

PLAC - FAQs for Social Workers

How do schools know if a child has PLAC status?

Schools only know a child is previously looked after (PLAC) if the parent or carer voluntarily shares this information with them. PLAC status is sensitive and not automatically disclosed to schools. You can help by encouraging families to inform the school and share documentation (such as an adoption certificate, special guardianship or care arrangement order) so that the school can access pupil premium plus (PP+) funding and offer tailored support.

Are pupils who are PLAC entitled to additional funding or support?

Yes. Pupils who are PLAC are eligible for pupil premium plus (PP+) to support academic progress, emotional wellbeing and social development to improve educational outcomes. Pupils who are PLAC will benefit from trauma-informed and attachment-aware approaches in school, alongside tailored support for any additional learning or SEMH needs. Schools must have an appropriately qualified Designated Teacher (DT) to promote the education of the school's PLAC cohort. PLAC also have priority for in-school admissions.

How can I ensure that a pupil who is PLAC receives appropriate support in school?

Find out who the school's designated teacher (DT) is. Ensure that the DT is aware of the child's PLAC status and build links with them. This raises awareness of the child's early life experiences and the impact that these can have on learning, progress and educational engagement and attendance. It also enables the school to access PP+ and tailor support, including emotional wellbeing, academic interventions, and staff awareness of attachment-aware and trauma-informed practice.

What is pupil premium plus (PP+) and how do schools use it to support PLAC?

PP+ is extra funding given to schools in England to help support the education of PLAC. For 2025 to 2026, schools will receive £2630 for each eligible PLAC - but only if a pupil's PLAC status is recorded in the school's autumn (October) census.

The funding is not ring-fenced for individual pupils but should be used to address the specific needs of these children, who may have experienced trauma, disrupted attachments or gaps in their learning. Common uses include pastoral support (emotional literacy, mentoring, counselling), academic interventions, staff training in trauma-informed and attachment-aware practices, resources to support learning and engagement and possible enrichment activities to build confidence and social skills. As a social worker, you can help by encouraging collaboration between the school's DT and parents/carers.

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Can all schools claim PP+ for PLAC?

State-funded schools in England are eligible to claim PP+ for PLAC. This includes local authority maintained schools (mainstream and special schools), academies and free schools, alternative provision academies / education centres and certain FE colleges with 14-16 provision. Independent schools are generally not eligible to receive PP+ funding directly unless the SEN Service have commissioned a full-time place for a pupil with an EHCP. Further information can be found in the DfE [Pupil premium 2025 to 2026: technical note - GOV.UK](#)

Can a child receive PP+ as PLAC *and* PP for free school meals (FSM)?

A child cannot receive both PP (FSM/Ever 6) and PP+. If a child qualifies for both, only PP+ is awarded, as it is the higher rate. The child still receives FSM if eligible, but the school does not receive the FSM/Ever 6 PP funding in addition to PP+.

Pupils with a parent serving in the armed forces can receive the service pupil premium (SPP) in addition to PP or PP+, as it serves a different purpose — supporting pastoral needs rather than academic attainment.

Should pupils who are PLAC have a PEP or personal plan?

There is no requirement for PLAC to have a PEP. These are a statutory requirement for LAC as part of their care plan. However, it is good practice for schools and parents to consider creating an education support plan (ESP) - previously known as an education plan for adopted children (EPAC).

The ESP is intended to identify and address the specific educational needs of PLAC, recognising the impact of their early experiences of trauma and loss (including in-utero). An ESP should be a collaborative plan, ideally established in the autumn term, or when a child starts at your setting, and reviewed termly. Pupil voice is especially important when creating an ESP.

As a social worker, you can support this process by encouraging parents to share relevant information with the school and by helping facilitate communication between families and the DT. You can also advocate for the inclusion of trauma-informed strategies and ensure the child's views are meaningfully captured in the plan.

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If a child has an SGO, does that automatically mean that they are PLAC?

No. A child with an SGO is only considered PLAC if they were previously looked after by a local authority before the order was made. SGOs awarded or applied for when a child is placed with extended family through a private agreement, without care proceedings (possibly following CIN or CP planning), or if a child comes from abroad to guardians in the UK but was not looked after by a UK local authority, do not have PLAC status. You may find it helpful to refer to our Kinship Carers section for further information.

What is the role of the Virtual School for PLAC?

Since September 2018, Virtual Schools have had a statutory duty to provide advice, guidance and information about the education of PLAC. This advice and guidance is available to schools, parents, social workers and a range of professionals, as appropriate, who are working to improve the educational outcomes of previously looked after children.

What is the role of the Virtual School for PLAC? ..continued..

Virtual schools do not act as corporate parents for PLAC and, as such, do not case-hold or work directly with individual children. For PLAC attending Hampshire education settings, even if their home address is not in Hampshire, Hampshire Virtual School's Extended Duties team provide advice, guidance and information in relation to PLAC .

Any further questions?

If you have any further questions or would like support, please contact the Virtual School Extended Duties team: VSExtendedDuties@hants.gov.uk

