Distribution of the Pupil Premium for children cared for by Cheshire East Council

2019 to 2020

Part 1 Background and Rationale

Raising the educational achievements of cared for children, (CFC) sometimes known as looked after children (LAC) is a priority for all those who work and support this vulnerable group and the Pupil Premium (LAC) is allocated by the government to support this.

Over recent years the amount allocated for each child has increased, as has the requirement for Virtual School Heads to ensure that this is used to maximum effectiveness to benefit these children and for schools to make clear through the PEP how this money will be used and its impact monitored.

The amount paid to the council to be allocated by the Virtual School Head was increased in 2018-2019 to at £2,300 per child in care who is in Reception to Y11. This is a result of a transfer from DSG to the pupil premium included in the national funding formula policy which will ensure that support for looked after and previously looked after children is maintained. The allocation system which has been previously agreed by the Corporate Parenting Board and the Schools Forum will continue in 2019-20, details are provided in Part 2 of this paper.

Use of the Pupil Premium for Looked after Children (PPLAC)

The PPLAC is intended to enhance the provision and support for cared for children in order that they might make accelerated progress and so close the achievement gap with their peers. This means that it may not be used to replace or double-fund any support or resources to which the child is already entitled either by being a member of the school community or to meet their special educational needs but will fund interventions and support which are over and above that which the school could reasonably be expected to provide to all children. PPLAC will not usually be paid to independent schools or full time alternative provision where the provider is already funded for specialist provision unless there are exceptional circumstances where the funding requested can be shown to be over and above that in the funding agreement.

The PPLAC is intended to improve educational achievement and so will usually be focussed on one or more of the following areas:

- Raising levels of attainment or rate of progress
- Supporting achievement in an area where the child is gifted or talented
- Improving attendance
• Promoting inclusion and reducing exclusions
• Developing social skills
• Supporting emotional wellbeing and positive mental health
• Supporting transition between classes, key stages or schools

To be allocated funding schools will be required to identify the funding required to meet the needs of each child in any of the areas listed above. A contribution of up to 25% could be considered for school trips that are aimed to support improving attainment and progress on an individual basis. There will be no fixed amount per child and all requests to meet needs which cannot be provided as part of the school provision will be considered...

Some children have very high support needs and for these the £2,300 issued by the DfE is only a fraction of the costs needed to help them engage and succeed in education. This group will include

• Children coming into care from a fragmented home, with chaotic educational history who are significantly behind their peers,
• Children who have to move between schools or providers,
• Children where there is a significant [and often delayed] reaction to abuse and neglect, which manifests in hard to anticipate behaviours.

The Virtual School is usually heavily involved with these cases but requests for additional high costs will be considered from all schools and will be funded from the retained portion of the PPLAC allocated to Cheshire East.

The DfE document “Pupil Premium and the role of the Virtual School Head 2014-15 frequently asked questions” states that PPLAC can be used to fund posts within the Virtual School where the post will have a direct impact on the quality of support provided to care for children. In Cheshire East the PPLAC is used to provide staff that will:

1. Provide specialist support to work directly with young people, including Educational Psychologist (EP), tutors, mentor and attendance education support to help schools with strategies for integration of pupils and reducing exclusions. NB this is not to replace the schools own EP, tutor or mentor services who should be consulted initially if there are concerns about a child or discussions regarding any special educational needs.
2. Focus on post-16 progression into employment or training,
3. Monitor the quality and progress of the service to ensure that the most vulnerable children have the support they need and that priority issues are understood and addressed
4. Advise schools on how to complete the PEP and funding requests to the required standard and to liaise with schools about setting up the meetings and returning the completed PEPs.

5. Lead training for staff on how best to support cared for and previously cared for children. This is offered free to schools as centrally arranged training and network events or as bespoke training for schools around specific children or issues, e.g. reducing exclusions and attachment and trauma.

**Early Years (pre-school)**

From April 2015 all cared for children age three or four years who are accessing the free early education entitlement have been eligible to receive an allocation of up to £302.10, depending on the number of hours which the child attends a registered nursery or childminder. This will be issued to the setting attended by the child, and the setting will be required to ensure that PEPs are returned which give sufficient detail about the planned expenditure and how the impact will be assessed and provide data on progress. The allocation method for this group will remain unaltered and details are provided later in this document.

**Post-16 cared for and care leavers**

There is no PPLAC for this group although they will be eligible for the 16-19 Bursary if they remain in education or training. This is £1,200 worth of support per year issued by the provider to any young person who was in care on their sixteenth birthday and had been in care for a minimum of thirteen weeks since their fourteenth birthday. It should be noted that the bursary can be provided either ‘in kind’ or by cash payment into the young person’s bank account. How the funds are issued is at the discretion of the education provider.

**Previously Looked after**

The pupil premium allocated to the Council for 2019 to 2020 will include pupils recorded in the January 2019 school census as previously looked after. These are children who are no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or were adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales. ‘State care’ is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society. These children are collectively referred to as post-LAC. Schools will receive £2,300 for each child recorded as ‘post-LAC’ in the census. This will be allocated directly to academies or via the local authority for maintained schools.
The Virtual School Head does not have responsibility for the use of this funding but schools are advised to work with parents to agree the most effective use and how this can be monitored and reported. From September 2018 the Virtual School will offer information and advice to schools and parents of previously looked after children. This will include support on school selection and admission, use of pupil premium and effective ways to support children in schools. PEPs are not required for previously cared for children but schools are advised to work with parents on identifying ways to support children and improve their achievement.

**PEP quality assurance**

PEP meetings will be held at least once per term for all children in care, with the school/setting taking the lead to maintain the PEP document and implement all agreed actions. Social Workers will be expected to attend the PEP and provide all the necessary background information that the school need. The Virtual School will usually attend all initial PEPs and complete the documentation for this meeting. Review meetings will be led by school/setting and the Social Worker with school/setting ensuring that the documentation is completed and returned to the Virtual School within 5 working days. Completed PEPs will be returned to the Virtual School Advisor via the PEPS inbox and a quality assurance assessment will be conducted. This uses the criteria which were designed by Designated Teachers and the Virtual School staff. The quality assurance report will monitor the extent to which the PEP demonstrates that the school and others working with it have identified the needs of the child and have effective plans in place to address these. Schools will be informed of any actions needed to improve the quality of future PEPs but the PEP will be returned if it is found to be inadequate to evidence the progress, needs or plans for a child. This process will be used for all PEPs when the Virtual School Advisor did not attend and for a sample of others returned by schools.

**Monitoring of Pupil Premium Plus**

Schools are accountable for the educational attainment and progress of all disadvantaged pupils who attract all types of pupil premium on their roll, through Ofsted inspections and KS2/KS4 school performance tables. This means that they should record the impact of any actions implemented. Designated Teachers should provide an annual report to Governors which would include the use and impact of the PPLAC although care must be taken to avoid identification of pupils where there are small numbers of cared for children in a school.

On receipt of each PEP with an accompanied PPLAC request the Virtual School will record the amount requested, and the type of expenditure that is planned so that the outcomes for each child
and the impact on their attendance, attainment and progress can be assessed. The Virtual School Head will monitor the spending of the grant over the year and produce a report summarising the allocation and impact of the Pupil Premium Plus in 2019. Any funding not allocated by March 2020 will be distributed to schools.
Part 2 Distribution Method 2019-20

Early Years  (pre-school)

Instalment 1 – Summer term 2019

- Up to £95.40 per child dependent on hours attending nursery/provider
- Paid only if spring term PEP and data has been received and clearly shows the impact of any previous allocation and plans for future spend.

Instalment 2 – Autumn term 2019

- Up to £111.30 per child dependent on hours attending nursery/provider
- Paid only if summer term PEP and data has been received and clearly shows the impact of any previous allocation and plans for future spend.

Instalment 3 – Spring term 2020

- Up to £95.40 per child dependent on hours attending nursery/provider
- Paid only if autumn term PEP and data has been received and clearly shows the impact of any previous allocation and plans for future spending

Should PEP and/or the data not be returned by the end of a term, then the allocation for the following term may be delayed while the Virtual School liaises with the education provider to agree how to collect this information.

Where the PEP makes clear that the actions required exceed the standard allocation the Virtual School Head will review the PEP and will allocate the additional funding subject to availability. Payment will be made by Cheshire East Council as a stand alone payment for settings outside Cheshire East and alongside Early Years funding for those inside Cheshire East.
Reception to Y11
For most cases schools are invited to submit 1 or 2 requests during the year.
Request 1 – made in the summer term to cover support either for the next year if known or to cover costs until October half term when this is not known
This can include requests for any summer holiday activities to support progress and engagement. When a child is changing schools it is expected that the receiving school will attend the summer PEP.
Request 2 – made in autumn term to cover predicted costs to the end of the year
NB
The Spring PEP will be a review of progress and will not usually require any additional funding.
Requests for children in crisis or with unforeseen needs can be made throughout the year and will usually be discussed in advance with the Virtual School Advisor.

What do schools need to provide?
1. Completed good quality PEP each term, which SMART targets and review of previous targets and funding.
2. End of term data updates on current attainment and progress (requested separately)
3. Funding request form to show the nature and duration of the request

Should PEP and/or the data not be returned by the end of a term, then the allocation for the following term may be delayed while the Virtual School liaises with the school to agree how to collect this information.
While the Virtual School aims to provide all children with the support needed it may not be possible to fund all possible interventions so schools are advised to await confirmation of the agreed funding before starting on any support plan. For this reason, schools are advised to liaise with Social Workers to hold PEPs as early in the term as possible.

How much can schools request?
This system allows schools to match the funding to the needs of the child, always with the aim of increasing their engagement, achievement and progress and all requests will be considered. This means that the amount will vary between children but previous years suggest that most children require funding in the region of £1000 - £1200 per year with additional funding requested for children preparing for exam preparation or transition. Due to the increased allocation from DfE we anticipate that schools will be allocated an average of £1400 over the year in 2019/20.
Most funding will be allocated in summer and Autumn Terms and requests for funding made after Dec 20\textsuperscript{th} will be for exceptional funding only. This will include children who are new into care, who have moved schools or who are experiencing particular unforeseen difficulties.

**Key dates for submission of requests and payments 2019-20**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of submission of request</th>
<th>Date when decision will be made and school informed</th>
<th>Latest date by which funding will be transferred to school</th>
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<td>24\textsuperscript{th} May</td>
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**NB requests made after 21\textsuperscript{th} December 2018 will be for exceptional funding only and will be responded to on an individual basis**

**How will schools receive their funding?**

For schools/academies in Cheshire East – transferred by Cheshire East Schools Finance Team
For maintained schools outside Cheshire East – paid to school from Virtual School
For academies outside Cheshire East – paid by Cheshire East Schools Finance
For independent schools and providers – paid by Cheshire East Council.