

## **Q&A RE ELIGIBILITY FOR THE PUPIL PREMIUM – RECEPTION CLASS TO YEAR 11**

**Q1: Why are children adopted from care and those who leave care under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Child Arrangements Order (CAO - formally known as a Residence Order (RO)) getting a Pupil Premium worth £1900?**

Many of these children will have experienced grief and loss and will have had traumatic experiences in their early lives. 72% of those adopted in 2013-14 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 SGO or CAO will be paid directly to schools.

**Q2: What are the eligibility criteria?**

Children must have been adopted from care in England and Wales or left care in England and Wales under a SGO or CAO and living in England to be eligible.

From April 2015, eligible children in alternative provision (for example, attending an independent school or educated at home) will also attract the pupil premium where the local authority funds the cost of the place or provision.

**Q3: What do parents need to do?**

Schools will not necessarily be aware that they have adopted / SGO / CAO children on roll. If your child meets the eligibility criteria and you would like your school to claim the pupil premium, you should inform the school of your child's status, confirm your child was in local authority care in England or Wales, and provide evidence, for example, a copy of the adoption order.

Schools will be completing the School Census on Thursday 15 January 2015. You should therefore confirm your child's status by this date.

**Q4: Will parents and guardians who self-declared last year need to self-declare again?**

Parents and guardians will need to self-declare again if their child has moved school since January of last year.

**Q5: Is the pupil premium paid in advance or arrears i.e. when will schools first receive the amounts for children recorded on the January 2015 School Census?**

Schools will receive funding for pupils who are recorded on the January School Census in the following financial year. For example, eligible pupils recorded on the January 2015 School Census will qualify for premium funding from April 2015 to March 2016 (i.e.2015-16 financial year).

**Q6: Do pupils adopted from care 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.

**Q7: Do schools have to spend the additional funding they are getting on the individual child adopted from care?**

The pupil premium 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.

**Q8: How do you know schools will use this money on raising the attainment of adopted children? How will this be monitored?**

Schools are held to account in several ways for the educational progress and attainment of their disadvantaged pupils, including those adopted from care. Ofsted inspections now look closely at the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils, and the gap between them and their peers. Schools will not normally be judged 'Outstanding' if disadvantaged pupils are not making at least good progress. The key stage 2 and key stage 4 school performance tables include details of the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and the in-school gap between them and their peers, reported for that year and as an

average over the last three years. There is also a legal requirement for schools to publish information online about their pupil premium funding allocation, how it has been used and the impact it has had on disadvantaged pupils.

**Q9: 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 formally looked after children 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. They may be unfamiliar with the detail of any barriers to learning individual children 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.

**Q10: 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 formally looked after children 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.

The Department has also commissioned BAAF to look at emerging good practice on how schools are using the pupil premium to support children adopted from care. Case studies will be published on-line shortly.