



Sefton Virtual School for Looked After Children

Guide to Personal Education Plans and Pupil Premium Plus

2021-2022 (revised January 2022)

Person Education Plans: what are they?

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) is part of a Looked After Child's (LAC) care plan. All Looked After Children of statutory school age need a PEP. The PEP is an important document because it is:

- a record of a child's educational needs
- a personalised plan to meet the child's educational needs, raise aspirations and improve their life chances
- a live and evolving document that shows how professionals are working (and plan to work) with the child to ensure their progress towards fulfilling their potential

For a child with SEND who has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), the PEP should complement (but not duplicate or replace) the EHCP.

What is Pupil Premium Plus? (PP+)

PP+ is a grant awarded to schools to help them to provide additional support and interventions to enable a Looked After Child to make progress by overcoming barriers that might prevent them from making good academic progress. This grant can be treated as a personal budget for each child, but it can also be 'pooled' to provide a service that will help all Looked After Children in a school (e.g. training staff to understand how to help Looked

After Children or employing tutors (or additional staff) to teach specific skills, such as literacy, to a cohort of Looked After Children. However it is spent, the school must choose evidence based interventions and itemise on the termly PEP how the PP+ has benefitted the child, with detailed costings. Allocation of the funding will be linked to clear Personal Education Plan SMART targets.

Most of the PP+ is devolved to schools on a termly basis, following receipt of a detailed and fully completed PEP document. During the financial year 2021-22, the amount for each child will be £1600, divided into three terms. For Early Years settings, the amount is £300 per year. Independent special schools and Post 16 providers will receive PP+ at the discretion of the Virtual Headteacher. A percentage of the grant is retained by the Virtual Head teacher to commission extra services to support the whole cohort, most especially those children who have complex needs but do not have an EHCP, and yet need support to remain in education.

The Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium funding will be allocated according to the following principles:

- Children and young people will be eligible from the first day of the care episode.
- The Local Authority that looks after the child is responsible for distributing the Pupil Premium Plus payments to schools, settings and academies.
- The Virtual School Head is responsible for making sure that there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus and Early Years Pupil Premium funding to benefit children in care to their Authority.
- The PEP must be monitored and reviewed closely by the Designated Teacher, the Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer for effectiveness.
- The PEP must be reviewed on a termly basis by the Designated Teacher, and the child's targets, and any other relevant information, conveyed to their teachers.
- All PEPs will be monitored for SMART targets that have a positive impact on the improvement of educational outcomes.
- Only PEPs that are **fully completed**, with SMART targets that have been reviewed and evaluated, will trigger payment of Pupil Premium Plus.

As a result of the above, the allocation of Pupil Premium Plus is a model driven by a child's needs, managed through high quality PEPs. PEPs will be monitored closely by Designated Teachers, the Virtual School, Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers.

The Virtual School Head is responsible for the allocation of the Pupil Premium to schools and settings and. Schools remain accountable for the educational attainment and progress of all disadvantaged pupils in their setting.

Schools should ensure that the funding is used to close the gap between the outcomes for children in care and all other children within the school, as well as all children nationally. Pupil Premium Plus allocation must be spent in line with the Terms and Conditions of Grant as dictated by the DfE.

Circumstances in which Pupil Premium Plus will not be agreed

Pupil Premium Plus cannot be used to 'double fund' or replace funding which should have or has already been allocated to the school to support the child. Specifically, it cannot be used to:

- Fund services that should be provided via an EHC plan.
- Fund SEN needs where the child is on School Support and the school's SEN budget should be used to meet these needs.
- Provide other statutory work e.g. statutory assessment or support from health.
- Provide support which is provided for in other contracts. As such, it will not be paid to independent settings where this support is expected as a condition of contract.
- Any expenditure which is not linked clearly to one of the PEP targets.

Pupil Premium Plus will not be paid if:

- The interventions put in place do not require any funding.
- The school's own funding covers the cost of the interventions.
- The PEP for that term hasn't been completed.
- The PEP is deemed not to be of high quality, with SMART targets, through the Virtual School Quality Assurance process.
- The school is not sharing the relevant attainment, progress and attendance data.

Funding should not be used to replace:

- Resources that a Local Authority provides for through its allowance to foster carers or children's home fees. Carers have an allocation for clothing, uniform and out of school activities within reason.
- Trips and visits organised by the school as part of the curriculum. If these are part of the curriculum or specifically related to exam coursework, schools can only request a donation. It is expected that Social Care or the carer should provide resources for these activities.
- Basic equipment that the child or young person needs to participate in lessons or for school uniform, school lunches or equipment for physical education lessons.
- Alternative education for Looked after Children subject to fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Before or after school childcare clubs.
- Funding covered by foster carers (as part of their own contractual funding agreement) such as out of school hours activities such as sports clubs, theatre trips, etc.

Funding for electronic equipment will not be automatically granted.

There is an expectation that evidence of how this funding is being used to improve the educational outcomes of looked after children is produced termly at the Personal Education Plan meetings or review. If the school is unable to evidence how the funding is being used to support the child to progress in line with their peers, Pupil Premium Plus may be withheld by the Virtual School.

Use of PP+ for Extra-curricular activities

PP+ can be used to support in school extracurricular activities if these can contribute to the outcomes above. For example, this could be used to fund music tuition for a student if this contributes towards 'Wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is gifted and talented'.

The funding cannot be used to fund an activity which does not contribute towards these outcomes. For example, it may not be appropriate to fund a Ski Trip which takes place in school holidays and could be supported by the carer.

Ofsted findings

*The following comments relate to **both PP and PP+** and is therefore related to a wider cohort. Nevertheless, it gives a view of good practice.*

What does not work in terms of effective interventions?

- Spending the funding indiscriminately on teaching assistants with little impact and not managing their performance well
- Spending the funding on one-to-one tuition and booster classes – that are unmonitored...and do not relate to class teaching...and are not audited or quality assured
- Planning spending in isolation – not part of the school action plan
- Assuming that pupils eligible for the PP+ will have learning difficulties
- Comparing the performance of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium with other eligible pupils nationally, rather than all pupils – lowering expectations.

What does work?

- Targeted tuition to include measuring impact (start and end of intervention).
- Homework support.
- TA appointment and targeted input for specific areas.
- Resources (e.g. revision guides, text books, equipment for particular lessons such as DT, Art, college / off site courses, sensory equipment, etc.).
- Group work intervention, with LAC as focus child (for both learning and pastoral areas).
- Online access to learning resources which require funding.
- Access to extra-curricular activities which will support or impact behaviour and in turn learning (e.g. Drama clubs).
- Reward systems (e.g. rewards for daily golden time) which will impact learning.
- Behaviour interventions.
- Opportunity to extend school time, in order to access learning.
- Staff training to enhance understanding of LAC related difficulties (for example attachment).

Examples of effective use of PP+

This is not an exhaustive list, all PP+ expenditure must be specific to the needs of the child and linked to aspirational targets in order to engage and raise attainment.

- Focused and finite additional 1:1 or small group intervention. This should be focused on areas of weakness or gaps in learning. This intervention should have clear outcomes and its impact evaluated.
- Covering part of the cost of an Educational Psychologist report
- Rewards for achieving goals in behaviour for learning.
- 1:1 intervention to re-engage a disaffected learner.
- Short term 1:1 tutoring for a child on a temporary modified timetable.
- Extending school time e.g. afterschool support with homework.
- Specialist software or equipment beyond that normally provided by the school e.g. a graphics tablet, speech recognition software. A typing tutor programme.
- Fees for national awards such as DofE.
- Staff training to enhance understanding of LAC related difficulties e.g. attachment disorder.

What shouldn't the PP+ be used for?

Items which the foster carer is expected to provide such as:

- Items of school uniform including sports kit.
- Standard text books or equipment (e.g. calculator).
- School trips which are an essential part of the core curriculum.
- Playgroup or nursery fees.
- The cost of school lunches or packed lunch.
- School photographs.
- Day trips.
- Transport to and from school or bus pass.
- Musical instrument.
- Bike.
- Private music, dance, drama or sports lessons.

Under some circumstances, additional funding for some of the items above may be available through the placement social worker.

Funding to carers may vary between Sefton and private fostering agencies. In some cases, funds are available through the fostering agency for the cost of one trip abroad with the school for every young person during their secondary education - this trip can be taken at any point between year seven to eleven and will be paid in addition to the young person's two week's additional holiday allowance in that particular year. All other school trips abroad will not normally be funded as these would fall within the normal expectation of activities funded by the carer

All school field trips required for GCSE courses should be funded by the school.

Year 11 and transition to post 16 provision

Pupil Premium Plus will **not be** paid to schools for any Year 11 student in the final (summer) term of Year 11. This funding will be pooled and used to support transition to post 16 provision. This transition might include:

- Virtual School team support to make the transition to post 16
- Additional one to one tuition for any English or Maths retake exams
- Education package to support next steps in education (Post 16) E.G Functional skills

Pupil Premium Plus for Children Previously in Care

In addition, and through a separate process, children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangement order or a residence order will have their entitlement to Pupil Premium Plus paid directly to the school. The school will need to work with the adoptive parents to ensure the status of the young person is recorded on the census return, the Pupil Premium Plus funding will then be received through the normal school funding routes.

There is no direct responsibility for the Virtual School Head to monitor the use of this Pupil Premium Plus and there is no expectation of a PEP. However, support and advice for previously looked after young people is available and schools should contact the Virtual School Education Adviser PLAC or the Virtual School Head if this is required.

Roles and Responsibilities

According to statutory guidance, it is the shared responsibility of several partners to produce and monitor the Personal Education Plan. The key question 'Would this be good enough for my child?' is a central one in making decisions and evaluating the effectiveness of the Personal Education Plan. The roles and responsibilities of these partners are outlined below.

SEFTON VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The Virtual School Head has a statutory responsibility to ensure the quality of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and oversee the spending of Pupil Premium Plus funds (PP+). The schools and settings that receive the funding will be held accountable to provide evidence of the effective and efficient use of Pupil Premium Plus.

In Sefton, we have a team who manage the process and support the partners involved. The Virtual School team will notify colleagues when a PEP meeting is due, and when PEP reviews are due. They will support partners to adhere to timelines and notify headteachers, social workers and IROs if there are any delays. They will also attend review meetings, as appropriate, to offer advice and support. The Virtual School team will quality assure the

PEPs before the PP+ funds are released to the schools. Education Coordinators will monitor the progress of Looked After Children and work with partners to ensure that PEPs are fit for purpose and reflect the needs of the young person. The Virtual School head has a duty to regularly update the Virtual School Governing Body about the progress of Looked After Children, and the quality of their Personal Education Plans.

Any of the partners involved in delivering PEPs can contact the Virtual School team for advice and support at any stage in the process.

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SOCIAL WORKER

The Social Worker (SW) is responsible for ensuring that the main PEP meeting takes place. This should be within 10 days of a child coming into care. The SW should:

- Initiate a PEP (even if the child does not have a school place). It is important that the Virtual School is notified as early as possible so it can support this process
- Ensure that the PEP is effective and available for the first statutory review meeting of the Care Plan.

The SW **must** arrange the PEP meeting (either the first one after the child comes into care, or at the start of the autumn term), liaising with the school's Designated Teacher and parents/ carers. The SW should inform the VS of the date of the PEP meeting. Education Coordinators will attend these meetings, where possible, to provide advice and guidance.

Timely and effective planning and collaboration at this early stage will ensure that the PEP is fit for purpose and that difficulties are minimised later in the process.

During the PEP meeting, the SW will contribute to the discussions about the child's needs and actions needed to reduce barriers to learning. The following actions must be agreed:

- Targets (no more than 4) for the term
- Clear, evidence-based interventions and strategies to achieve the targets
- The expected outcomes
- Detailed costings for spending the PP+ funds

The school will then type up the rest of the PEP document and return it to the Virtual School for quality assurance and release of PP+ funds. The PEP will be stored in the child's records in ICS/ Liquid Logic.

DESIGNATED TEACHER

The Designated Teacher (DT) has a critical role in helping a Looked After Child to thrive and succeed in school. They are responsible for keeping the PEP updated and ensuring that colleagues who are in contact with the child have the information and understanding

about that child's needs that will allow them to provide an education that supports, inspires and challenges them.

It is the responsibility of the DT to organise termly PEP reviews. The Virtual School will alert the DT and SW when a PEP review is due and send appropriate documentation, as necessary. The DT will need to liaise with the SW prior to the review so that the SW can advise about current concerns, or any changes. It is expected that the SW will attend PEP meetings, although more complex cases will need the SW to attend each review in order to proactively deal with problems and avert the need for crisis meetings. The VS team will attend as many meetings as possible to offer advice, guidance and support.

Termly progress and current attainment data must be shared through the PEP. Impact of interventions funded through Pupil Premium Plus must be clearly evidenced and recorded in the child's PEP.

It is imperative that the PEP is a robust, live and personalised document that reflects the child's needs and the school's plan for meeting those needs. The Designated Teacher, with detailed knowledge of both the child and the school, is key to ensuring the quality of the PEP.

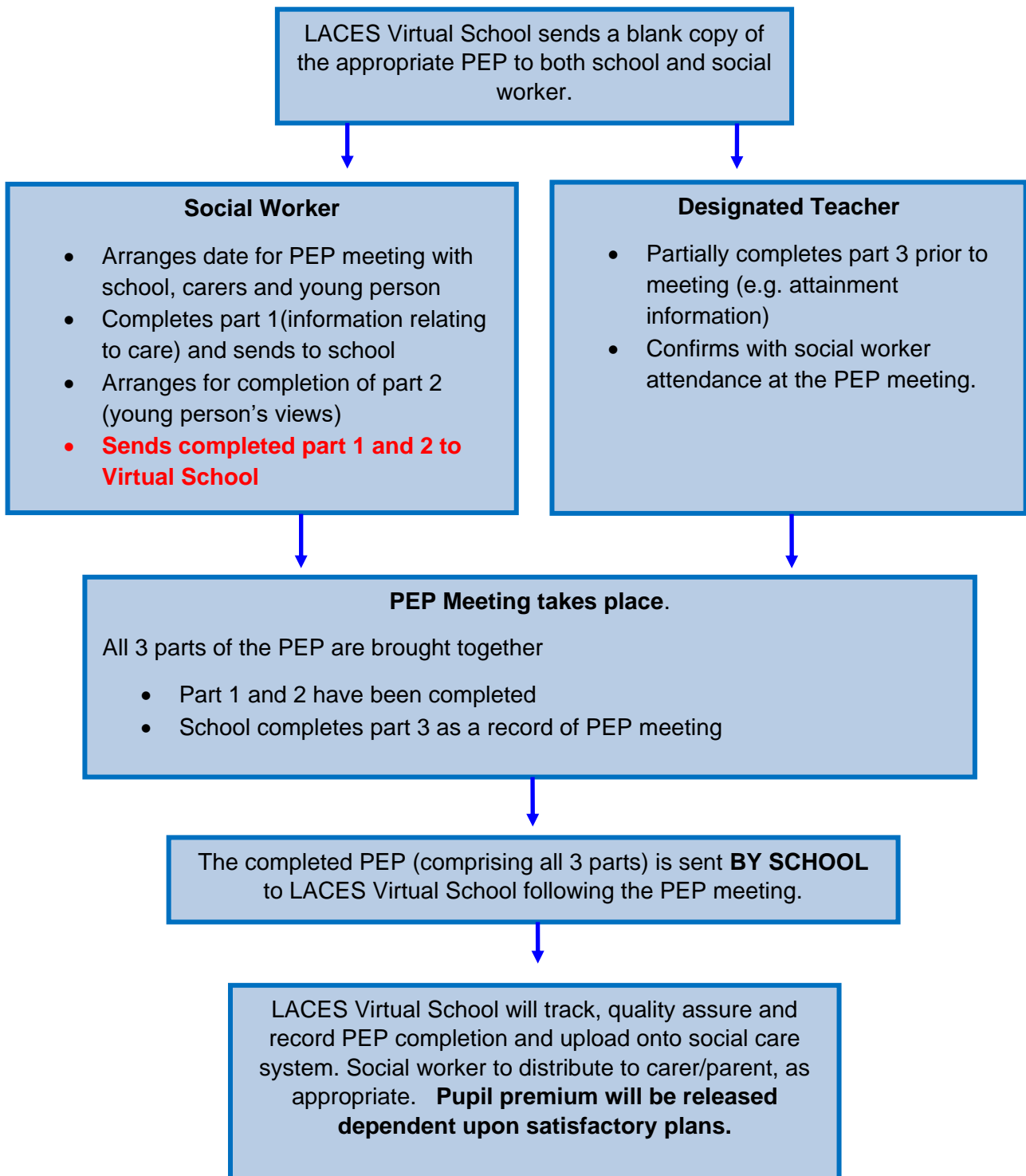
After the review, the Designated Teacher will need to complete the PEP document and return it to the Virtual School PEP Support Officer by the due date.

In-Year School Transfers

If a child moves from one school to another during the academic year, a full PEP document will be forwarded to the new school by the Virtual School, and a new PEP meeting must be held.

The Personal Education Plan Process

A personal education plan is an integral part of the care plan and must be put in place within 10 days of a child becoming looked after*. The following process outlines the duties of the relevant parties in accordance with statutory guidance.



Please return the completed PEP to LACES Virtual School-
admin.virtualschool@sefton.gov.uk or by post to LACES Virtual School, Ainsdale Hope
 Site, Sandringham Road, Ainsdale, Merseyside PR8 2PJ

This policy is informed by the three key Department of Education (DfE) documents regarding the arrangements for Pupil Premium for Children in Care (CiC):

□ Pupil Premium 2021 to 2022: Conditions of Grant (published 24 June 2021)

Pupil premium: conditions of grant 2021 to 2022 for academies and free schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

□ The DFE will update and finalise allocations to local authorities for LAC in December 2021 based on the number of children looked after for at least one day during the year ending March 2021, as recorded in the March 2021 children looked-after data return (SSDA903), and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2020. Where a looked-after pupil has previously been recorded as claiming FSM this update may have an impact on some academies' allocations as set out above.

□ Pupil Premium and the role of the Virtual School Head teacher - Frequently Asked Questions

□ Early Years Pupil Premium: Guide for Local Authorities

Early years national funding formula: technical note for 2020-21 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

DfE external document template (publishing.service.gov.uk)