

PUPIL PREMIUM + GRANT POLICY 2024-25



Shropshire Virtual School



General Overview of the Pupil Premium Plus Grant

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is a Grant made by the Department of Education to raise the attainment of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children and close the gap with their peers. Pupil Premium Plus for Looked-After Children is allocated to Virtual Schools and the aim of the Grant is to support them towards achieving their full potential, developing their aspirations and goals.

Children who are Looked-After are eligible for PP+ if they have been in care for at least one day and are in year groups from Reception up to the end of Year 11. The Virtual School Head (VSH) in the Authority that looks after those children is responsible for

- allocating the Grant effectively to schools and settings
- working with schools and settings to agree how the PP+ will be spent for Looked-After children as identified in their Personal Education Plan, ensuring it is used on well- evidenced interventions to diminish the difference and realise the potential of their children, irrespective of where they live or attend school.
- being able to demonstrate how the effective use of PP+ is raising the achievement of looked after children.

Children who attend a Shropshire school but are **Looked-After by another Local Authority** are supported by the Virtual School in that Local Authority where they came into care i.e. their 'home' Authority – and each Virtual School sets out their own PP+ Policy.

To ensure effective use of the PP+ Grant the Virtual School Head Teacher can decide to retain some (or all) of the PP+ Grant that they receive. Funding that is not distributed to schools must not be used to duplicate other Local Authority funding (e.g transport, uniform) but can be used to fund activities that will benefit a group or all of the Authority's Looked-After Children for example. The Virtual School Head Teacher is required to produce an Annual Report that outlines how PP+ has been used and to what impact on their Looked-After children's achievements. The OFSTED Framework for inspecting Local Authority Children's Services requires inspectors to ask for this Annual Report. Any PP+ monies not passed on to schools or spent by the Virtual School by 31st March 2023 will be recovered by the Government.

The Guidance for PP+ can be found here:

[Pupil premium: overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-overview)

[Pupil premium - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium)

[Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-and-previously-looked-after-children)

Additionally, the Shropshire Virtual School website has a section on PP+ [Pupil Premium Plus | Shropshire Council](#)



How the Shropshire Virtual School administers PP+

Shropshire Virtual School acts as a 'good parent' would - and aims to best use the fund by:

- recognising needs in our children's personalised plans
- ensuring flexibility within the system for when needs change or arise
- planning strategically so that there is an excellent offer in terms of building capacity within the education settings supporting our looked after children as well as through support for access to training and relevant services to support achievement.



For this reason, an element of PP+ for Shropshire Looked-After children is distributed to schools and settings on a termly basis (working on 3 x terms per academic year) and the remaining component is retained to fund projects and initiatives that will support achievement and attainment.

For the **financial year 2024-25** the amount of PP+ forthcoming from the DfE will be **£2570** per Looked-After Child and as a result the termly allocation to schools from Shropshire Virtual School will increase to **£433**. The PP+ Grant will normally be paid to the school in three instalments over the financial year (once each term as per Autumn, Spring and Summer). If a payment is not made, for example because there was no up-to-date good quality PEP, it can be paid at the following term provided any requirements be met.

For Shropshire Looked-After Children, a termly allocation of PP+ is released to schools/settings **on completion of a Good Quality PEP** for the child. A Good Quality PEP is key as it evidences a personalised plan that reflects the identified learning needs of a Looked-After Child, raises aspirations and builds life chances. [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Training for Designated Teachers New to Post is available every term from Shropshire Virtual School and this includes information and guidance on PEPs and PP+. There is a termly network for all Designated Teachers and advice can be sought from Shropshire Virtual School at any time to support with matters relating to PP+ or completing good quality PEPs. See our website for more details of Training on offer [Training | Shropshire Council](#)



Shropshire Virtual School will Quality Assure completed PEPs and the features listed below broadly outline those necessary for a PEP to be Good Quality

1. There is up to date Attendance data and relevant action to support engagement and inclusion.
2. The Attainment and Progress section is fully completed to give a full picture of the young person's achievements and needs.
3. Social Worker attended, their Single Page is completed and up to date (as the PEP is an integral part of the Care Plan)
4. Previous targets are reviewed.
5. New Targets are SMART including one target for
 - Maths and one for English in secondary school
 - Each of Reading, Maths and Writing in primary school
 - Each of the 3 prime areas in Early Years Foundation Stage (Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal Emotional & Social Development)
– *note: this is being reviewed as the EY PEP is being refreshed.*
 - Each termly small step taken from the EHCP if the specialist attainment & progress section is being used.
6. How the PP+ funding is used is clear and there is information about its impact
7. There is evidence the young person participated - or that their views were sought in advance and information fed back to them.
8. There is evidence of transition planning where relevant including towards next phase of education and any school moves.
9. The Meeting Summary contains concise information that gives a robust picture of the child's needs and journey - and Actions are clear.

In the event that a PEP is not submitted, or the PEP Quality is evidenced as '**Needing Development**', Shropshire Virtual School will contact the Designated Teacher and/or Social Worker to discuss how any gaps in information can be addressed. Once the gaps are addressed and the PEP is of Good Quality then Shropshire Virtual School will aim to release the termly allocation of PP+ funds to the school/setting.

Most PEP targets are supported by the termly drops to schools. However, there may be times when there is evidence of elevated need and so a school looks at requesting an additional amount to help. If this is the case, please use the **REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL PP+ in the drop-down funding tab** and show **exact costings**. This will ensure that the Virtual School Link practitioner for the child knows a request is being made and they can submit this to the VS Head Teacher for consideration. They will let you know if this is approved and then you can plan for the intervention/resource.



If additional PP+ is needed at a time between PEP meetings, then the VS Link practitioner can be contacted to request this, there is no need to wait until the next PEP.

Schools/settings are expected to outline how the termly allocation has been used and to what effect before a request can be progressed to the Virtual School Head Teacher via the **PP+ Additional Request Form** (in order that the Virtual School is able to demonstrate best use of the Grant for our children's benefit.) The PP+ Additional Request form is an internal one that is completed by the Virtual School Link Worker and supports our tracking of the PP+ spend.

For Shropshire Looked-After Children who attend **LA Specialist Schools, Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRP) or are on single roll with a Pupil Referral Unit**, the PP+ is distributed on a termly basis where the conditions in this Policy are satisfied. Given the higher level of funding coming from SEN for the designation of need (e.g. SEMH) it is important that PP+ is spent effectively to support enhancements to the child's Education i.e. there is no 'double-funding'.

For example, the PP+ Grant might be used effectively to promote wider outcomes such as engagement with after-school educational activities or targeted interventions not directly relating to the specific designation of that SRP/Specialist School.

For Shropshire Looked-After Children on roll at **specialist non maintained schools** the allocation of Pupil Premium Plus is not sent as a termly amount in order to avoid 'duplication' of Local Authority funding, but requests for PP+ can be considered within the context of the overall provision for the child.

If a Shropshire Looked-After Child **moves school** during the year, both schools will be entitled to receive a proportion of the PP+ based on the date of the move and as long as any requirements are met. Where a child moves, or their Looked-After status changes, the Shropshire Virtual School will approach this in a pragmatic and responsive way.

To reduce the possibility of over- or under-payments the Shropshire Virtual School must be informed when a Looked-After Child moves school or with as much advance notice as possible if they are due to **leave care**. Schools will be invoiced if any overpayments are made in the case of emergency moves and if there is evidence that the funding is not based on meeting the needs of the Looked-After Child then it is the Virtual School's right to recoup the funding.



For **Year 11 students** PP+ will be paid for autumn and spring term only. Any requests for PP+ during the summer term of Year 11 need to be discussed as early as possible. The Pupil Premium Plus Grant for year 11s in the summer term will focus on supporting their transition into Year 12 e.g. supporting with equipment they may need to support them on their course.



If a Shropshire Looked-After Child in the statutory school years is without a school temporarily then the termly PP+ will be retained to support with tuition costs and other interventions to support achievement and engagement during this time.

Where Shropshire's Looked-After Children are attending schools or settings **out of the Authority** then the process is that our administrator contacts the school in question before the end of term to confirm the correct amount and request an invoice. Upon receipt of this invoice the payment can be processed if the Virtual School Head Teacher approves and all conditions as per this policy are satisfied.

Good Practice for Schools and Settings

The Guidance includes information on a three-tiered approach which is informed by evidence of effective practice – and stipulates that schools demonstrate how the activity they use the Grant to fund has been informed by research evidence. The three-tiered approach is:

1. High quality teaching, such as staff professional development
2. Targeted academic support, such as tutoring
3. Wider strategies to address non-academic barriers to success in school, such as attendance, behaviour and social/emotional support

The 'menu of approaches' can be found here [Pupil premium - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has recommendations for effective use of PP+ [Using pupil premium | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

It is good practice for schools/settings to plan expenditure of the Pupil Premium Plus for their Looked-After Children **early in the school year**. This is especially important for children in years 2, 6 and 11 when children may need support in preparing for end of year events, assessments and transition to secondary school or further education. It is expected that the Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children attends the PEP meeting and thus will have the authority to authorise funding decisions within the school setting.

Shropshire Virtual School welcomes creative uses of PP+ to raise standards and narrow the gap for CLA. If a school wishes to **pool PP+** for several Shropshire Looked-After Children, it must be agreed at the each of the children's PEPs - and each one of those children must be able to specifically benefit from the plan with the plan/target illustrating robust purpose with clear impact measures and outcomes being aimed for. This approach must aim to avoid individuals being disadvantaged through lack of funds being available to meet their personalised needs at some



point later in the year for example. It is always advisable to consult Shropshire Virtual School in advance before embarking on such arrangements.

To support the achievement of Looked-After Children PP+ can be used for enhancement of **wider opportunities** and school trips/after-school clubs* can be considered under this umbrella. A discussion at the PEP between the network of practitioners around the child is key in order to contemplate important questions such as:

- Is this part of the young person's curriculum? For example, they are studying GCSE French and the trip relates to this.
- How important is the trip for the child's wider opportunities and aspirations?
- What has termly PP been spent on so far and what are the priority needs for next term? For example, a literacy intervention is more likely to take priority.



From this discussion it may be that an additional PP+ request might be made, also that a contribution from other parties/partners supporting the young person might be considered, for example a three- way split. It is imperative that any discussions / requests are made in advance of the child starting any activity as historical spends are highly unlikely to be approved and reimbursed. Shropshire Virtual School Links are open to discussions around good uses of PP+ at any time – and an Appendix at the end of this Policy gives some examples.

**PP+ for after school clubs with an educational or social/emotional focus would relate to wider opportunities and so funding and participation can be considered as either part of the termly PP+ or as an additional request. After school care is not in line with the terms and conditions of PP+ Grant and so would not be appropriate for use of PP+.*

It is an **OFSTED requirement** that schools evidence how they spend the Grant and how PP+ has benefited Looked-After Children. Schools are advised, therefore, to keep detailed records of how the PP+ for Looked After Children in their school has been spent as well as the impact it has made on the achievement of the children – and to include this in their report to their Governing Body. (A template for the report to Governors can be found on the Shropshire Virtual School website.) This information should also be recorded in the child's individual PEP. Schools can consult the Virtual School on using the PP+ Grant effectively.



Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

Early Years Pupil Premium Plus is an entitlement for children who are accessing quality provision and meet the required eligibility. There is an extension for the financial year 2024-25 and detailed information can be found in the Guidance [Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-entitlements-local-authority-funding-operational-guide-2024-to-2025)

In summary, a child will be eligible for EYPP if the child receives either:

- The universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4-year-olds or
- The 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year-olds or
- 15 hours entitlement for children aged 2 years of working parents or
- From September 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for children aged 9 months to 2-year-olds of working parents.
- **and**
they meet any of the other criteria, which include currently being looked after by a LA in England or Wales or they have left care in England or Wales through an adoption order, a special guardianship order or a child arrangement order.

Note - there are additional conditions as part of the new Guidance - [Free childcare for eligible working parents for children aged from 9 months and above in foster care \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/2024/07/11/free-childcare-for-eligible-working-parents-for-children-aged-from-9-months-and-above-in-foster-care). During the summer term of 2024 LA partners will agree what the new process is ready for September. CLA have an entitlement for funding through 2 for u and this process will continue to be used in the interim. Email 2foru@Shropshire.gov.uk for support with this process.

EYPP becomes payable from the beginning of the term following an eligible child turning 9 months old or the beginning of the term following their second or third birthday. Early Years settings can claim for an eligible child for 68 pence per hour up to a maximum of 570 hours (£388 per year). Early Years PP+ is only payable on the universal 15 hours entitlement and not on the additional 15 hours entitlement for working parents.





If a child is attending an Early Years setting in Shropshire, the setting will receive payments directly from the Shropshire Council **Early Years team** on completion of a termly return. Shropshire Virtual School would expect as a result to be able to see in the child's PEP how settings are effectively using the PP+ Grant to benefit the child's educational development and needs.

Previously Looked-After Children (P-LAC)

PP+ is also allocated by the government for Previously Looked-After Children. Parents and/or Carers should inform schools/setting of their child's status so that they can benefit from this fund. Previously Looked-After Children includes children who were Looked after by the Local Authority or other State Care immediately before being adopted or who left Local Authority or other State Care on a Special Guardianship Order or a Child Arrangements Order. This may also include children who are supported in a Kinship Care arrangement.

[Pupil premium 2024 to 2025: conditions of grant for local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pupil-premium-2024-to-2025-conditions-of-grant-for-local-authorities)

Where children have been identified as Previously Looked-After schools need to include them in the Census in order to trigger the funding to be released. Unlike with Looked-After Children the PP+ is released directly to schools, not through the Virtual School and the child's school is responsible for ensuring the Grant is spent effectively to support the specific educational needs of PLAC in line with the Conditions of Grant.

Children who have been Previously Looked-After are highly likely to have barriers to or gaps in their learning as a result of their experiences and the allocation of PP+ is in recognition of their need for support. The funding isn't 'ring fenced' for the individual child as a personal budget at this time, but schools should look to allocate the funds to be spent on their Previously Looked-After Children cohort. It is for School Leaders to decide how to spend the PP+ Grant within the requirements of the Conditions of Grant and the Guidance recommends that the Designated Teacher consults with their Virtual School on how to spend it effectively, where appropriate. The Guidance is clear that the Designated Teacher should work with the adoptive parents/guardians in deciding how the funding should be used.



At Shropshire Virtual School we support early planning for transitions such as when our Looked-After Children are due to leave Care eg to become Previously Looked-After. We encourage discussion at the child's PEPs on matters relating to this, including around planning for the entry of their new PLAC status on the School Census to ensure funding is in place from the government to the school as early as possible.

Included in this approach is for the network around the child to consider how the last termly Looked-After Child's PP+ allocation can be used effectively and whether any additional request might be a consideration to support the success of this important stage, especially if there may be a considerable gap until the school receive PP+ for the child as a Previously Looked-After Child. If such a request is considered appropriate, then the VS Link can complete an ARF (Additional Request Form) for consideration by the Head Teacher of Shropshire Virtual School. This would need to include costings for the specific interventions and must be in advance of the child leaving care.

Our PP+ Support Map at Shropshire Virtual School

At Shropshire Virtual School we have created a PP+ Support Map to show what is on offer from us through the PP+ we retain. This is one way we evidence additional resources and support available for our Shropshire Looked-After Children and is an 'at a glance' guide for our partners to access.

Please see our website for the current Shropshire PP+ Support Map [Pupil Premium Plus | Shropshire Council](#).

The amount and type of support available may change through the year as new opportunities are added and the Map will be reviewed annually. Shropshire Virtual School is not a *provider* of education and PP+ is targeted towards an enhancement of the young person's educational experience. It is important to note that there may well be other providers for services which PP+ can be used for, not just those on the PP+ Support map. If there is something that our partners would like to suggest as part of this offer, Shropshire Virtual School are open to considering suggestions.



APPENDIX - Examples of Good Practice

For Individual young people:

Child in Reception needing emotional well-being and social skills support to help make gains with educational achievement.

G entered care during his reception year. At that time his early years development assessments were behind his chronological age. More significantly, G found the social and emotional side of school very challenging. He was unable to play with peers, frequently lashing out, he would often try to run off, and under stress would try to eat sand, gravel and other items.

School used pupil premium+ to improve social and emotional areas of learning. Pupil premium+ funded small group, controlled play sessions so G could learn to interact with peers and follow adult instructions. This progressed into small group Lego Play sessions. Through these interventions, G has been able to access more learning and rarely now has emotional difficulties in school. Now in Year 1, he is meeting Age Related Expectations in all areas.

Speech and Language

V entered care at the start of the Covid pandemic. He was reception age but historically had very poor attendance and hardly any attendance in nursery. Due to chronic neglect pre-care, V had delay in all areas, especially his speech, where he could not make himself understood. During the second lockdown his new school asked for additional pupil premium + to provide intensive daily sessions to develop his speech and language. These sessions were supported by small group interventions to practice his speech with peers. A year later, V can now talk clearly and has also passed his phonics screening. He is now very chatty and enjoys reading.

Creative arts

A local secondary academy have been supporting a young person who has aspirations around going into horror film make up as a career. They brought in a film make-up artist to support and give the young person experience and skills to see if this would engage her and support with planning for destinations re Post 16.

Accelerating Learning in an SEMH hub

C was coping well socially and emotionally now he had the support of the SEMH hub, but his reading was 2 years below his chronological age. The school used PP+ to train key staff in a Paired Reading approach so that C could access this support 3 x weekly for 15 minutes. They also used PP+ to purchase some books – and they asked C to help choose which ones. Their impact measures using the YARC assessment indicated 8 months gains in reading ability and comprehension over the 16 weeks of intervention.



For school/trust level:

Emotion Coaching

A school has used PP+ to buy in Emotion Coaching training for all their staff, including those involved in the office, lunch time support and site management. They feel this has had a huge impact on how any member of the school team is able to diffuse and de-escalate situations and that resilience is developing within their groups of vulnerable children. Data indicates that their number of lost days to Fixed Term Exclusions has been reduced since the training and also the school council have given very positive feedback from their children.

Maths

A primary trust analysed their data around Maths and identified that their Looked-After Children in Key Stage 2 were not making expected progress or achieving desired attainment standards in comparison to their peers and other vulnerable learner groups. The Maths Leads across the Trust focused on the children's work in detail and could see that key building blocks (e.g subitising skills) had not been well developed - possibly as a result of poor attendance prior to coming into care. They used PP+ to bring in a new multi-sensory maths programme with engaging resources which the Looked-After Children accessed in very small groups - and built time in with Foster Carers so they also understood subitising concepts and could support well with homework tasks.

If you have any queries relating to children looked after by another Local Authority, please contact the Virtual School Head Teacher (VSH) from the placing/home authority in the first instance. Shropshire Virtual School will be able to assist with general queries in relation to this group of children if contacted.

This policy is subject to review on an annual basis. If you have any queries, feedback or need any further information please feel welcome to get in touch with Shropshire Virtual School:

Contact: 01743 250124

Email: virtualschool@shropshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/looked-after-children/shropshire-virtual-school/>

