

## **Pupil Premium**

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and is additional funding given to schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers. Pupil premium funding is available to both mainstream and non-mainstream schools, like special schools and pupil referral units.

### **Funding levels**

The pupil premium is allocated to children who are looked after by the local authority, those who have been eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the last six years (also known as Ever 6 FSM) and for children whose parents are currently serving in the armed forces. The level of premium for 2014-15 is £1,300 per primary pupil, rising to £1320 per pupil for 2015-16. Secondary FSM 'Ever 6' receive a premium of £935.

From April 2014 children who are looked after\* attract a higher rate of funding than children from low-income families - the 'Pupil Premium Plus', which will be £1,900 per pupil for 2014-15. This is to help address the challenges they face at school where they often struggle to keep up with their peers at both primary and secondary level due to instability in the home setting.

\*A pupil deemed looked after:

- has been looked after for 1 day or more
- has been adopted from care
- has left care under:
  - a special guardianship order
  - a residence order
  - a child arrangement order

Information for schools on the policy adopted for Pupil Premium Plus is also available from the Virtual School Head.

Children who have parents in the armed forces are supported through the service child premium which for 2014-15 will be set at £300 per pupil.

The Early Years pupil premium comes into effect from April 2015 and is worth up to £300 per child. Schools, nurseries and child-minders will be given up to £300 for every 3 and 4 year old from a low income family to provide them with the best possible start to their education and prevent them falling behind before they even start formal schooling.

### **Identifying eligible pupils**

The main reason for receiving the pupil premium is eligibility for free school meals. For the academic year 2014 - 2015, pupils who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years can be in receipt of pupil premium funding. Adopted pupils are also eligible for pupil premium funding but identifying them is reliant on parents letting the school know that their child is adopted and therefore eligible.

Since September 2014, universal free school meals are available to all Key stage 1 pupils so schools will request that parents and carers inform them of their eligibility for pupil premium if they are in receipt of any of the benefits listed below:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support from NASS (National Asylum Support Service) under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit.

### **Funding allocations**

Allocations are made to the school which the eligible pupil attends at the time of the January school census. Funding is received as part of the annual school budget. In the case of pupils who are looked after the pupil premium funding is held centrally by the Local Authority and allocated through the Virtual School Head.

It is for schools to decide how the pupil premium allocated to their school is spent.

### **Accountability**

Since September 2012 the Department for Education has required schools to make a report on-line as to how they have used the Pupil Premium and the impact it has had on pupil attainment and progress. There is no specific advice about how schools should report although including details of the context of the school (ie: the amount of funding received and percentage of pupils eligible), the planned provision for the coming year and an evaluation of the impact of spending to date in terms of outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is necessary.

Headteachers and school governing bodies are also held to account for the use of this additional funding in the following ways:

- school performance tables, which include a “Narrowing the Gap” measure which indicates how disadvantaged pupils performance compares with their peers
- the Ofsted inspection framework, where inspectors focus on the attainment of pupil groups, and in particular those who attract the pupil premium.

The Local Authority has developed a document which details its strategic intention with regards to narrowing the gap for disadvantaged pupils and works with schools to address the issue.

### **Pupil premium reviews**

Schools will want to ensure that the funding is being allocated appropriately and secure best practice with regards to outcomes for disadvantaged pupils so may request a pupil premium review to be carried out by an independent reviewer.

A pupil premium review looks at how a school is spending its funding. The purpose of the review is to improve the school's pupil premium strategy, so that funds are spent on approaches shown to be effective in improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

The reviewer will be an independent, experienced leader with a track record of making these improvements for disadvantaged pupils.

The Teaching Schools Council has produced a guide for “Effective Pupil Premium reviews.” It has been developed for system leaders and school leaders and provides a rigorous and tested framework which reviewers and supported schools can use to make the most of a pupil premium review. The guide sets out a simple, six-step process for a review, including self-evaluation by the supported school and the creation of an action plan for the school by the reviewer. There are also case studies from a reviewer and three schools that have previously commissioned reviews.

Information about commissioning a review can be found on the GOV.UK website. The NCTL system leader reviews directory will list someone in the local area who can conduct pupil premium reviews.

Ofsted can recommend that a school commission a review if, as a result of a section 5 inspection, it identifies specific issues regarding the provision for disadvantaged pupils. In some cases, the Department for Education, the local authority, a regional schools commissioner, or the organisation involved in running a school, academy or free school (for example, the trust or diocese) may recommend that a school commission a review if there are concerns about the results of disadvantaged pupils.

As a local authority, the designated Pupil Premium Champions can provide advice, guidance and training for schools in effective ways of using the pupil premium and support for disadvantaged children.

### **Effective practice**

There are a range of toolkits and aids on best practice. The Education Endowment Foundation (Sutton Trust toolkit) has produced an independent teaching and learning toolkit to help teachers and schools effectively use the pupil premium to support disadvantaged pupils. This is one of many and several universities have also produced information on the pupil premium, some are linked with wider themes like Durham University’s work on motivation and pupil premium.

The amount of funding available to schools varies depending upon the number of pupils registered as eligible therefore some schools will have the majority of pupils on roll eligible for pupil premium funding, whereas in other schools there might be ten or less across the whole school that may be eligible. In some schools the total sum of the pupil premium can be a six figure sum in other schools less than £10K.

Irrespective of the number of pupils in receipt of pupil premium it is the progress of these pupils that matters. Expectations are that pupil premium pupils should make better than expected progress and be better than the national average for that key stage.

Ideally schools should audit the needs of each individual pupil premium child to identify what is likely to make the biggest impact on their progress and attainment. Schools may encourage parents and pupils to input as to how the funding is spent. Typically schools will focus on ensuring that the pupil’s literacy and numeracy skills are strong and may invest in additional teaching time for a group of pupils, or in other cases ensure that they can access wider extracurricular opportunities like musical instrument lessons and school visits.

**For more information** on the pupil premium please consult your child’s school website.