

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Virtual School for children in care

Accessing funding to improve educational outcomes of children and young people previously in care (PLAC)

These questions are based on the most frequent queries received by the Virtual School and will be updated annually

Frequently asked questions: Schools

What are the Virtual School's statutory duties towards children post/previously looked after?

Virtual Schools have a statutory duty (from September 2018) to provide advice, guidance and information to schools, parents and a range of professionals around improving the educational outcomes of children previously looked after. They are not corporate parents for this group of children.

Do we use a PEP for students when they are no longer LAC?

The Virtual School would consider it best practice to use the Education Plan for Adopted Children (EPAC); which can be found on this section of the website. There is an EPAC for each Key Stage.

What is the EPAC and when should it be used?

The EPAC (Education Plan for Adopted Children) is not statutory but the Virtual School would strongly recommend it as an effective way of providing a clear structure and plan around the child. It can be used as soon as the child has an Adoption Order. It is available on the Virtual School website. School staff should seek parental permission to use the EPAC, and work with parents/guardians to complete it. The Virtual School recommends that the EPAC is used at a point of transition, a move to a new class or school, or at a time of difficulty. As with a PEP it will need to be reviewed termly; however it is acceptable to review less frequently if all parties are in agreement

Do we send the EPAC to the Virtual School when it is completed?

Please circulate the document as agreed in the EPAC meeting. Do not send to the Virtual School

Is there an Education Plan for children subject to an SGO or Residency Order?

This is currently under construction and it is hoped to be on the website in the Spring Term 2019.. Until then please use the EPAC document as it will be very much the same, except that the term Guardian will be used in place of Parent.

Pupil Premium for children post/previously looked after

Which Post LAC pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium?

Children in School Years R to 11 who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order are eligible to attract the Pupil Premium funding.

What is the purpose of Pupil Premium?

The DfE takes the view that many care experienced children from the groups described above will have experienced grief and loss and will have had traumatic experiences in their early lives. The majority of these children entered care due to abuse or neglect. Their needs do not change overnight and they do not stop being vulnerable just because they are in a loving home. Their early life experiences will have a lasting effect emotionally, socially and academically. The purpose of the Pupil Premium is to raise educational attainment and close the gap between Post LAC students and their peers.

What are the conditions of Pupil Premium Grant?

Please refer to this document

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2018-to-2019>

When does Pupil Premium funding start and finish?

Any child attending school from the start of Reception Year to the end of Year 11 is eligible to receive Post LAC PP. Children who are electively home educated or are post-16 students are currently not eligible for Post LAC PP. To be eligible, a child needs to have been previously in care at some point in England or Wales, and once they have left care, they would need to have been either adopted, subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Child Arrangements Order (CAO). Children who return home to live with their parents or relatives (outside these 3 categories) do not qualify for post LAC premium.

Can we use the Pupil Premium for providing school uniform?

It is expected that a parent would provide school uniform for their child. If the family is experiencing financial difficulties and are unable to provide a school uniform for their child then they should seek advice from their child's school.

Should our Post – LAC students be entitled to Free School Meals?

Parents/ Guardians can check if they meet the criteria for receiving Free School Meals by using this link.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Are children previously looked after entitled to FSM Ever 6 PP?

Generally they are not entitled to FSM Ever 6 PP as they cannot receive both pupil premiums. Therefore the PP for Post LAC will take precedent.

Should the Pupil Premium be used for school trips and outings?

It is expected that a parent will provide the financial support for additional curricular activities. Use of the EPAC will support the evidence for the decisions taken around Pupil Premium funding. If a Parent / Guardian's financial situation is unable to support the cost of a trip then please discuss with them as you would any other parent in a similar situation.

Do schools have to tell parents what they spend the Pupil Premium funding on?

The DFE consider it to be good practice for schools to work in partnership with parents, and to have transparent processes in place. The use of the EPAC will support the evidence for the decisions taken around Pupil Premium funding.

Is it ok to buy equipment so that all the children in the school benefit from it?

As long as you have identified how the child will benefit from the equipment purchase this is acceptable. However please be fair in your assessment of how much of their funding is to be used. Use of the EPAC will support you in making these decisions.

Can we use the Pupil Premium funding for the child to join out of school clubs?

As long as you can identify how this benefit the child's academic progress and attainment. Use of the EPAC will support you in making these decisions.

What school types attract the Pupil Premium funding for children who are Post LAC?

All state funded education providers may claim the pupil premium for children adopted from care and for children who have left care under a special guardianship order or child arrangements order (formally known as a residence order). This includes children in alternative provision such as an independent provision, or an education centre.