spring | 31 January 2025 |

Timescales for payment from Finance once approved

- **Derbyshire County Council Schools:**

On receipt of approved requests from the Virtual School, Accountancy will implement an electronic transfer at the end of each month to the school's budget.

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- **Bank Account Schools & Academies:**

On receipt of approved requests from the Virtual School, Accountancy will organise payment by BACS via Accounts Payable. Payments will be made at the end of each month.

- **Other Local Authority Schools:**

On receipt of approved requests from the Virtual School, Accountancy will organise payment by BACS via Accounts Payable. Payments will be made at the end of each month, provided that the vendor is set up on SAP. Payment may take longer if the school needs to be set up. Schools will need to send their bank details on official school letterhead to Virtual School, signed by the Headteacher or Finance Officer.