

Pupil Premium Plus for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children:

Arrangements for 2023-24

Northumberland Virtual School for Looked After Children



This policy sets out how Northumberland Virtual School will distribute and monitor the Pupil Premium Plus grant for looked after children and support the use of the Pupil Premium Plus grant for previously looked after children in the financial year 2023-24.

The policy should be read with the government guidance on the Pupil Premium:

- [Conditions of grant](#)
- [Virtual School Heads' Responsibilities](#)

and the statutory guidance for:

- [The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children, Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children, Statutory guidance for local authorities](#)

There is further government guidance on how much pupil premium funding schools and non-mainstream schools receive, how they should spend it, and they are held them to account [here](#).

The **Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)** is grant funding from the DfE to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and to close the attainment gap with their peers.

For the financial year **2023-24** the Virtual School will receive £2530 of PP+ funding for eligible pupils from Year R to 11 who are looked after by Northumberland Local Authority*. This funding is managed by the Virtual School Headteacher.

The Virtual School is also responsible for managing the [early years pupil premium \(EYPP\)](#) which in Northumberland is distributed through the Early Years team to providers that educate looked after children who are taking up the [free early education entitlement for 3 or 4 year olds](#).

Schools receive directly from the ESFA £2530 of PP+ funding for pupils who are no longer looked after because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order. These pupils are known as previously looked after. This funding is *not* managed by the Virtual School Headteacher.

**looked after for at least one day in the previous financial year*

1. Eligibility

- Eligible pupils who are looked after by Northumberland are identified by the Local Authority on DfE return SSDA903 in March of each year.
- Eligible pupils who are no longer looked after but who have been adopted or who left care on a Special Guardianship or Child Arrangements Order (previously known as a Residence Order) immediately after being looked after (known as previously looked after) should be identified to schools/academies by parents or guardians and their status recorded on the School Census.

2. Role of the Virtual School Head

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires all Local Authorities to have a Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) who has additional statutory powers to carry out the duty to promote the educational achievement of the children it looks after. The VSH must manage the grant allocation to be used for the benefit of the looked after child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP).

This has statutory force and there is no requirement for the VSH to give the money to schools or to disperse the full £2530.

VSHs are responsible for making sure there are effective arrangements in place for allocating PP+ funding to benefit children looked after by the authority:

- making sure that it is spent effectively and fully;
- being able to demonstrate how PP+ funding managed by the VSH is linked to raising achievement and closing the gap;
- having arrangements in place to engage with the looked after child's school/academy about how the PP+ funding is contributing to meet the needs identified in his/her PEP.

To ensure that these objectives are achieved and to enable the VSH to plan expenditure effectively to maximise impact of the funding, the following arrangements will be in place for dispersal of the grant in the financial year 2023-24:

- a. the Virtual School will retain the first £1035 of every eligible pupil's grant to be used to promote the educational achievement of all looked after pupils in Northumberland;
- b. to ensure transparency, the VSH will publish details of expenditure and impact in the Annual Report;
- c. schools/academies will receive a **direct payment** in three instalments of £365 each term to a maximum amount of £1095 per eligible pupil when the VSH has approved the Outcomes section of each pupil's ePEP and there is evidence in the ePEP of a termly review of progress to achieve those outcomes;
- d. a further £400 per eligible pupil will be paid to schools on completion of the 2 x 6 monthly **multi-agency PEP reviews**, at a rate of £200 for each review;
- e. the Outcomes section identifies the pupil's personalised needs through SMART targets and details the resources required for the actions which need to be taken to raise achievement;
- f. if the Outcomes section is not completed to an acceptable standard then the PP+ funding will not be paid to the school or alternative provider;
- g. if there is no evidence that previously set Outcomes have been reviewed termly or achieved then the PP+ funding will not be paid to the school or alternative provider;

- h. it is the responsibility of the Designated Teacher, with the support of the Virtual School when appropriate, to assess the needs of individual children and complete the Outcomes section of the ePEP;
- i. **additional funding** can be accessed from the PP+ fund held centrally by the VSH from retaining £915 of each grant. Each will be considered on an individual needs-assessed basis and awarded at the discretion of the VSH;
- j. the VSH will also allocate an amount from that centrally held PP+ fund for **eligible pupils in crisis***. Each will be considered on an individual needs-assessed basis and awarded at the discretion of the VSH;
- k. the VSH requires every Designated Teacher to complete a Pupil Premium Plus Impact Statement at the end of each academic year to gather further evidence of the impact of the PP+ on the progress and achievement of looked after pupils, and to assess the allocation of PP+ to schools in the following academic year;
- l. any surplus funding at the end of the financial year will be distributed to schools with looked after children on roll at the discretion of the VSH.

**This allocation of PP+ funding is so that the Virtual School can respond to a crisis situation arising from the pupil's circumstances in care. These situations are ones that we can not predict and PP+ therefore allows us to intervene swiftly and responsively. This means that the Virtual School can fund high levels of support or personalised packages as and when required.*

Dispersing the grant on a termly basis will align the financial year with the academic year so that the outcomes in the PEP relate to the academic year (from September to July).

The proportion of the PP+ grant held centrally by the Virtual School will be used to accelerate the progress of all eligible looked after children belonging to Northumberland local authority. Details of expenditure each year are included in the VSH annual report and include:

- educational psychology support;
- teacher support and 1 to 1 tuition;
- careers advice and guidance for looked after children and care leavers;
- Thrive attachment training;
- Intervention strategies;
- Occupational therapy;
- support and education provision for children in crisis;
- one to one tuition;
- therapies.

3. Process

For 2023-24:

- The PP+ will be devolved to schools/academies/alternative providers on receipt by Northumberland of the funding from the DfE.
- There will be three payment windows a year based on those in care on the 1st April 2023, 1st September 2023 and 1st January 2024.
- If a school requires funding in addition to the direct payment then further requests can be made through the ePEP system. Evidence will be required of the impact of the initial spend.

- All requests for additional funding will be considered by the Virtual School management team and other professionals where appropriate eg the Independent Reviewing Officer.
- If a school has a looked after pupil in crisis and additional funding is required urgently then the VSH should be contacted directly to access crisis funding (ESLAC.info@northumberland.gov.uk).
- If there are any changes of educational placement during the year other than transition in September, the funding will need to be managed between schools with the agreement of the Virtual Head(s) of the belonging Local Authority(ies).
- If a pupil has a placement at an alternative provider, including the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), then the PP+ will be paid to the provision on a pro rata basis to continue to support the outcomes detailed in the pupil's ePEP.
- If a pupil becomes eligible between payment dates then PP+ funding can still be accessed through the ePEP.
- If a child ceases to be looked after then there will be a review of the PP+ funding allocation by the VSH with the Designated Teacher. Funding may continue to ensure there is no funding gap and that the needs of the pupil are still met, for example a child who leaves care on an adoption order who then becomes eligible for the PP+ for previously looked after children which the school will received in full (£2530) directly from the ESFA but not until the following financial year.
- If a pupil is eligible and is in Year 11 on and after 1st April 2023, the school will receive 5/12 of the pupil premium allocation to cover the period from April to August.
- The payments from the Virtual School will be made to the school where the pupil is on roll at the beginning of the payment period ie April and September.
- For Northumberland belonging children on roll in Northumberland schools the funding will be paid by journal to subjective code 300014 ED10PL of the relevant school's budget.
- For all Northumberland belonging children on roll in Northumberland academies the funding will be paid by the Virtual School raising a purchase order.
- For Northumberland belonging children on roll in schools in other Local Authorities a payment will be made directly to an Academy or school, or to the Local Authority to then transfer to the appropriate school (depending on other Local Authorities' arrangements).
- For pupils from other Authorities who are on roll in Northumberland schools, if a payment is made directly to Northumberland County Council with details of the school and amount to be paid, then this will be transferred into the appropriate school budget under subjective code 300014 ED10PL. It is also possible that some Local Authorities will pay schools/academies/settings directly.
- PP+ will not be used to replace other funding for which a looked after child might be eligible, for example STAR funding, and should not be used to fund services provided through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- We will only seek to recoup funding when there is evidence that the PP+ is not being used to address an individual pupil's needs, and therefore not where a pupil moves mid-year (for whatever reason).

- Schools are required to provide a termly progress report, through the ePEP, for individual looked after children so that the VSH can monitor the impact of PP+.

Please note: other Authorities have plans to devolve the Pupil Premium in different ways. If you have a query about the PP+ looked after child who is on your school roll but belongs to an Authority other than Northumberland then please contact the relevant Virtual School Head directly and ask to see their PP+ policy.

4. Pupil Premium Plus for previously looked after children

PP+ for previously looked after children is paid directly to schools by the ESFA at a rate of £2530 per pupil registered in the January census. Schools are responsible for recording the number of eligible pupils in January so that the funding will follow in April.

Schools should do all they can to ensure that parents, carers and guardians are aware of the PP+ entitlement.

Parents, carers and guardians must self-declare to the school, providing evidence that their child is previously looked after and has an Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangements Order or Residence Order. The child must have been in care previously in England and Wales.

It is important for schools to discuss the use of the PP+ with parents, carers and guardians.

5. Private and independent settings

The decision of the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP), in its capacity as the governing body of the Virtual School, is that independent special schools with Northumberland belonging children and young people on roll will not routinely be paid the PP+. The VSH will, however, consider proposals from individual schools about individual cases.

6. Monitoring impact

The Personal Education Plan (ePEP) will be used to inform discussions with schools and other stakeholders on the use of the PP+. Each ePEP therefore needs to be of high quality and set robust targets for improvement. The ePEP should be reviewed every term in accordance with statutory guidance and every 6 months as part of the multi-agency statutory review of the child's care plan. It is a record of what needs to happen for a child in care to reach their educational potential.

ePEPs will need to be monitored closely by schools, the Virtual School, social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs). The ePEP review must evaluate the impact of the PP+.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children in each school should be able to influence how the PP+ is used to support progression and learning and report to Governors as part of their annual report on the impact the funding has had on education outcomes for each eligible pupil.

The VSH is accountable to the governing body (Multi Agency Looked After Partnership) and Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Advisory Group for ensuring that the funding is effectively dispersed with maximum impact.

7. Developing good practice

The PP+ must be used to improve outcomes for pupils in the following areas:

- academic achievement and progress;
- wider achievement eg in an area in which the child is gifted and talented;
- attendance;
- inclusion eg reducing fixed term exclusions;
- mental health;
- emotional health and wellbeing and social skills;
- transition eg to a new key stage or learning provider.

Examples of the types of activities that the PP+ might be used to support children include:

- additional one to one tuition to support learning;
- additional group tuition to support learning;
- additional support in school that will build a child or young person's self-esteem, confidence or develop their learning skills eg mentoring;
- aspiration raising activities that will benefit the child or young person's learning and development;
- extra learning resources that may support these individual pupils;
- additional support for vocational training eg equipment;
- alternative education packages;
- revision courses;
- school organised overseas trips which promote learning.

8. Early Years Pupil Premium

From April 2015 additional targeted funding for looked after children has been available as an Early Years Pupil Premium for 3 and 4 year olds. Looked after children who are eligible for the funding are identified by the Virtual School. Further information on the Early Years Pupil Premium in Northumberland is available to download and read [here](#).

Jane Walker
Virtual School Headteacher, Northumberland