



**ESSEX VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

Pupil Premium Plus

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*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”*

**Nelson Mandela**

**Introduction**

Essex Virtual School sits within ‘Essex Specialist Education Services’ and is therefore ideally placed to be able to work collaboratively with social workers, carers, and the many teams and services who all contribute in different ways to ensuring that children enjoy and achieve in their education and beyond.

Essex Virtual School are fully committed to being ‘educational advocates’ for our children and young people. We aim to deliver this not only with determination and energy, but also with care and compassion.

The Virtual School’s statutory responsibilities extend to every looked after child, whatever their age.

***Our mission is to place our children and young people at the very heart of everything we do. Championing their interests, celebrating their successes, and constantly striving to ensure that all those working around them share the highest aspirations for their achievements. We want our children and young people to feel happy, safe, and secure in settings where they receive an outstanding educational experience that enable them to grow into confident, resilient citizens.***

**To achieve this we:**

* Work across the ‘whole system’ for children to raise aspirations and improve educational outcomes of care experienced children and young people.
* Build capacity through specialist professional development for Designated Teachers, school governors, social workers, carers, and a range of partner agencies.
* Provide advice, information, and guidance on all aspects of the education of looked after, previously looked, and children with a social worker.
* Act as a ‘link’ between different services.
* Help secure suitable education provision for looked after children, particularly those who experience the greatest difficulty in accessing and engaging with education and those who need a personalised approach or the support of specialist services.
* Promote and foster a culture that takes account of the child’s views according to age and understanding, identifying, and meeting their educational needs.
* Work with Designated Teachers and social workers to ensure that each child has a current and high-quality Personal Education Plan (PEP) which meets their individual needs.
* Link with carers to provide the information, advice and training needed to assist them to support the education of the children and young people in their care.

**Pupil Premium Plus:**

**What is Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)?**

This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after children and close the attainment gap between them and their peers.

The Headteacher Virtual School has considerable flexibility in the use of PP+ funding to maximise its impact for individuals as well as the whole cohort.

PP+ for previously looked after children is allocated directly to and managed by schools, (not the Virtual School) - and the onus is on the parent, carer, or guardian of the child to make the school aware of the child’s status.

PP+ is not a personal budget for individual children.

**How is the money devolved to the VS and who decides how it is spent?**

PP+ funding is provided by the Department for Education (DfE) to diminish the difference and realise the potential for all Essex children in care, wherever they live.

The Virtual School has considerable flexibility in the use of PP+ funding to maximise its impact for individual looked-after children as well as the whole cohort. A proportion of PP+ funding is centrally pooled by the VS and used to provide support best delivered at a local authority-wide level – e.g. training on attachment for all designated teachers.

This document outlines arrangements for ensuring PP+ is used in accordance with the latest Dfe conditions of grant and any supplementary departmental advice issued.

**The breakdown of funding:**

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**Use of Pupil Premium Plus funding centrally:**

Some PP+ funds the teams of Advisors and Inclusion Officers who provide:

* Training and support for Designated Teachers, carers, and social workers.
* Support, guidance, and monitoring for schools in category schools attended by our children.
* Interventions to avoid exclusion, support admissions, tackle underperformance, and improve attendance.
* Support and guidance for Designated Teachers.
* A response to enquiries from carers, social workers, and schools.

Some PP+ funds training to promote the education of our children, this includes:

* Attachment Aware Training delivered by the EP Service.
* PEP/role of DT/DT Network meetings.
* TPP Foster carers.
* Education Matters/Made/Make it Happen – Foster Carers
* CSS Training project for schools – Mental Health, Positive Behaviour & Relationships, Attachment in the classroom, coaching, co and self-regulation.

Some PP+ funding supports provision of laptops and suitable devices to enable access to:

* Maths Whizz - KS1 and KS2
* Reading Plus - KS2-4
* Britannica - All ages

It also funds projects such as:

* Vehicle wrap- years 10,11 and 12
* SPEC Holiday program – Sports and Wellbeing project
* Music Services – All ages
* Mental health and well-being workshops with Ignition Arts.
* Author reading workshops in schools.

**Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)**

The VS are also responsible for identifying and managing the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) for Essex Children in care. This funding will be given to early years providers that CiC attend. Early Year’s providers are any organisation that offers education for children aged under 5, including nurseries. The EYPP gives providers additional funding to support children who are three or four years old and are currently in care to a local authority in England or Wales. Once the child enters Reception, they will no longer be eligible for EYPP, but may become eligible for Pupil Premium Plus. Eligibility for EYPP does not lead automatically to eligibility for Pupil Premium Plus when the child starts school.

**PP+ Grant to Schools**

The Pupil Premium Plus providers an opportunity to address the learning needs of children in care through the provision of **additional** interventions and learning resources tailored to the individual child’s need. It is **not** intended to replace services, support, or resources that the Local Authority, schools, Early Years providers, carers or other agencies working with children in care already provide, **or** that is provided to all children in the area as universal services as part of the education offer.

Spending should provide **additional** interventions, resources, activities, or support to that which is received from other services. In particular, PP+ funding allocated through schools should **not** be used to replace:

* The support set out in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) or those attached to a school-based plan for additional special educational needs.
* Interventions that have no additional cost and where the Early Years setting, or school’s own funding covers the cost
* Resources that a Local Authority provides for through its allowances to foster carers or children’s home fees. Carers have an allocation for clothing, uniform, out of school activities and residential or trips abroad 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 carer should provide resources for these activities.
* Basic equipment that the child or young person needs to participate or for lessons including school uniform, school lunches, or equipment for physical education lessons this would also include access to a computer and the internet for completion of homework or private study.
* Alternative education for children in care subject to fixed term or permanent exclusion.
* Before or after school childcare clubs.

In addition, it should not be used to fund transport to or from education settings.

On occasions there are specific activities that improve self-esteem or social skills or are linked to raising aspiration and this must be clearly linked to the child’s learning objectives along with how it will **contribute to improved educational outcomes.**

**The Personal Education Plan and PP+**

All looked-after children must have a care plan, of which the PEP is an *integral* part.

The PEP (*pre-school to age 18*) is a ‘living’, evolving, comprehensive and enduring record of the child’s experience, progress, and achievement (academic and otherwise), and informs any discussion about education during statutory reviews of the child’s wider care plan. It is an *evolving record* of what needs to happen for looked-after children to enable them to make at least expected progress and fulfil their potential.

The PEP should reflect the importance of a *personalised* approach to learning that meets the child’s identified educational needs, raises aspirations, and builds life chances. The school, other professionals and the child’s carers use the PEP to support achieving those things.

The quality of the PEP is the *joint responsibility* of the *local authority* and the *school*. Social workers, carers, Virtual Schools, designated teachers, and as appropriate, other relevant professionals will need to work closely together.

All of those involved in the PEP process at all stages should involve the child (according to understanding and ability) and, where appropriate, the child’s parent/carer and/or relevant family member.

The PEP must:

* Be initiated within 10 working days of a child coming into care or entering a new school.
* Be in place even where a school place has not been organised.
* Be reviewed with a PEP meeting that occurs on at least a termly basis (three times a year).
* Be quality assured by The Virtual School.
* Cover the full range of education and development needs.

The PEP meeting is part of a continuous cycle of plan, do, review. An important element of this process is the setting of SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time measured) targets that address the short- and medium-term educational needs of the child. These should focus upon addressing specific barriers to learning.

PP+ allocation for Essex children in care must be used for the benefit of the educational needs of the individual child in care **as set out in the Personal Education Plan**.

If there are concerns regarding the quality of the Personal Education Plan and the proposed use of the Pupil Premium Plus there are arrangements in place to discuss this with the Designated Teacher so that the funding/provision can be amended.

The Local Authority is not permitted to carry forward funding held centrally into the next financial year.

If there is evidence that the funding has not been used to address the specific learning needs of a child in care the Virtual School will take steps to recoup that funding.

**Who can claim PP+?**

All maintained, academies and free schools are eligible to claim. All registered early years providers that take children for the funded early education entitlement including school nurseries and maintained nursery schools; private; voluntary and independent providers, will be eligible to claim the pupil premium.

In Essex, Pupil Premium Plus is not allocated to non-maintained or independent schools as those places are funded differently and funding is already based on the child’s individual needed.

**How do schools claim PP+?**

The school or Early Years provider will identify the child’s learning objectives in the PEP. The objectives and spending plan will be assessed by the Virtual School and the funding will be sent out. On occasions there is a moderation process to clarify or reassess the plan if necessary.

Payments will be released by the Virtual School and processed by the Finance hub of ECC. Payments from the virtual school will be referenced ‘PP+ CiC (term Year, payment run)

# Schools can request additional funding by submitting **Exceptional Pupil Premium Plus Grant Request form**:



# Exceptional Pupil Premium Plus Grant Request form

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| --- | --- |
| Students name |  |
| Year group |  |
| LAC status |  |
| School details |  |
| Designated teacher or Virtual School team member details  |  |
| Date of request |  |
| Intervention details (please provide details below, including how and when this will be provided) |  |
| Expected measurable impact date |  |
| Total amount of exceptional funding request |  |
| Breakdown of cost. |  |
| Does the pupil have an EHCP? | Yes |
| Is an EHCP application underway? | Y/N |
| Have you applied for SEN support funding? |  |
| If yes, please provide date and amount of application |  |
| Virtual School Headteacher approval (VSH to complete) |  |
| Total approved |  |
| Date approved |  |
| Comments | .  |

**Please ensure that SMART targets and any agreed funding are recorded and evaluated on the students Personal Education Plan. Do not commit to any intervention until approved.**

**FAQs**

**Can the Pupil Premium Plus be used to purchase a laptop?**

No. Essex VS has taken steps to provide devices for all our children in care. When children enter care, we will assess need and arrange provision.

**Can the school use PP+ to fund out of school clubs, trips or uniform?**

On occasions there are specific activities that improve self-esteem or social skills, and this would need to be clearly linked to the child’s targets along with how it will contribute to improved educational outcomes. If in doubt the Designated Teacher should consult with the Virtual School Operational Lead.

Within the fostering allowances, foster carers have an allocation for clothing, uniform, school trips and out of school activities within reason. Foster carers can claim additional funding to support the cost of the year 6 residential trip as well as one school trip aboard during the child’s secondary education.

Any use of PP+ for this should be discussed with the VS.

**Can the Pupil Premium Plus be used to fund Alternative Provision?**

Not if the child has been the subject of a PEX.

Every child is entitled to a full education provision, regardless of whether they are in care and attract PPG plus. The PPG plus should be used for additional interventions and should not be used to replace services, support, or resources that the Local Authority, schools, Early Years providers, carers or other agencies working with children in care already provide, **or** that is provided to all children in the area as universal services as part of the education offer.

In some instances, PP+ may be used to provide access to services that meet additional specific need associated with a child’s care experience. This would be part of the PEP, and negotiated with the Virtual School, carers/parents, social workers, and Designated Teachers, having listened, and responded to the views of children and young people.

**Contacts**

If you wish to send a document or information that contains sensitive information, then please request that a secure email is sent to you so that you can reply securely. Contact details can be found on the website.

**Website:**

<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/Essex_Virtual_School/Pages/default.aspx>