**Adopted Children and Post-Looked After Children**

**Pupil Premium**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

This guide has been produced by Mrs Marks for Children in Care and aims to provide answers to frequently asked questions surrounding funding received for children who are currently in care and those previously in care. The information contained within this guide is based on the current Department for Education (DfE) Pupil Premium Conditions of Grant 2020-21 along with a handful of other official sources. This document is correct as of September 2020 and will be regularly updated to reflect ongoing changes as they come through government.

**Post-LAC Children and Eligibility:**

Post-LAC children are a wider group which collectively refers to children who have:

* Been adopted from care
* Left local authority (LA) care on a special guardianship order (SGO) or;
* Become subject to a child arrangement order (CAO).

 All children in these groups are eligible for post-LAC pupil premium (PP) funding. Similar to other types of pupil premium, the purpose of post-LAC PP is to raise educational attainment and close the gap between post-LAC children and their peers.

Any child attending school from the start of reception to the end of Year 11 is eligible to receive post-LAC PP. Children who are electively home educated or are post-16 students are currently not eligible for post-LAC PP.

**Why is there a post-LAC premium?**

The DfE takes the view that many children from the groups described above will have “experienced grief and loss and will have had traumatic experiences in their early lives. 72% of those adopted in 2013-14 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 experiences in early life can have a lasting impact which can affect the child many years after they have left care. We therefore believe that teachers and schools have a vital role to play in helping these children emotionally, socially and educationally by providing specific support, to raise their attainment and address their wider needs”.

**How much post-LAC pupil premium will a school receive and when is this paid?**

Schools will receive £2,345 for each child recorded on the January school census. This is paid in the following financial year. For example, eligible pupils recorded on the January 2019 school census will qualify for PP funding from April 2019 to March 2020 (i.e. 2019-20 financial year). There may therefore be a time lag in terms of receiving funding and schools should be aware of this, especially as post-LAC PP is paid in one lump sum on an annual basis, and not in instalments like other forms of PP. Schools can however, use the £2300 already sent in that financial year for another child to support more than one post-LAC child and do not have to wait until the next financial year to put in any additional support a child may need. Once a parent or guardian has written to the school to declare their child’s post-LAC status, they will not need to do this again unless the child moves school.

**Which types of schools receive post-LAC premium?**

All mainstream and non-maintained special schools receive post-LAC PP. There are differences in the ways payments are made to free schools and academies who receive their PP payments from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). For maintained schools, funding is paid annually from the Local Authority (i.e. Cornwall).

**What is the difference between LAC and post-LAC pupil premium?**

Cornwall’s Virtual School Head is responsible for managing arrangements for Looked After Pupil Premium. This includes making decisions about the amount and frequency that is sent to schools, and must ensure the use of this funding is making a difference in the learning for those children in care.

This is not the case for the post-LAC PP, which is paid directly to schools. School leaders are responsible for ensuring that the post-LAC premium is spent in accordance with the conditions of grant. At Carbeile, the Designated Teacher (Mrs Marks) ensures the post-LAC premium is spent to effectively support the pupils who receive it.

**Do schools have to spend the additional funding they receive on the individual child adopted from care?**

Unlike LAC PP, the answer to this is no. The DFE states: “The pupil premium is additional funding given to schools to improve the educational and personal outcomes for pupils who have been adopted from care, including (but not limited to) their attainment. It is not intended that the additional funding should be used to back-fill the general school budget nor is it the policy intention that the funding should be used to support other groups of pupils, such as (for example) those with special educational needs or who are low attaining. The funding is not ring-fenced and is not for individual children – so the Department would not necessarily expect the school to spend £2300 on every child adopted from care on roll at the school. This is partially because a child may have left the school and new pupils may have joined but also because a school is best placed to determine how the additional funding can be deployed to have the maximum impact. For example, a school may decide to train their staff in recognising and responding to attachment-related issues; or that a particular adopted child needs tailored support that is in excess of the £2300 the school has received.”

**Who is accountable for the use of post-LAC PP?**

Ofsted inspections look closely at the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and the gap between them and their peers. At the end of each academic year, there is a legal requirement for schools to publish information online about their PP funding allocation, how it has been used and the impact this funding has had on disadvantaged pupils. The Virtual School does not currently have accountability for any post-LAC PP.

 **What role do parents and guardians have in the spending of Post-LAC PP?**

The DfE takes the view that: “The role of parents and guardians in their child’s education is crucial and we expect schools will want to engage with them about the education of the pupils on their roll, irrespective of whether they attract the pupil premium. However, we would hope that schools would want to take particular advantage of this relationship with regards to formerly looked after children as the school may have only become aware of the child’s status when they are told this by the child’s parent ahead of the School Census. They may be unfamiliar with the detail of any barriers to learning individual children may be facing as a result of their history. Schools should, of course, be mindful of the sensitivities that may exist around the child’s history and ways in which their experiences prior to leaving care are affecting the child currently.” It is important to reiterate that Cornwall Virtual School have no responsibility over how post-LAC PP is spent.

**What happens if a child was previously looked after by a different Local Authority?**

DfE uses the January school census to identify all previously looked after children and their on roll schools. Each local authority receives funding from the DfE based on this data and is required to distribute this to their local schools where the child is attending according to the data provided. It doesn’t matter which local authority the child was previously in care to.

**How should schools aim to use their post-LAC PP?**

There is a growing body of research and guidance to support schools. The DFE “encourages all schools to use robust evidence when making decisions about how to spend their Pupil Premium. Schools may contact their LA and national organisations such as BAAF and Adoption UK for support and guidance. The Sutton Trust-Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit is also a useful source of information schools can draw on. The characteristics of formerly looked after children do not disappear overnight.” Schools may also find Virtual School Head, Virtual School Staff and the Designated Teacher at the school a valuable source of information”.

**What happens to the post-LAC premium if a child moves school?**

Schools are not obliged to pass post-LAC funding on to a new setting if a post-LAC child leaves the school. Any decisions about passing funding on take place between the two schools and an agreement needs to be made between them if funding is to be shared. The same rule applies to a dual-registered student who is on roll. The home centre – i.e. the initial school – is responsible to liaising with the alternative provider and sharing funding as agreed.

**What support is available in Cornwall to help schools in meeting the needs of adopted children?**

Anyone who has been affected by adoption from the UK care system, or from overseas, is entitled to an assessment of their support needs, and the Adoption service provides a range of services to adopted young people, their families and birth relatives of adopted children.

As many adopted children’s needs will be the same as when they were in care, schools may find it useful to access information, services and signposting from Cornwall Virtual School. Cornwall Virtual School’s website is a useful place to initially start and further contact details can be found at https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/virtual-school-for-children-in-care/.