

## Warwickshire Virtual School

### Pupil Premium Plus Policy for Children in Care (CiC)

September 2025

The DfE term used is Looked After Children (LAC); Children in Care (CiC) is the preferred term used by Warwickshire. Children in Care are one of the groups of pupils that attract Pupil Premium funding with the aim of:

*'Raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities to reach their potential.'*

Disadvantaged pupils by definition include:

*'Looked-after children (LAC) defined in the Children Act 1989 as one who is in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English local authority.'*

For Children in Care, a higher band of funding called Pupil Premium Plus is allocated to an authority's Virtual School Head for decisions over allocation arrangements.

*'The LAC premium must be managed by the designated virtual school head (VSH) in the local authority that looks after the child and used without delay for the benefit of the looked-after child's educational needs as described in their personal education plan.'*

*The VSH should ensure there are arrangements in place to discuss how the child will benefit from pupil premium funding with the designated teacher or another member of staff in the child's education setting who best understands their needs. Processes for allocating funds to a child's education setting should be as simple as possible to avoid delay.'*

Pupil Premium: Conditions of Grant

### Principles

Pupil Premium Plus is allocated to maintained schools and academies only, for statutory school age children in the care of Warwickshire.

Warwickshire's Virtual School recognises that schools are in the best position to make use of resources to raise the attainment of individual Children in Care in their setting. We understand and acknowledge that a child's needs may change over time and, therefore, ask that schools request a termly amount depending on the additional support being provided in that school term.

### Individual Allocation

As outlined in the DfE guidance, Pupil Premium Plus is based on a per pupil calculation but is not a per pupil entitlement. Schools will determine whether Pupil Premium Plus funding is required each term and what amount. There is no requirement that allocated funding be used exclusively for the benefit of one individual Child in Care. Where group or paired interventions are more successful, Pupil Premium Plus will be used accordingly by schools.

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When completing Personal Education Plan reviews on the designated web-based platform, schools request £0, £400, £800 or £1500 for that term. It is expected that requests for £1500 will only be used in exceptional circumstances. The school is responsible for measuring the impact of the funding and reporting this to the Virtual School and associated professionals via the next termly Personal Education Plan review.

Money will be paid to schools termly in arrears when Virtual School Education Advisers are satisfied that it is appropriately targeted and focussed on raising attainment for the Child / Children in Care.

### **Wider Allocation**

Warwickshire's Virtual School will spend the remainder of Pupil Premium Plus receipts on initiatives to improve understanding, support school improvement and develop support networks to improve outcomes for Children in Care and reduce the attainment gap between them and their peers. This includes training for designated teachers, developing Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed schools across Warwickshire and commissioning support from external professionals.

### **Early Years' Pupil Premium Plus**

Children in Care from age 3 years are entitled to Early Years Pupil Premium Plus, which is currently £1 per eligible child per hour (up to £570 per year) when in attendance at a pre-school, nursery class or day care provision. This funding is allocated by the respective Local Authority Early Years team where the setting is based and is not allocated by the Virtual School.

### **Appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus funding**

Pupil Premium Plus funds must be used to close the gap in attainment and progress between Children in Care and their peers.

We must remain ambitious and have high expectations of our Children in Care. With possible gaps in learning their prior attainment should not be seen as a ceiling to future attainment. Interventions in English and mathematics to close the gap should be used to allow children to 'catch up and keep up'.

The DfE expectation is that evidence-based interventions will be used. The Virtual School has identified examples of how the funding can be used effectively. Suggested uses include:

- One-to-one or small group tuition, e.g. in mathematics and English such as EPATT
- Staff development, e.g. training on attachment needs, trauma, resilience, emotion coaching and restorative practice
- Implementation of whole school strategies such as zones of regulation
- Expert assessment and/or advice, e.g. from an Educational Psychologist
- Counselling or mentoring
- Therapeutic support e.g. play therapy, LEGO therapy
- ELSA

- Additional learning opportunities e.g. revision days
- Enrichment experiences focused on developing emotional wellbeing e.g. forest school, nurture
- Contributions towards residential trips
- Engagement with clubs and activities that lead to formal accreditation. e.g. referee qualification, Arts award, music lessons, Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Other evidence-based interventions from the [Education Endowment Foundation](#)

### **Inappropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus funding**

Pupil Premium Plus funds should be used to close the gap in attainment. The money should **not** be used to replace funds which would otherwise be provided from the main school budget or by the carer. Hence, the Virtual School will not typically support the use of Pupil Premium Plus on the following:

- Giving young people access to existing arrangements, e.g. homework club
- School trips, which are effectively part of the curriculum
- School equipment e.g. stationery, DT food ingredients
- Reduced class sizes
- School uniform
- School meals
- Transport
- Holiday clubs / regular clubs e.g. swimming, football, guides
- To provide support that would be part of a school's core offer e.g. a phonics group that the child would access ordinarily
- To provide support as outlined in a child's EHCP – schools should liaise with SENDAR for funding discussions
- Laptops

### **Evaluation / Impact**

The Designated Teacher (DT) is responsible for evaluating the impact of interventions funded by the Pupil Premium Plus. Where interventions are not leading to 'sufficient' improvement, the professionals involved should consider what changes should be made to the support plan.

Impact might be measured using:

- SDQ / Boxall Profile / Thrive
- Reading age
- Spelling age
- Standardised testing
- End of term / topic assessments
- SALT screening e.g. WellComm
- Attendance
- Accreditations gained
- Increased engagement

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- Child / student views score
- Engagement with wider school activities

Whilst the Virtual School has the discretion to reallocate funding where it is not leading to the achievement gap being closed, it is hoped that this can be done in partnership with all colleagues supporting the child, including school staff, social worker and foster carer.

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