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**Somerset Virtual School**

**Virtual School Pupil Premium Policy 2024/25**

Our policy is informed by three key Department for Education (DfE) documents:

1. **Pupil premium: conditions of grant 2024 – 2025** [Pupil premium 2024 to 2025: conditions of grant for local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2024-to-2025/pupil-premium-2024-to-2025-conditions-of-grant-for-local-authorities)
2. **Pupil Premium 2024 to 2025: conditions of grant for academies and free schools** [Pupil premium 2024 to 2025: conditions of grant for academies and free schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2024-to-2025/pupil-premium-2024-to-2025-conditions-of-grant-for-academies-and-free-schools)
3. **Pupil Premium: Virtual School Heads’ Responsibilities updated March 2015** Pupil premium: virtual school heads’ responsibilities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

**Key points about Pupil Premium for CLA from the DfE**

* The Pupil Premium funding for CLA is different and separate from the Pupil Premium provided to schools based on census returned relating to children in receipt of free school meals or from service families
* Pupil Premium funding to support children and young people in care at school is released to the LA at a rate of **£2,530** per CLA
* Children and young people will potentially be eligible as soon as they enter care
* The overall grant allocated to each LA is calculated on a per capita basis for the eligible cohort. However, PPG does not have to be distributed on a per capita basis, given that children and young people in care have differing levels of need at different stages of being in care. It should not be viewed as a personal allowance
* The grant must be managed by the Virtual School Head and used to improve outcomes and “narrow the gap” as identified in the Personal Education Plan [PEP] in consultation with the Designated Teacher, Social Worker, carer and Virtual School advisor.
* As a result, PEPs need to be monitored closely by Designated Teachers, the Virtual School, Social Workers, CSC Managers and Independent Reviewing Officers

**Pupil Premium for Previously Looked After Children**

In addition and through a separate process, children adopted from care and those on Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders are entitled to Pupil Premium funding passed directly to the school following the school’s submission of its annual census document which declares adopted children where parents choose to share this information. This grant, its allocation and use in schools is outside the remit of the Virtual School.

**Allocation of Pupil Premium for Children Looked After by Somerset Virtual School**

1. Pupil Premium will be paid to schools provided that there is a high quality, up to date PEP in place which:
   * Is submitted to the Virtual school within ten school days of the PEP meeting taking place
   * Identifies the learning needs and progress of the child
   * Has a clear action plan to address the needs and promote progress with specific (SMART) targets
   * Demonstrates how the Pupil Premium allocated will be used to support the child’s learning, increasing engagement and improving rates of progress and academic outcomes as outlined in the child’s targets
   * Provides details of the impact of allocated PPG spent to date
   * Is clear, specific and comprehensive, especially for readers who are not education specialists
   * Is approved by the Virtual School advisory staff
2. Pupil Premium for CLA must be used to improve outcomes for children in the following areas:

* Rates of academic progress and academic achievement
* ‘Catching up ‘ – addressing lost learning
* Wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is gifted and talented
* Attendance
* Inclusion [by reducing internal and external exclusion]
* Support for social, emotional and mental health needs linked to education
* Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider

1. The impact of all interventions must be reviewed and documented within the PEP. Any planned intervention should be intended to bring about positive difference within the classroom.
2. The Virtual School allocates the funding it retains to provide additional support, for example:
   * Extra funding where the school makes a good case for additional support (see below)
   * Transition support for children and young people moving to new schools in line with long-term care plans or foster placement changes.
   * Support for children in care not in education and in need of additional support to return to full time education.
   * Training for designated teachers and other staff who work in schools.
3. The allocation of Pupil Premium for Post 16 CLA

* Post 16 Pupil Premium Grant is subject to the same rationale as that for Statutory School Age learners i.e. it is provided to increase rates of progress and specifically impact positively on academic outcomes and/or engagement in employment and/or training
* Any P16 PPG request must be made through the P16 PEP process setting out the anticipated impact, the monitoring arrangements and how its spend will be reviewed. There must, additionally, be clarity around the recipient of the funding and how that money will be paid.
* the total P16 PPG budget is much smaller than that for SSA (£509 per P16 YP compared to £2340 for SSA) so all sums need to be explored with the Virtual Schol Post 16 team to ensure they are appropriate use of the funding.
* the Vulnerable Learners’ Bursary is still available to learners in FE settings and this should be the first source of financial support for all CLA and spend set out within the PEP document alongside any request for P16 PPG+
* Examples of effective use of P16 PPG are available on the VS website.

**Circumstances in which Pupil Premium will not be provided**

Pupil Premium may not be used to double fund or replace funding which should already have been allocated to the school to support the child and specifically:

* to fund services that should be provided via an Education Health and Care Plan or to meet costs that other SEND funding should be supporting
* other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from health providers
* to fund therapeutic interventions that do not have a direct and demonstrable link to improving academic outcomes that schools can monitor and report on
* to fund transport to/from education provision
* where the interventions to be put in place are already available to any learner with CLA specific needs in the school
* where the school’s or carer’s own funding is otherwise provided to cover the cost of the interventions/resources
* where there is no evidence of engagement, impact or movement towards the intended outcomes provided via the PEP reviews
* where the PEP does not meet Virtual School requirements

**Recoupment policy**

We reserve the right to recoup the funding if there is evidence that the funding is not being used to address the CLA’s needs as set out in the PEP

**Allocation of grant to independent schools and residential providers**

1. Pupil Premium will not usually be paid to independent specialist schools or residential providers because these are already funded at a high level by central budgets on the basis that the provider is being funded to meet all identified needs.
2. Payments can be made to meet individual needs in exceptional circumstances provided this is discussed agreed and documented with the Virtual School.

**Funding Process from September 2022**

DfE guidance states that the funding 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 PEP.

A scheme of delegation and payment process has been agreed to secure a smooth process for payment of funds summarised here:

1. Funding of up to £500: If a member of the VS is present in the PEP review meeting, this would be agreed at the meeting. This would be confirmed in writing to the school after the PEP has been received within 5 working days.
2. Approval of funding up to the value of £1,000: This would be confirmed in writing to the school within one week of receipt of the PEP by an appropriate Advisory Teacher.
3. Approval of funding over the value of £1,000: This would be confirmed in writing to the school within 2 weeks of receipt of the PEP by an Advisory Teacher.
4. For Early Years children, funding of up to £100 can be agreed each term

**Payment Methods**

- For NCY 0-11, once the PEP has been finalised and funding therefore approved, the VS business support will enter the approved amount on Capita

- Payments to Somerset schools will be through CYP Finance

Payments dates:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Deadline Date** |
| Autumn 2024 | 08 November 2024 |
| Spring 2025 | 07 February 2025 |
| Summer 2025 | 06 June 2025 |
| Autumn 2025 | 07 November 2025 |

- Early Years and out of county payments will be made through Childrens Transactional Finance, as and when funding is agreed and notified.

- For Post 16 payments, where a young person is in an education setting we pay that setting where the YP is not on a setting roll arrangements and payees must be agreed with the VS through the PEP process.