

Cambridgeshire Virtual School **Pupil Premium Plus Policy**

The Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) grant is a vital resource which promotes high aspirations and seeks to secure the best educational outcomes for children and young people in care.

The Virtual School Head is responsible for managing PP+ funding for all children and young people in the care of Cambridgeshire County Council wherever they live and wherever they go to school.

For this policy the term 'school' should be taken to include all education providers.

This policy references and should be read in conjunction with the following government guidance documents and national advice:

1. Pupil premium: allocations and conditions of grant 2024 to 2025, available at: [Pupil premium: allocations and conditions of grant 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocation-conditions-2024-2025)
2. Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders - February 2024, available at: [Using Pupil Premium: Guidance for School Leaders \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/using-pupil-premium-guidance-for-school-leaders)
3. Guidance: Pupil Premium Overview – updated February 2024 - available at: [Pupil premium: overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-overview)
4. Using your pupil premium funding effectively, available at: [The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/using-your-pupil-premium-funding-effectively)
5. Guidance: Pupil premium virtual school heads' responsibilities, available at: [Pupil premium: virtual school heads' responsibilities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities)

It is a statutory requirement that schools evidence how the Pupil Premium Plus funding is spent and how it benefits the education outcomes of Children in Care. Schools must ensure that every PEP includes smart desirable outcomes, and that there is clear evidence of impact on children's achievement.

Statement of intent

The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by children and young people in care; Cambridgeshire Virtual School therefore intends this grant to be used to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best educational outcomes. Schools are responsible for determining how PP+ is spent for the benefit of the child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan and should consider the feelings and wishes of the individual pupil, their social workers and carers. The allocation of PP+ must be linked to clear desirable outcomes as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) and the impact of this is reviewed termly by the Virtual School.

Challenges

Challenges which impact on achievement of children and young people in care may include:

- Placement moves
- School moves and fragmented or disrupted education
- The court process and uncertainty about the future
- Separation from siblings and worries about birth family

- Curriculum triggers eg. Birthdays and other celebrations, drug education, mother's day...
- Transitions
- Travel and distance from school
- Changes of social worker
- Peer and adult understanding of 'being in care'

Allocation

The DfE currently allocates to local authorities £2,570 per pupil per annum. It is the responsibility of the Virtual School Head to determine the distribution of the grant.

The Virtual School distributes the PP+ to schools on a termly basis, based on the educational needs identified in the PEP. Schools must ensure that PEPs, including an up-to-date submission of attainment and progress data, are completed each term to a high standard (refer to Quality Assurance criteria and PEP exemplars to be found in the Documents section of the PEP) in order to receive the funding; typically around £600 is available per term if approved through the PEP.

Standard Transitions

- For pupils moving to a new school as part of a standard transition (this may include entry to Reception, entry to Year 3 - if separate infant and junior schools - or entry to middle, secondary or high schools) we expect the Designated Teacher of the new school to attend the child / young person's summer term PEP meeting. During this meeting PP+ can be requested to support the needs of the child / young person in their first term at the new school. Payment will be made to the new school.

Year 11

- In the summer term of Year 11, schools are urged to consider the use of PP+ to support entry into post-16 education. This may include books, IT equipment or specialist resources. Payment will be made to the secondary school in advance of the summer holidays.

New to Care

- When a pupil is new to care an initial payment will be made to schools depending on the needs of the child at that time. This will be paid on initiation of the PEP which must be actioned within 10 school days of the pupil coming into care.
- If there is a planned change of school, the Virtual School will work with the school where the pupil is currently on roll and the receiving school to determine how this initial payment will best support the pupil.

Early Years

- Children below statutory school age are eligible for EYPP+ funding, which currently amounts to £388 per year. This amount is distributed in three termly instalments and is paid by the local authority where the child is educated.
Eligibility criteria are as follows:
 - From 9 months of age, if the child is attending nursery **and** their foster carers qualify for nursery funding
 - From the term after the child turns 2 years old, provided they are attending nursery.

Exceptional Circumstances

- In exceptional circumstances, where additional funding is needed, schools may request this at any point. The guidance to support this can be found in the appendix to this policy and also on the Virtual School website.

Retained Funding

The Virtual School retains an amount of PP+ annually in order to fund provision that will benefit a group of, or all, the authority's children in care. This will include activities such as:

- Centrally delivered training
- Provision and resources for pupils not on a school roll
- Cluster projects supporting specific groups of pupils within or across schools

Recoupment

The Virtual School may recoup the PP+:

- If there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the pupil's needs
- If the pupil moves education placement in order to transfer the money to the new placement

Other Local Authority Children in Care

Children in reception classes or of statutory school age, attending Cambridgeshire schools, who are in the care of other local authorities will receive PP+ from the placing authority's Virtual School. The name and contact details of other Virtual School Heads can be requested from Cambridgeshire Virtual School.

Children Previously In Care

Children who have previously been in care and are now subject to a Special Guardianship Order, a Child Arrangement Order or have been adopted are entitled to PP+. This will need to be claimed through the October annual school's census, with the parents'/carers' permission once evidence of their status is seen. The PP+ grant for children who have previously been in care is managed by the child's school; it is outside the remit of the Virtual School and this policy.

Accountability

The Virtual School Head is accountable for the local authority's distribution of PP+ through the Virtual School's annual report, which includes:

- details of how the PP+ and EYPP+ has been managed
- evidence of how the spending of the premiums has supported the achievement of the pupil

PP+ must not be used to

- Fund services that should be provided via an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Provide other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from health
- Fund services that the local authority is responsible for funding, such as support for foster carers, school uniforms, school meals or transport to get the pupil to and from school, or additional EYFS hours.

Further guidance on this is available in the appendices.

Appendix 1 – Guidance for the Effective use of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

PP+ should not go into a general pot for inclusion, SEND or narrowing an achievement gap. It should be utilised to support each child in care's individualised learning outcomes (as detailed in their Personal Education Plan). Decisions around the use of it should be driven by priority and need.

PP+ is intended to be used aspirationally, whatever the child's starting point and is therefore not a catch-up grant designed to purely close the gap. Designated Teachers may find it helpful to refer to the Education Endowment Fund Tool Kit when considering whether an intervention might be an effective use of PP+ to support a child in care. ([Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk))

Effective learning interventions are underpinned by three principles:

- Provision should be bespoke, tailored to the pupil's individual needs and strengths, with very regular reviews of progress. Try to fit the provision to the pupil, not the other way around.
- Intelligent and aspirational analysis of data (both "hard" and "soft") should be fully used to identify attainment gaps and barriers to achievement, with the selection of strategies based on evidence of what is most likely to work in meeting that individual need.
- A joined-up approach works best for all. Where external agencies are involved, collaboration is key to helping children feel more secure and connected and avoiding gaps or duplication. Interventions should never be bolted on or approached as isolated or unconnected to the rest of the provision.

Other important considerations which should underpin practice and can themselves become key strategies, include:

- The importance of early intervention (rather than just focusing on end-of-key stage).
- The value of capturing the pupil's voice.
- The need to engage parents, carers or social workers.
- Strategic use of teaching assistants which enables an increased teacher led focus for the pupil.

Powerful approaches are likely to be ones which schools develop themselves, based upon attachment aware and trauma informed principles. However, suggestions for effective spending are also detailed as a result of research undertaken by the REES Centre (University of Oxford),

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and PALAC (Promoting the Achievement of Looked After Children, University College London) amongst others.

PP+ can be used to target any area of need which will ultimately drive forward the education and developmental outcomes of the pupil; SEMH, behaviour and inclusion interventions will be most effective when they put the child at the centre. That said, interventions should include supporting the school staff, in order to be effective.

We do not recommend the commissioning of treatment of child-focused therapies **without prior consultation with the child's social worker** and an appropriate trauma-informed mental health assessment, from a body such as LAC-CAMHS. In general, the most useful intervention for our children is leading with an Attachment Aware Trauma Informed (AATI) approach.

Accountability for PP+ spend is critical. Pupil progress meetings (including PEP reviews), data-tracking, pupil surveys and focused observations can all be used to capture formative and summative data at regular intervals. Social and emotional progress can be baselined and measured using tools such as Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs), Boxall Profile and FAGUS.

Pupil Premium Plus can help to build staff capacity and confidence around a range of additional needs if that is what is required to support a pupil; this may include building on an awareness of attachment and the effects of early trauma. PP+ can be used to purchase training for staff on specific skills and approaches which in turn impact positively on the education experience of the pupil.

Where an external provider is commissioned to do work funded by PP+, schools should ensure that the provider is appropriately quality assured, and risk assessed.

PP+ spending should contribute towards aspirational expectations:

- Raising academic access and outcomes in all areas of the curriculum
- Priority for participation in all areas of school life
- Access to music
- Encouragement and support to aspire towards further education, higher education, employment or training
- Access to enhanced careers advice and guidance and quality work experience

Targeted Academic Support	Wider Strategies – Well-being	Wider Strategies – Social Skills	Wider Strategies – Attendance	Wider Strategies – Transitions	Wider Strategies – Aspirations
1:1 tuition (time-limited & measurable)	Nurture group(<i>PP+ can only be requested for the CIC's place in the group</i>)	Circle of Friends	Additional pastoral time	Home-school planning ahead	Bespoke careers advice
Literacy interventions eg Read, Write, Inc; curriculum resources	Circle of Friends	Coaching & Mentoring	Meet & Greet by trusted adult	Additional transition supported facilitated by trusted adult	FE and university visits
Numeracy interventions eg Mathletics; TT Rockstars	ELSA	Self-esteem sessions(<i>PP+ can only be requested for the CIC's place in the group</i>)		Facilitated attendance at Open Days	Residential trips
Individualised instruction	Targeted regulatory activities eg Lego play	Targeted small group work(<i>PP+ can only be requested for the CIC's place in the group</i>)		Supported visits to build relationships with new setting	Aspirational & enrichment experiences linking to the child/young person's interests
Targeted small group tuition(<i>PP+ can only be requested for the CIC's place in the group</i>)	Social Stories			Transition projects	Additional activities leading to an award or qualification (eg Duke of Edinburgh)
Mastery learning	Well being and mindfulness sessions				Music lessons
Pre-teaching eg subject specific vocabulary	Coaching & Mentoring				
Digital technology	Meet & Greet by trusted adult				

Appendix 2 – Restrictions on the Use of PP+

PP+ is not a means tested grant and should not be used to provide resources that a Local Authority provides through its allowance to foster carers or children's home fees, such as:

- School uniforms (Foster carers are provided with an allowance)
- School lunches (Foster carers are provided with an allowance)
- Transport to and from school or to any Alternative Provision / activities / work experience
- Out of school activities which are **not** linked to an aspiration or lead to accreditation (Foster carers are paid an allowance to fund a child / young person's hobbies / activities)
- Out of school activities accessed for childcare purposes or additional EYFS hours

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) must not be used to double fund or replace funding which has already been allocated to the school to support the CYP. Specifically, it cannot be used to:

- Fund services that should be provided via an EHC plan
- Provide other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from CIC health
- To cover interventions which have been funded from elsewhere

PP+ will not be paid if:

- The interventions offered by the school are universally available to all children in school and the school's own funding covers the cost of the interventions
- The PEP Desirable Outcomes do not meet requirements as set out by Cambridgeshire Virtual School (refer to Quality Assurance criteria and PEP exemplars to be found in the Documents section of the PEP)
- Interventions are not evidence based, for example: paying for additional adult support with no agreed outcome or focussed intervention.
- Interventions and outcomes are not time-limited and there is little attention to impact

The following are **not** good examples of the effective use of PP+:

- Activities or interventions which are not evidence informed
- Deployment of teaching assistants without a planned strategy
- One-to-one tuition and booster classes that are not time-limited or measurable by impact

Appendix 3 - Trips and Visits

- DFE guidance *Charging for school activities: May 2018* states that school governing bodies and local authorities cannot charge for 'education provided during school hours' or 'education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education'. This includes activities such as geography/history field trips, English/drama visits to the theatre etc. Charging for school activities (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Therefore, PP+ may not be used to fund any trips which form part of the pupil's core education offer as detailed in the above bullet point.
- Voluntary contributions may be requested, and carers are expected to pay these; the carer's allowance which is paid to foster carers and guardians enables such contributions. Where an individual carer's personal circumstances prohibit this, they should be treated as any other parent on a limited income in line with school policy.
- Schools can charge for board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit and it is recognised that this may be a barrier for some Children in Care. It is therefore expected that PP+ may fund up to one third of a residential trip **as long as the need for / benefits of the trip are clearly described in the Desirable Outcomes section of the PEP**. The remaining two thirds can be made up of contributions from social care, carers, school or another funding stream.

Appendix 4 - IT Equipment

- IT equipment, including laptops and tablets, may be purchased using PP+ so long as need is identified and recorded within the PEP
- Software, including Microsoft Office packages, may also be purchased using PP+ with the exception of specific packages detailed in EHCPs as these should be provided via SEND funding streams
- Appropriate safeguarding, licensing and maintenance should be undertaken in line with school policy
- Any equipment purchased using PP+ is the property of the child and therefore should transfer with them in the case of school or placement moves
- It is understood that IT equipment does become out-dated over time, however it is expected that PP+ should not be used to replace equipment more frequently than every 3 years

Appendix 5 – Additional Pupil Premium Plus Funding Requests (Guidance)

- Where a requirement for funding is over £1000 a term and/or over the annual allocation of £2,570 for an individual child, schools should make the request using the PEP document as usual. The request will then be reviewed by the Pupil Premium Plus Panel prior to a decision being made.
- In the case that a request needs to be made outside of the normal PEP submission deadlines, the DT should contact their linked advisory teacher. Any agreed funding will be recorded by the Virtual School on the PEP.

- Appendix 6 – Post 16 Pupil Premium Plus

Cambridgeshire Virtual School has been allocated £116,835 for the academic year 2024-25 to support our cohort of post 16 children in care and care leavers.

Cambridgeshire Virtual School is in receipt of this grant following an extension of the pilot programme. The funding provides support to local authorities in England for expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them to extend support to children in care and care leavers at post-16. This will build an evidence base of best practice which will inform any future support for this cohort of young people.

For enquiries regarding this grant please email: virtualschool@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

[Pupil premium 2024 to 2025: technical note - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118421/pupil-premium-2024-to-2025-technical-note.pdf)