



# Virtual School Pupil Premium Plus

## Policy and guidance April 2025-26

**Pupil Premium Plus (PPP or LAC Premium)** is additional grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE) for children in care. The grant aims to close the attainment gap for this cohort of children and improve their educational outcomes. Each year, the DfE publishes a conditions of grant document that outlines the arrangements and funding allocations for all types of pupil premium, including PPP. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2025-to-2026>

### Key facts

- **Eligibility:** PPP is provided for each child who is in care for at least one day, as recorded in the March 2024 looked after children data return (SSDA903). Pupils from year R to year 11 are eligible for PPP.
- **Management:** PPP must be managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH) in the local authority that looks after the child, for the benefit of the looked after child's educational needs as identified in their Personal Education Plan (PEP). Unlike other types of pupil premium, PPP is managed by the VSH rather than the school.
- **Previously Looked After Children (PLAC):** Children who were previously looked after by a local authority in England and Wales and are now adopted or subject to special guardianship order (SGO), child arrangements order (CAO), or a residence order (RO) are also eligible for the pupil premium grant. However, this grant is not within the remit of the Virtual School. Further guidance can be found on page three of the conditions of grant document.

### What are the current PPP arrangements in place for 2024/25?

£1,600 per child in care is allocated and paid in termly instalments of £600 (summer term), £550 (autumn term) and £450 (spring term). Schools will usually receive the full term's funding for each pupil who has been in care for at least one day in that term.

£1030 per child is held centrally by the Virtual School to deliver a range of services and interventions. These arrangements are subject to annual review. For more details, refer to the DfE's conditions of grant document.



To minimise any delay, schools will receive their allocation automatically from Hampshire in May (summer term), October (autumn term) and March (spring term).

This arrangement is contingent upon the receipt of each child's current Personal Education Plan (PEP) by the Virtual School's termly deadline. If a PEP is missing, the termly allocation may be delayed or withheld.

### The Virtual School expects that:

- PPP funding is spent in line with the current conditions of grant
- PPP spending should be linked clearly to children's targets as identified in their personal education plans, with PEP targets informed by a robust needs analysis
- school leadership teams recognise the staff development needs associated with the education of care experienced children and proactively access and request this support from the Virtual School.

### Designated teachers (DTs) should:

- **Maintain a careful oversight** of PPP allocated to their school and actively participate in deciding how this money should be spent.
- **Ensure PPP is spent** in line with the current DFE conditions of grant, ensuring it impacts individual children, and recording and reviewing these in their PEP
- **Hold overall responsibility** for decision-making concerning PPP, using an appropriate needs analysis tool to support informed choices about any interventions funded through pupil premium plus.
- **Inform decisions** with the views of children, carers, social workers, and other stakeholders, recognising that not all needs will be easily identifiable or obvious, and that children's emotional responses or behaviours may be visible at home rather than at school
- **Include an account** of how PPP is being used for in their annual report to governors, together with the impact on progress, particularly in English, mathematics, and social/emotional development while ensuring individual pupils are not identifiable.



### Governors should:

- **Maintain focus** on the education of care experienced children, through regular briefings from their designated teacher, or training available from governor services or the Virtual School.
- **Hold the school accountable** through the designated teacher for how effectively looked after and previously looked after children are supported including the use of PPP, their progress and outcomes.
- **Regularly review** the support and resources provided to the DT to fulfil the statutory requirements of their role
- **Expect to receive** the statutory annual report from the designated teacher.

### Previously looked after children (PLAC)

Virtual schools have a statutory duty to provide advice, guidance and information to schools, parents and a range of professionals to improve educational outcomes of previously looked after children. They are not corporate parents for this group of children.

Pupil premium for previously looked after children is paid directly to the school by the education finance team in the local authority, without any involvement from the virtual school. Once received, it is the school's responsibility to ensure the funds are spent in accordance with the DfE conditions of the grant.

Parents and guardians of eligible children must self-declare their child's status to the school where their child is on roll to trigger the funding. The school can then use that information to record on their school census how many children on their roll were adopted from care or are PLAC. Schools must first seek the permission of parents/guardians to record a child's status as previously looked after on the school census.

For additional support, please refer to the EEF guide to pupil premium, updated September 2024

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



## Early years pupil premium (EYPP)

Children aged three and four attending an early years education setting who are or have been in care will be eligible to receive EYPP. Providers could claim up to an additional £570 annually from the LA for each child to support their development, learning, and care. Hampshire Virtual School does not hold this funding. For more details, refer to the 2024 to 2025 early years national funding formulae: technical note. [2024 to 2025 early years national funding formulae: technical note - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2024-to-2025-early-years-national-funding-formulae-technical-note)

National data and research indicate that children who meet the EYPP criteria need to maximise their early years education. Similar to the pupil premium available for children in reception to year 11, the EYPP will provide nurseries, pre-schools and childminders with extra funding to ensure children receive the best start possible.

Please see <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/pupil-premium>

## Post 16

Pupil premium plus is not directly available from the DFE for post 16 young people who are in care. However, the Virtual School has been allocated grant funding for 2025/26 for post 16 young people. This funding will be held centrally by the Virtual School to fund the post 16 work within the Virtual School.

The government states that the 16 to 19 bursary fund is intended for young people in education or education providers. The guidance provided by the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), is reviewed and updated at the start of every new financial year, informed by any findings from the ESFA's financial audit of post 16 providers. The revised guidance for 2024/25 clarifies that this funding is intended to cover the essential costs of participating in their study programme and not to support activities unrelated to education or services that the education setting would ordinarily provide, such as counselling. For more details, refer to the 16 to 19 bursary fund guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance>.



## PPP frequently asked questions

### Does the Virtual School head have to give PPP to schools?

There is no requirement for the Virtual School Head to give Pupil Premium Plus (PPP) funding to schools. However, there is a strong expectation that Virtual School Heads will pass on some or all of the PPP funding to a child's education setting. This funding should be used to meet the additional needs outlined in the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) and can be distributed to the school on a termly or annual basis. Any funding not passed down to schools by the end of the financial year must be returned to the DfE.

### Is there a cut-off date for PPP funding?

No. The current arrangement for Hampshire is that funding is distributed on a termly basis and is proportionate to the length of the term. A data run of all current and historic looked after children is collected each term. For children who have been in care for a very short period, the VSH can use their discretion to allocate an amount of funding to reflect this.

### How can schools find out PPP arrangements for children in the care of a different LA?

Schools should contact the virtual school in the child's home LA. Most virtual schools will have a website containing contact details and their local PPP policy. If schools encounter any difficulty, please contact us at the Virtual School:  
[virtualschool@hants.gov.uk](mailto:virtualschool@hants.gov.uk)

### What happens if a child moves school? Does the PPP funding (and any resources bought for a child from PPP money, such as a laptop) follow them?

Transferring PPP funding is a matter for discussion between schools and, where appropriate, alternative providers (APs). The Virtual School would expect that when a child moves school, there is a discussion about the provision and support being delivered. This should include how any funding passed to the receiving school or alternative provider will be used to meet a child's needs in accordance with their PEP. Where a school retains any PPP after a child has left, it will still be accountable to the LA and Ofsted for demonstrating the impact of pupil premium spending on improving educational outcomes.



### **Do children in care qualify for free school meals (FSM)?**

Children in a funded care placement, such as an LA foster carer or an independent fostering agency (IFA) carer, generally do not qualify for FSM. This is because the carer receives an allowance which covers all meals for each child in their care. Therefore, carers already receive the funding needed to provide meals.

However, this situation may differ for a child who is not in a funded care arrangement. For example, a child placed at home but with the LA in receipt of a care order. In such cases, the normal criteria for benefits-related school meal eligibility still apply, and applications for free school meals can be made as usual.

Please note that current guidance states: “For children who are attending school, meals should be provided by the school and be free of charge for pupils who would normally receive free school meals. Schools have discretion as to whether they charge other pupils.”

### **What happens in cases where a child is dual rolled at a school and an alternative provider such as an education centre or pupil referral unit (PRU)?**

Funding is paid to the school where the pupil is solely registered. In the event of dual registration, funding will go to the main school. The education centre or PRU will need to liaise with the main school to request a transfer of a proportion of the funding. For long-term arrangements, it is possible to request that the money be paid directly to the alternative setting.

### **Where can additional funding information about children with special educational needs and disabilities be found?**

Further information can be accessed from Hampshire's local offer web pages: <https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/localoffer.page>

### **Is PPP allocated to non-maintained special schools (INMSS)?**

Children's needs are generally met and fully funded through the local authority's payment for the school place. As such, Hampshire Virtual School retains the pupil premium.

### **How can schools help ensure that PPP payments are made on time?**

It is imperative that schools accurately record LAC status on their census. Errors in census returns may result in funding being delayed.





### **What should a school do if they have not received PPP funding for child in care on their roll?**

The school can contact the Hampshire education funding team directly, who will investigate why and make payment if applicable.

Contact details are [school.fund@hants.gov.uk](mailto:school.fund@hants.gov.uk)

Schools can also contact the Hampshire Virtual School if they encounter any difficulties with this or have additional questions.

### **Is PPP available for looked after children in the early years?**

The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) provides up to £570 per year for each child in care or eligible for free school meals (FSM). Early years settings must ensure that these funds are used to enhance the quality of provision and practice, enabling children to make at least expected progress, and helping poorer-attaining children to make better than expected progress. Ofsted inspectors will evaluate how well leaders utilise additional funding, including EYPP where applicable, and measure its impact on disadvantaged children's outcomes.

### **FAQ on EYPP are available here**

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/childcare/providers/eye-eynff/early-years-pupil-premium>

<https://www.early-education.org.uk/how-spend-your-eypp>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/pupil-premium>

### **What about post-16?**

Vulnerable student funding of up to £1,200 per annum is available for post 16 young people in care. <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund/eligibility> For higher education (HE), there is a £2,000 bursary that the care leavers service will fund. Young people should talk to their personal adviser or a specialist adviser within the education participation team about funding and visit the local offer for care leavers web pages.

The link for Hampshire is:

<https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/advice.page?id=T3SjaCfrefM>



### Acronyms used in this document

AP	Alternative Provision
CLA	Child Looked After
DT	Designated Teacher (for looked after and previously looked after children)
DfE	Department for Education
EFA	Education Funding Agency
EYPP	Early Years Pupil Premium
FSM	Free School Meals
IFA	Independent Fostering Agency
INMSS	Independent Non-Maintained Special School
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Child
NoR	Number on Roll
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PPP	Pupil Premium Plus
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
VSH	Virtual School Head





## Useful links and references

Guides for parents and carers around PPP for children in care and PP for previously looked after children can be accessed from the Virtual School website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/virtual-school/funding>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2025-to-2026>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2025-to-2026/pupil-premium-2025-to-2026-technical-note>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-funding-2025-to-2026/early-years-entitlements-local-authority-funding-operational-guide-2025-to-2026#early-years-pupil-premium-eypp>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit>

[https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/guide to the pupil premium - 2024.pdf?v=1727884053](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/guide%20to%20the%20pupil%20premium%20-%202024.pdf?v=1727884053)

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/pupil-premium/resources-tools>