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Pupil Premium Plus Grant Funding for Children Looked After 2014-15

Report of the Director of Education and Early Intervention

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Forum Members with information about the significant change to the conditions of grant allocation for Children Looked After (CLA) from April 2014 and the proposed strategy for allocation to Hertfordshire schools.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The changes are as follows:

- The overall amount of Pupil Premium will be based on numbers of Children Looked After aged 4-15 with a mid-year revision to account for additional children and a notional £1900 per child.
- The grant may be paid from day one of the care episode.
- Unlike in previous years, there is no requirement for the Local Authority to pass a set amount of funding onto the school. Instead the money must be managed by the Virtual School to be used to improve outcomes as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) in consultation with the designated teacher for the school.
- The allocation is on a needs-led basis, managed through a high quality PEP.
- The Head of Achievement and Lead Adviser for the Virtual School will be accountable for managing the efficient use of the Pupil Premium funding for the purpose it has been provided. Schools remain accountable for the educational attainment and progress of all disadvantaged pupils.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Forum members are asked to consider and respond to the proposed strategy for Pupil Premium Plus distribution outlined in the report and give their views.

4. Background

4.1 The Pupil Premium Grant provides funding for two purposes:

- Raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and closing the gap with their peers; and
- Supporting children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces.

4.2 The Aims of the funding are as follows:

- To reduce the attainment gap between the highest and lowest achieving pupils nationally.
- To increase social mobility.
- To enable more pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to get to the top Universities.
- To provide additional resource to schools to do this.
- To support looked after children and *post -LAC.

4.3 The Allocation

The Grant funding has risen from £488 in 2011-2 to the following allowances in 2014-5;

Disadvantaged pupils	Pupil Premium per pupil
Pupils in Year Groups R to 6 recorded as Ever 6 FSM	£1,300
Pupils in Year Groups 7 to 11 recorded as Ever 6 FSM	£935
Looked After Children (LAC)	£1,900
Children adopted from care under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and children who have left care under a Special Guardianship or Residence Order*	£1,900
Service children	
Pupils in Year Groups R to 11 recorded as Ever 4 Service Child or in receipt of a child pension from the Ministry of Defence.	£300

4.4 **The Pupil Premium Grant –*New category: children adopted from care or ‘post-LAC’**

The Pupil Premium for 2014-2015 will include those pupils recorded on the January 2014 School Census who were looked after immediately before being adopted on or after 30 December 2005, or were placed on a Special

Guardianship or Residence Order immediately after being looked after (known as **post-LAC**). A child should be recorded as such where the parent or guardian of the child has informed the school that the child has been adopted from care or has left care under a Special Guardianship or Residence Order. This funding will be paid directly to schools and not via the Virtual School.

4.5 **Children Looked After (CLA)**

- The overall grant is calculated on a per capita basis. This will be adjusted in September 2014 in line with the SSDA903 return for April 2014. The grant does not have to be distributed on a per capita basis, to reflect that looked after children and young people have differing levels of need at different stages of being in care.
- The Local Authority working in collaboration with schools, is expected to determine how best to manage the grant to 'narrow the gap' and had has been encouraged to be 'creative and innovative'. Different approaches will be adopted by different Local Authorities as the contexts vary across the country.
- The terms and conditions of the grant confirm a central role for the leadership of the Virtual School in the allocation of the grant.
- There will be a high level of accountability in terms of how the funding is used to narrow the gap that must be detailed in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each child looked after. The funding must not be used to fund central services that would reasonably be expected to be funded by the Local Authority to comply with their duty to promote the educational achievement of children looked after.
- The Hertfordshire PEP documentation and processes are currently under review in the light of Pupil Premium Plus.
- Personal Education Plans will need to be monitored more closely by schools, the Virtual School Team, social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs).
- Children and young people are eligible for support from the first day of the care episode, so this has to be taken into account in allocating the grant.

5. **Allocation of the Looked After Children Premium**

The DfE is explicit that the grant allocation for looked after children must be managed by the Virtual School leadership in the authority that looks after the child. This has statutory force. This funding is to be used for the benefit of the child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP). The local authority is not permitted to carry forward funding held centrally into the financial year 2015-2016. Grant held centrally that has not been spent by 31 March 2015 will be recovered.

6. Allocation of the Pupil Premium Plus funding in Hertfordshire 2014-5

- 6.1 As children looked after have differing levels of need during their time in care and now have eligibility from the first day of the care episode, it is proposed that **£1500** is allocated to the schools they attend both in and out of the Local Authority (linked to clear PEP actions) at **£500** per term from the summer term 2014.
- 6.2 **£400** will be held centrally and allocated to meet the differential needs of children and young people looked after as agreed during the PEP process. This will be on a needs-led basis.
- 6.3 The central resource could provide rapid access to specialist services such as:
- speech and language
 - play therapy
 - bereavement counselling
 - reading recovery
- or assist in funding:
- complementary and alternative provision
 - temporary additional support in schools
 - CPD for Designated Teachers or other school staff supporting children looked after and young people with complex needs
 - whole school training for example in 'attachment theory'
- 6.4 The impact of the funding will be evidenced during a termly PEP review and from the collection of pupil-level attainment data from schools also each term. The Virtual School Governing Body that is made up of Head Teachers and Senior Officers will monitor the use and impact of Pupil Premium Plus in schools and the allocation of the centrally held funding. An annual report will be made to the Corporate Parenting and Children's Services Panel as part of the process of accountability.
- 6.5 The Hertfordshire Personal Education Plan (PEP) is to be revised and streamlined to support this process. A revised PEP format will be trialled in selected schools during the summer term with the final agreed version launched for a September 2014 start.
- 6.6 It is suggested that the plan for the Pupil Premium Plus funding in the revised PEP should be 'signed off' by the Head Teacher of the school before the funding may be triggered. This will provide a clear audit trail for both school, Designated Teacher and the Virtual School. It is also suggested that the Designated Teacher for the school will hold accountability in school for the Pupil Premium Plus grant allocation.
- 6.7 The allocation of the grant will remain on a termly basis to take account of the more frequent movement between school of this group of children.
- 6.8 The DfE has published a frequently asked questions (FAQ) abstract that is attached as Appendix 1 together with the Conditions of Grant document.

7. Conclusion

Forum Members are asked to consider the proposals for allocation of the Pupil Premium Plus Grant for Hertfordshire children looked after in 2014-15.