Supporting previously looked after children in school who are living Cheshire East

Cheshire East has a proven track record of providing post-adoption support to schools and families but from Sept 2018 the statutory duties of Local Authorities and schools have been extended to ensure that children who have previously been in the care have access to information and advice. This article outlines how this will operate within Cheshire East.

The information applies to children who leave care through Adoption, Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) or Child Arrangement/Residence Orders.

Information, advice and support
The Virtual School can provide advice to young people, families or schools on how to support previously looked after children. This can include issues such as school admissions, transfer between schools, and appropriate use of Pupil Premium, challenging exclusions, post-16 options and course availability. Schools are required to identify a staff member to oversee the support for previously looked after children and these staff are able to access all training offered by the Virtual School to Designated Teachers for cared for children.
Contact Laura.Rogerson@cheshireeast.gov.uk

In school support and intervention advice
The Cheshire East Adoption and Special Guardianship Team have a school advisor who is able to offer practical advice to schools and families on how to ensure that schools understand and respond appropriately to the needs of previously cared for children. This advisor is also able to offer advice should issues arise in school such as reduced attendance or exclusion and to identify if a case might be eligible for Post Adoption Support Funding.
Contact cathy.moss@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Funding support
1. Pupil Premium
Schools that have children who are previously looked after, and subject to adoption, special guardianship order or child arrangement order are eligible to claim the pupil premium. To do this, head teachers should invite parents to self-declare that they have a previously looked after child and request sight of the legal paperwork, such as a court order or certificate. This needs to be indicated on the schools management information system before the January census in order for the school census to be accurate. The funding is sent directly to the school. Early Years settings can also claim pupil premium for previously adopted children.

2. Post Adoption Support Fund
To provide essential therapeutic support for adopted/SGO children and families in a plan agreed with the post-adoption support team.