



PUPIL PREMIUM (PP+ AND PP+ POST 16) POLICY APRIL 2024 - MARCH 2025

BCP Education services

BCP Virtual School

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to appoint someone (called the Virtual School Headteacher VSH) who holds the responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC). This includes 'maintaining accurate and up-to-date information about how they are progressing at school and taking urgent and individual action when they are not achieving well'. This also includes promoting the educational achievement of PLAC in their area by providing information and advice to:

- any person that has parental responsibility for the child
- providers of funded early years education, designated teachers for previously looked after children in maintained schools, academies, and other educational establishments
- any other person the authority considers appropriate for promoting the educational achievement of relevant children

1.2 In Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, the Virtual School do not use the terms Looked after Children (LAC) or previously Looked after Children (PLAC). Instead, we use Children in Care (CIC) and Care experienced Young People (CEYP) in all documentation produced.

1.3 The 'Pupil Premium 2024-2025 Conditions of Grant'¹ document informs us that school age CIC attract a Pupil Premium plus (PP+) grant of £2570.

1.4 The 'Early Years entitlements: Local Authorities funding of providers operational guide 2024-2025'² provides guidance for funding providers to deliver the Early Years entitlements in the financial year 2024 to 2025. Section 8.5 covers the Early Years pupil premium. For Early Years, the amount is equivalent to at least £353 per year.

1.4 'Promoting the education of LAC and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) statutory guidance for local authorities'³ dated February 2018 gives clarity on how this separate grant should be managed and these funds are not within the remit of this policy.

1.5 In June 2021 the duty was extended to cover the promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements⁴. These children are identified as Children in Need (CIN) or Children subject to Child Protection Plans (CP). This duty is of a strategic nature and does not involve any 'case work' with individual children. Separate funding is provided for this duty and these funds are not within the remit of this policy.

1.6 In October 2021, the Virtual School was successful in bidding for pilot funding to support children in the Post 16 phase. This funding was extended until Aug 23. Due to the success of the pilot programme this has now become a universal grant⁵ for all Virtual Schools from April 2024 onwards and is now within the remit of this policy.

¹ 24-25 terms of grant not yet published, to be added for final draft.

² [The Early Years entitlements: Local Authorities funding of providers operational guide 2024-2025 \(Nov 23\)](#)

³ [Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children \(February 2018\)](#)

⁴ [Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements: virtual school head role extension](#)

⁵ Guidance on spending of the post 16 grant not yet published, to be added for final draft

2. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

2.1 The Virtual School holds responsibility and accountability for:

- making sure that there is a system to track and monitor the attainment and achievement of Children in Care
- ensuring that all Children in Care have a robust and effective Personal Education Plan (PEP) with access to appropriate support, including personal tuition where appropriate⁶
- championing the educational needs of Children in Care across the authority and those placed out-of-authority

2.2 In Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP), the PP+ grant is managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH) and used to improve educational outcomes for Children in Care looked after by BCP. It is expected that schools and early years providers will use the funding to address pupils' identified needs as detailed in this policy and agreed in the child's PEP.

2.3 All expenditure of the PP+ grant is scrutinised annually by the Corporate Parenting Board in the January following the previous financial year end. The annual report is published for transparency purposes.

2.4 Schools who have CIC from other Local Authorities on their roll must contact the Virtual School of the relevant authority to request information on their policy for allocation of PP+. The name and contact details of other Virtual Schools can be requested from the BCP Virtual School team.

2.5 The Virtual School has a responsibility on behalf of the child's social worker to initiate a PEP meeting date via the ePEP system. Where a child is placed in an emergency, the PEP must be initiated within 10 working days of them becoming looked-after. We do this in partnership with the school/setting and the social worker. All future PEP meeting dates are agreed at the PEP meeting. Further details can be found in our process flowchart provided upon request.

2.6 There is an expectation that schools and settings will also engage with support and training offered by the Virtual School to ensure their Designated Teacher (DT) is best placed to serve the needs of all CIC. Attendance at DT networks will be monitored and any non-attendance may be discussed with Headteachers/Principals as appropriate. The Virtual School will support schools by offering training to all Governance/Trust Boards alongside a pro forma for the purposes of annual reporting to the Governance Board.

2.7 The Virtual School reserves the right to withhold funding allocations to schools if the conditions stipulated in section 4 of this policy are not met. However, support for schools/settings will be provided to ensure this is minimised. Any school/ setting whose funding has been withheld can challenge the decision by contacting the VSH. Any withheld funding subsequently released would be paid retrospectively in the following termly allocation payment.

3. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CENTRALLY RETAINED FUNDS

⁶ BCP use a secure online platform called ePEP provided by Welfare Call.

3.1 The Virtual School retains £570 of the annual £2570 grant for each school age looked after child and it is used to improve outcomes for all CIC to BCP, including those placed outside of BCP. Pupil outcomes and impact of the centrally retained funding is reported to the Corporate Parenting working group annually.

3.2 Expenditure of the centrally retained funds is planned strategically by the Virtual School Leadership team to support any educational activities deemed necessary for pupils from pre-school through to Year 11. All expenditure is monitored by the Central Finance Team for compliance with the conditions of grant.

3.3 The Virtual School retains £x of the annual £x grant for each post 16 looked after child and it is used to improve outcomes for all post 16 CIC to BCP, including those placed outside of BCP. Pupil outcomes and impact of the centrally retained funding is reported to the Corporate Parenting working group annually.

4. ALLOCATION OF FUNDING TO SCHOOLS

4.1 PP+ funding for school age CIC will continue to be allocated on a termly basis to enable funding to follow children who move schools during this period. Allocation will be based on what has been agreed with schools termly up to a notional amount of £2000 per year. Planned and actual spend amounts must be noted in the ePEPs termly with clearly identified, costed interventions linked to the targets set. Any planned interventions that spread across more than one term should only have each term's actual cost entered in the ePEP document for that term. Funds are unable to be paid in advance in case activities do not take place as planned and to ensure compliance with internal audit.

4.2 PP+ funding will only be allocated for pupils who have been in care for at least 3 weeks continuously and have had an ePEP completed. This is to reduce the risk of overspend through allocation to pupils who are looked after for brief periods with no agreed targets in place.

4.3 Allocation of funds will be subject to DTs and Social Workers completing high quality termly PEPs. All PEPs should include: a review on how the previous term's allocation has been spent; demonstration of outcomes/impact of previously set targets and funding and clearly costed new targets linked to the use of that term's requested allocation. The Virtual School team member responsible for each pupil will attend all PEP meetings. PEPs usually take place via telephone / video conference but can also be done face to face in schools if deemed necessary. Allocation of funds is also subject to the submission of any data collections requested by the Virtual School. All attendance data, progress data and end of Key Stage results are collected on our behalf by Welfare Call and all schools/AP providers are required to supply this data directly to Welfare Call. On occasion, there may be a request for other ad hoc data from the Virtual School Team members for specific project purposes, but this will be kept to a minimum.

4.4 The notional PP+ allocation for each school age CIC will be up to up to £2000 annually per financial year (April to March). This is paid termly subject to the conditions identified in 4.3. All funding is paid via BACs and remittance slips are issued. Any queries re funding can be directed to virtual.school@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

4.5 The Virtual School will also consider any proposal to use PP+ funds to direct pupils off-site for short term interventions as part of a joint-funding arrangement. Such interventions may reasonably be requested when there is clear evidence that a

temporary change in provision will be of benefit to the pupil. They must be time-limited and accompanied by a clear exit strategy that culminates in a successful reintegration to an appropriate full-time timetable. Schools will retain responsibility for safeguarding and quality assuring any off-site provision in accordance with the statutory guidance around the use of the B-code.

4.6 Where a school wishes to reduce a pupil's time in class by either instigating a part-time timetable or a bespoke provision, it may apply to the Virtual School for financial support in sourcing a suitable package. As in 4.5, any reduced provision must be time-limited, with clear objectives and time scales pertaining to a successful return to full-time education. The Virtual School provides a reintegration planning tool which should be used to track and monitor any short-term Alternative Provision arrangements.

4.7 PP+ funding will not be allocated to schools offering highly specialist residential provision that is funded by the LA. Appropriate provision for achieving the highest educational outcomes for these CIC will be stipulated at the point of commissioning a contract for placement.

5. ALLOCATION OF FUNDING TO EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

5.1 The BCP Virtual school does not hold funding for Early Years settings. The payment of Early Years PP+ is within free entitlement payments to settings managed by the Early Years support teams. Please contact them for further information. There is an expectation that this funding will be used to support the staffing costs for contribution to completing termly PEPs and monitoring of any interventions in place.

5.2 Some children in Early Years settings are placed with carers who are not eligible for the full 30 hours free early education entitlement. This is usually due to the carer's inability to undertake any other 'paid work' as their main occupation is that of being a carer, often for more than one child. In these circumstances, the Virtual School would consider awarding funding to the setting for extra hours that would benefit the child's education and to enable the child to be more 'school ready'. This would not apply if the extra hours sole purpose was to increase childcare provision.

Some of the following criteria would also need to apply:

- The child must be due to start school in the forthcoming September
- The child is behind their peers educationally within the EYFS framework
- The child would benefit from additional hours to support their learning and development.
- Additional hours would support the child's daily routine to be school ready

5.3 The need for an allocation of funding to meet specific interventions would be agreed by all parties during the child's termly PEP meeting and detailed within the completed ePEP. Funding would be approved by the Virtual School during the QA process, paid via BACs to settings termly and remittance slips are issued.

6. ALLOCATION OF FUNDING TO POST 16 PROVIDERS

6.1 Post 16+PP funding for post 16 CIC (up to the age of 18) will be allocated on a termly basis to enable funding to follow students who move providers during this period. Allocation will be based on what has been agreed with providers termly up to a notional amount of £x per year. Planned and actual spend amounts must be noted in the ePEPs termly with clearly identified, costed interventions linked to the targets set. Any planned interventions that spread across more than one term should only have each term's

actual cost entered in the ePEP document for that term. Funds are unable to be paid in advance in case activities do not take place as planned and to ensure compliance with internal audit.

6.2 Post 16 PP funding will only be allocated for students who have been in care for at least 3 weeks continuously and have had an ePEP completed. This is to reduce the risk of overspend through allocation to students who are looked after for brief periods with no agreed targets in place.

6.3 Allocation of funds will be subject to the termly completion and submission by social workers and DTs, of high quality ePEPs that include: a review on how the previous term's allocation has been spent; demonstration of outcomes/impact of previously set targets and funding and clearly costed new targets linked to the use of that term's requested allocation. The Virtual School team member responsible for each student will attend all PEP meetings. PEPs usually take place via telephone / video conference but can also be done face to face in providers premises if deemed necessary. Allocation of funds is also subject to the submission of any data collections requested by the Virtual School. All attendance data, progress data and end of Key Stage results are collected on our behalf by Welfare Call and all post 16/AP providers are required to supply this data directly to Welfare Call. On occasion, there may be a request for other ad hoc data from the Virtual School Team members for specific project purposes, but this will be kept to a minimum.

6.4 The notional Post 16 PP allocation for each post 16 CIC (up to the age of 18) will be up to up to £x annually per financial year (April to March). This is paid termly subject to the conditions identified in 6.3. All funding is paid via BACs and remittance slips are issued. Any queries about funding can be directed to virtual.school@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

6.5 The Virtual School will also consider any proposal to use Post 16 PP funds to direct students off-site for short term interventions as part of a joint-funding arrangement. Such interventions may reasonably be requested when there is clear evidence that a change in provision will be of benefit to the student. They must be time-limited and accompanied by a clear exit strategy that culminates in a successful reintegration to an appropriate full-time timetable. Providers will retain responsibility for safeguarding and quality assuring any off-site provision in accordance with any statutory guidance applicable to the provider.

6.6 Where a provider wishes to reduce a student's time in class by either instigating a part-time timetable or a bespoke provision, it may apply to the Virtual School for financial support in sourcing a suitable package. As in 6.5, any reduced provision must be time-limited, with clear objectives and time scales pertaining to a successful return to full-time education. The Virtual School provides a reintegration planning tool which should be used to track and monitor any short-term Alternative Provision arrangements.

6.7 Post 16 PP funding will not be allocated to providers offering highly specialist residential provision that is funded by the LA. Appropriate provision for achieving the highest educational outcomes for these CIC will be stipulated at the point of commissioning a contract for placement.

7. ePEPS AS A REQUIREMENT FOR ACCESSING FUNDING

7.1 ePEPs are the primary monitoring system to provide the Virtual school with an oversight of all Children and Young People's educational plans. The ePEP is a statutory, shared multi-agency document crucial to the educational planning of CIC. Termly

monitoring of the PEP document and meetings by the Virtual School team provides information and data to enable the Virtual School Officers and Headteacher to retain oversight of all pupils/students' progress and attainment and to address any issues across all agencies involved with that pupil/student. Additional ePEPs may be required if pupils/students move between schools/providers in year or where there is another compelling need.

7.2 For Year R to age 18:

The PP+ funding is provided to meet the additional needs of pupils/students through enabling associated interventions and support identified in the ePEP. The requested funding must be costed and linked to SMART⁷ goals focused on development, progress and improvement that are underpinned by detailed intervention and support. The goals and interventions/ support will be agreed with the Virtual School team member responsible for the pupil/student before or during the meeting. At any time in the term, a request can be made to amend the funding via email with the relevant member of the Virtual School team. After agreement by email any amendments will be noted on the current PEP by the Virtual School to ensure the correct allocation is awarded at the end of that term or in the following term during the QA process.

7.2.1 Pupil/student needs can include the following areas:

- Academic attainment or achievement
- Attendance
- Wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the pupil is gifted and talented
- Inclusion (reducing exclusion from the curriculum)
- Social Skills
- Transition to the next phase of education
- Emotional wellbeing such as those needs arising from the effects of attachment or childhood trauma upon learning
- Alternative provision provided as part of a reduced timetable

7.2.2 These needs will not routinely include the following areas unless agreed in advance with the Virtual School:

- Purchase of uniform, PE kit / trainers
- Any interventions or support that is part of the Universal offer for all pupils/students
- Contributions to school/provider curriculum trips or for the cost of residential trips
- Transport or travel costs

7.2.3 The Virtual School will no longer organise and directly fund interventions or the purchase of resources for any pupil/student 'on roll' in a school/provider. All interventions or purchase of resources for pupils/students 'on roll' in a school/provider will be organised and funded by the 'on roll' school/provider. This will include Alternative Provision provided by third party organisations as well as laptops/other resources. The aim is to ensure that the holistic overview of a pupil's education is retained by the 'on roll' school/provider thereby giving full autonomy to the school/provider to put into place any interventions agreed with the Virtual School team member during the PEP process or via email communication. Any expenditure should be included in the ePEP documentation.

⁷ SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound

7.2.4 The Virtual School will use retained funds for any pupils/students 'not on roll' to support any educational activities deemed necessary for pupil/students from year R to age 18.

8. SCHOOL AGE PUPILS WHO ENTER/EXIT CARE MID FINANCIAL YEAR

8.1 The Department for Education (DfE) allocates PP+ to the Virtual School during the period April 2024 to March 2025 as a provisional amount of £2570 per child looked after for at least one day, as recorded in the March 2023 children looked after data return (SSDA903), and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2023. The DfE updates and finalises this allocation in December 2024, based on the number of children looked after for at least one day during the year ending March 2024, as recorded in the March 2024 children looked after data return (SSDA903), and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2024. It is the responsibility of all Virtual Schools to set their own policy with regard to any allocation criteria. For BCP, this criterion is as stated in sections 4 and 5.

8.2 If a pupil comes into care outside these parameters the Virtual School will not be allocated any 'PP+' grant for the pupil from the DfE in that financial year however, schools and settings will still be allocated funding in line with section 4 and 5 of this policy.

8.3 No payments will be made for any pupils who were previously a Child in Care where the pupil is eligible for the school's own allocation of Pupil Premium funding under the government published criteria. However, additional funding requests will be considered for any pupil whose continued support is unable to be funded from other sources. For example, this might be where a pupil's 'left care' date falls between school census dates therefore school funding cannot be accessed.

9. ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL (IN FINANCIAL YEAR) FUNDING REQUESTS

9.1 Additional funding for pupils more than the notional PP+ allocation of £2000 for the financial year can be applied for in exceptional circumstances via the ePEP after discussion with the relevant Virtual School team member.

9.2 Starting school/ preschool and transition to a new school between key stages or in year can be a difficult period for CIC and any funds requested to support 'transition' can be included in the ePEP completed in the term prior to the planned transition taking place. Funding should only be requested for activities outside the routine universal transition arrangements expected of a provision.

9.3 In the event that a pupil receives a Permanent Exclusion, it remains the Local Authorities responsibility to arrange for a suitable full-time education from the sixth day of any such period. As per the statutory guidance on exclusions, the Virtual School will, wherever possible, consider any applications for financial support that enable suitable education to be in place before the sixth day. In all cases, it is expected that schools demonstrate how their existing PP+ allocation has been utilised to mitigate any risks of exclusion before any additional funding is requested.

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF PEPS

10.1 The Virtual School carry out QA checks on all completed PEPs. Feedback is then provided via the ePEP and will need to be actioned to enable the ePEP to be submitted as a true and final record of the PEP meeting. The analysis of QA will be used to

identify learning and good practice that will be discussed at termly networks as appropriate.

10.2 On a termly basis all PP+ expenditure will be monitored for patterns and trends in either good practice or learning recommendations. The monitoring of impact will also be looked at for identification of potential case studies.

11. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

11.1 The Virtual School Head or Deputy Head can at any time, under exceptional circumstances, take actions / use PP+ funds outside the requirements of this policy to meet the immediate or urgent needs of any pupil/s. For example, this could be a payment awarded to the school/setting when a child first enters care to help with immediate educational needs or a payment to a school for participation in specified educational projects / extra-curricular activities. All requests must be discussed with the relevant Virtual school team member initially who will then request approval from the Virtual School Head or Deputy Head. Any funds agreed must then be entered on the ePEP document.

12. FUNDING FOR THOSE STUDENTS OVER 18 IN YEAR 13

12.1 Once young people pass their 18th birthday, they become care leavers and we cease completion of PEPs. From that point forward funding for interventions and educational support is very limited and only available up until their 20th birthday and only if they are not able to be funded elsewhere. Any funding needs are discussed in Education, Employment and Training (EET) meetings and feed into Pathway plans.