

Frequently Asked Questions for Schools

What are the Virtual School's statutory duties towards previously children in care?

Virtual Schools have a statutory duty (from September 2018) to provide signposting, advice, and information to schools, parents and a range of professionals in relation to improving the educational outcomes of previously children in care.

Do we use a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for students when they are no longer Children in Care (CiC)?

The Virtual School would consider it best practice to use the Education Planning Document for previously children in care.

[Link to Education Plan](#)

What is the Education Plan and when should it be used?

The Education Plan is not a statutory document, it is recommended as good practice to create a partnership agreement between the child or young person, home, school and professionals to ensure effective provision. It supports with transitions to ensure all staff are aware of the young person's early life experiences, any significant developmental trauma and it allows exploration of what is working well and any further actions that can support the young person.

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

Please circulate the document to those agreed in the meeting. You are not required to send a copy to the Virtual School as the Virtual School is not the corporate parents for this group of young people.

How do we support a previously child in care with transition to primary, or secondary school?

We recognise that transition and change can be very daunting for children and young people who have previously been in care. Children and young people who have experienced trauma and find change very difficult may need an enhanced transition plan, please discuss appropriate strategies with parents and carers.

The following resources are very useful:

[WCC – starting a new school or college](#)

[PAC UK – example transition plan and strategies](#)

[PAC UK – goodbyes and transitions](#)

[PAC UK – easing the transition](#)

[Beacon House – supporting transitions](#)

[Beacon House – the transition storm](#)

[Anna Freud – supporting transition](#)

How do we access Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) for Previously Children in Care (PCiC)?

On entry to school please ensure that your school registration form clearly asks if the child has been previously looked after. Publicise in your newsletter regularly that additional PP+ funding is available. In discussion with the parents and carers, ensure you are satisfied that the child is eligible for PP+, take a copy of the court order or sign and date to show that you have seen it. This information is then recorded in the school census, PP+ will be sent to you at the same time as your pupil premium funding. The Virtual School do not have any additional funding for previously children in care.

Important - the young person needs to have been **LOOKED AFTER** prior to the court orders being granted. The census will ask you for the dates the child was in the care of a local authority. Children who have a private family arrangement are not eligible for PP+ and children who return home to live with their parents or relatives (outside adoption, Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and Child Arrangement Order (CAO)) do not qualify for PP+ funding.

What is the purpose of Pupil Premium Plus?

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. Many 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 Plus is to raise educational attainment and close the gap between previously children in care and their peers.

What are the conditions of Pupil Premium Grant?

[Pupil premium: allocations and conditions of grant 2023-2024](#)

When does Pupil Premium Plus funding start and finish?

Any child attending school from the start of reception year to the end of year 11 is eligible to receive PP+. Children who are electively home educated, who attend an independent setting or are post-16 students are currently not eligible for the funding.

Are Previously Children in Care entitled to FSM Ever 6 Pupil Premium?

PCiC are not entitled to FSM Ever 6 PP as they cannot receive both pupil premiums. Therefore, the PP+ for previously children in care will take precedence.

Should Pupil Premium Plus 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 Education Plan for PCiC will support the evidence for the decisions taken around Pupil Premium Plus funding. The allocation of PP+ to specific interventions should be evidence based and meet the individual needs of the child/young person. The Education Endowment Foundation provide schools with evidence of high impact strategies for disadvantaged learners.

[Pupil Premium Guide](#)

If a parent or carer'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 Plus funding on?

The DFE consider it to be good practice for schools to work in partnership with parents and carers, and to have transparent processes in place. However, schools do not have to inform parents of exactly how much funding is being spent on an individual child.

Is it ok to buy equipment or provide staffing support where other disadvantaged learners in the school benefit?

If you have identified how the child or young person will benefit from the equipment purchase or staffing resource this is appropriate use of funding. Schools will need to demonstrate evidence of impact of the PP+ grant for previously children in care. Use of the Education Plan will support the monitoring process and measure if the school's chosen strategies are making a positive difference to the individual child.