

Q1: Why are children adopted from care and those who leave care under a Special Guardianship or Residential Order getting a Pupil Premium worth £1900?

Adopted children will have experienced grief and loss and many of them will have had traumatic experiences in their early lives; 70% of those adopted in 2009-10 entered care due to abuse or neglect. Their needs do not change overnight and they do not stop being vulnerable just because they are in a loving home. Their experiences in early life can have a lasting impact which can affect the child many years after adoption. We therefore believe that teachers and schools have a vital role to play in helping these children emotionally, socially and educationally by providing specific support, to raise their attainment and address their wider needs.

Funding for those adopted from care, leave care under a special guardianship or residence order will be paid directly to schools.

Q2: What are the eligibility criteria?

From April 2014, maintained schools, non-maintained special schools and general hospital schools will attract the Pupil Premium for children:

- that left care under a Residential Order on or after 14 October 1991 (under the Children Act 1989);
- that left care under a Special Guardianship Order on or after 30 December 2005 (under the Children Act 1989);
- that were adopted from care on or after 30 December 2005 (under the Adoption and Children Act 2002);
- are in Reception to Year 11;
- where the parent self-declares their child's status to the school, providing supporting evidence (e.g. an adoption order); and
- where the school records on the January School Census that it has a child on roll who meets the above criteria.

The Schools Census 2014 guidance explains exactly what schools need to record on the census return and highlights the sensitivities that may exist around asking parents to self-disclose – the guidance is online at <http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/stats/schoolcensus/a00222835/school-census-2014>

(Pupils will be referred to as children adopted from care and post-LAC (for SGO/RO) throughout the remainder of this document.)

Q3: Why is the Pupil Premium for children adopted from care and post-LAC going to schools?

Children adopted from care and post-LAC are no longer looked after and virtual school heads do not have a role in promoting their achievement. Individual schools are responsible for the educational outcomes of children adopted from care/post-LAC on roll and therefore are best placed to decide how to use the Pupil Premium to support these pupils. Schools may wish to discuss the measures they are putting in place with the parents and guardians of the pupils concerned.

Q4: How will children adopted from care and post-LAC access the pupil premium?

This is money for schools to use. Parents and guardians of children who have left the care system through adoption, or who are post-LAC, will need to self-declare their child's status to the school where their child is on roll. Parents and guardians will be required to provide evidence to the school, such as their adoption order. The school can then use that information to record on their School Census how many children on their roll were adopted from care or are post-LAC.

Q5: When do schools need to record post-LAC and children adopted from care on the School Census?

Schools will complete the next School Census on 16 January 2014.

Q6: When should parents and guardians self-declare to the school?

Parents and guardians will need to self-declare to the school their child is on roll at as soon as possible to ensure that the school records them on the January 2014 Census. Schools will not necessarily be aware that they have adopted children and post-LAC on roll and so we would encourage parents/guardians to come forward, rather than relying on the school to approach them.

Q7: Will parents and guardians need to self-declare again? If so, when?

Parents and guardians will need to self-declare again if their child moves school. Parents and guardians will need to ensure that they self-declare to the new school before the next January School Census to ensure that the school can attract the Pupil Premium funding to which it is entitled.

Q8: Is the Pupil Premium paid in advance or arrears i.e. when will schools first receive the amounts for children recorded on the January 2014 School Census?

Schools will receive funding for pupils who are recorded on the January School Census in the following financial year. For example, pupils recorded as adopted or post-LAC on the January 2014 School Census will qualify for premium funding from April 2014 to March 2015 (i.e. 2014-15 financial year).

Q9: What school types attract the Pupil Premium for children adopted from care/post-LAC?

Mainstream schools and non-maintained special schools that record these pupils on the January School Census will attract the funding. The Department will contact General Hospital Schools directly and they will attract funding if they have children adopted from care/post-LAC on roll.

Q10: Do pupils adopted from care/post-LAC in pre-school or in post-16 education get the Pupil Premium?

No. The Pupil Premium is additional funding for schools and they attract it for eligible pupils between Reception and Year 11.

Q11: Do schools have to spend the additional funding they are getting on the individual child adopted from care?

Schools attract £1900 for every child identified as being adopted from care/post-LAC on the January School Census. This is additional funding given to schools to improve the educational and personal outcomes for pupils who have been adopted from care, including (but not limited to) their attainment. It is not intended that the additional funding should be used to back-fill the general school budget nor is it the policy intention that the funding should be used to support other groups of pupils, such as (for example) those with special educational needs or who are low attaining.

The funding is not ring-fenced and is not for individual children – so the Department would not necessarily expect the school to spend £1900 on every child adopted from care on roll at the school. This is partially because a child may have left the school and new pupils may have joined but also because a school is best placed to determine how the additional funding can be deployed to have the maximum impact. For example, a school may decide to train their staff in recognising and responding to attachment-related issues; or that a particular adopted child needs tailored support that is in excess of the £1900 the school has received. Alternatively, they may decide that a whole class intervention is appropriate and that other pupils that attract the Pupil Premium will benefit from this, alongside other pupils who are not deemed to be disadvantaged.

Q12: What role do parents and guardians have in terms of the Pupil Premium then?

The role of parents and guardians in their child's education is crucial and we expect schools will want to engage with them about the education of the pupils on their roll, irrespective of whether they attract the Pupil Premium. However, we would hope that schools would want to take particular advantage of this relationship with regards to children adopted from care/post-LAC, as the school may have only become aware of the child's status when they are told this by the child's parent ahead of the School Census and they may be unfamiliar with the detail of any barriers to learning that child may be facing as a result of their history. Schools should, of course, be mindful of the sensitivities that may exist around the child's history and ways in which their experiences prior to leaving care are affecting the child currently.

Q13. Where can schools go for support and guidance on how best to support the educational and pastoral needs of children adopted from care/post-LAC?

The Department encourages all schools to use robust evidence when making decisions about how to spend their Pupil Premium. Schools may contact their local authority and national organisations such as BAAF and Adoption UK for support and guidance. The Sutton Trust-Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit is also a useful source of information schools can draw on.

The characteristics of children adopted from care/post-LAC do not disappear overnight. Schools may find Virtual School Heads (based within the local authority) and the designated teacher at the school a valuable source of information.

Q14. Why is it that only children adopted after 30 December 2005 will attract the Pupil Premium?

The Department has applied the same criteria that were applied in relation to the priority school admission arrangements when they were introduced in 2012. The needs of children who cease to be looked after as a result of adoption don't change overnight and the Department did not want children adopted from care to be treated less favourably than they were as looked after children. This change will therefore benefit all adopted children who have been through this transition in the last 8 years.