

Guidance

Pupil premium: overview

Updated 14 April 2023

Applies to England

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>

This guidance is an overview of pupil premium for school staff, parents and anyone else interested in the pupil premium.

Purpose

The pupil premium grant is funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in state-funded schools in England. In the financial year 2023-24, pupil premium spending will increase to almost £2.9 billion.

We want to support all schools to use the wealth of evidence of ‘what works’, evaluated by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), to use this funding effectively.

Eligible schools

The following types of school are eligible to receive an allocation of pupil premium.

Local authority-maintained schools

This includes:

- mainstream infant, primary, middle, junior, secondary and all-through schools serving children in year groups reception to year 11
- schools for children with special educational needs or disabilities
- pupil referral units (PRUs), for children who do not go to a mainstream school
- local authority-maintained hospital schools

Academies, free schools and non-maintained special schools

This includes:

- mainstream academies serving children in year groups reception to year 11
- academies and non-maintained special schools for children with special educational needs or disabilities
- alternative provision (AP) academies, for children who do not go to a mainstream school

Pupil premium is also provided to local authorities for eligible pupils in independent special schools, where the local authority pays full tuition fees.

Pupil eligibility

The following groups are eligible for pupil premium:

- pupils who are recorded as eligible for free school meals, or have been recorded as eligible in the past 6 years, including eligible children of families who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF)
- children looked after by local authorities, referred to as looked-after children
- children previously looked after by a local authority or other state care, referred to as previously looked-after children

Funding rates for financial year 2023-24

This table shows how the pupil premium grant is allocated to schools and local authorities in financial year 2023-24, based on per pupil rates.

| Pupil eligibility criteria | Amount of funding for each primary-aged pupil per year | Amount of funding for each secondary-aged pupil per year | Funding is paid to |
|---|---|---|---------------------------|
| Pupils who are eligible for free school meals, or have been eligible in the past 6 years | £1,455 | £1,035 | School |
| Pupils previously looked after by a local authority or other state care | £2,530 | £2,530 | School |
| Children who are looked after by the local authority | £2,530 | £2,530 | Local authority |

The government has permanently extended free school meal (FSM) eligibility to include children in all households with NRPF. These pupils should now be recorded as FSM eligible in the school census and their pupil premium eligibility will follow on from that automatically.

There is separate guidance on [providing free school meals to families with NRPF \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools-and-local-authorities/providing-free-school-meals-to-families-with-no-recourse-to-public-funds-nrpf#eligible-groups\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools-and-local-authorities/providing-free-school-meals-to-families-with-no-recourse-to-public-funds-nrpf#eligible-groups).

From 1 April 2023, pupil premium eligibility for pupils who have been adopted from care or have left care will include children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales.

Funding for looked-after children will be paid to the local authority and should be managed by the [virtual school head \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities) in consultation with the child's school.

The pupil premium allocations and [conditions of grant for financial year 2023-24 \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024) provide further information.

Payment schedule for financial year 2023-24

Payments will be sent to local authorities on:

- 30 June 2023
- 29 September 2023
- 29 December 2023
- 28 March 2024

Payments will be sent to academy trusts (and free schools) on:

- 10 July 2023
- 9 October 2023
- 8 January 2024
- 9 April 2024

Payments will be sent to non-maintained special schools in:

- August 2023
- October 2023
- January 2024
- April 2024

Service pupil premium

Service pupil premium is additional funding for schools with pupils who have parents serving in the armed forces. It has been combined into pupil premium payments to make it easier for schools to manage their spending.

Pupils in state-funded schools in England attract the service pupil premium grant, at the rate of £335 per eligible pupil in financial year 2023-24, if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces, including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full-time reserve service - this includes pupils with a parent who is in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England
- registered as a 'service child' on any school census in the past 6 years

- one of their parents died while serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme

This funding is primarily to enable schools to offer pastoral support and help mitigate the negative impact of family mobility or parental deployment. It can also be used to help improve the academic progress of eligible pupils if the school deems this to be a priority.

Funding paid to schools

To ensure that pupil premium is focused on effective approaches to raising the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils, schools must use their pupil premium in line with the 'menu of approaches' set by the Department for Education.

The menu of approaches is in '[Using pupil premium](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium>): guidance for school leaders.

The menu has been developed in line with the EEF's 3-tiered approach to help school allocate spending across the following 3 areas:

- supporting the high-quality teaching, such as staff professional development
- providing targeted academic support, such as tutoring, including through the National Tutoring Programme
- tackling non-academic barriers to academic success, such as difficulties in attendance, behaviour and social and emotional wellbeing

In line with the EEF's recommended approach, schools should prioritise high-quality teaching, though the exact balance of spending between tiers will vary depending on the specific needs of pupils.

Pupil premium is not a personal budget for individual pupils, and schools do not have to spend pupil premium so that it solely benefits eligible pupils.

Pupil premium can be used to support other pupils with identified needs, such as pupils who have or have had a social worker, or pupils who act as a carer. It can also be used for whole class interventions, for example high-quality teaching, which will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils.

High attaining eligible pupils should receive just as much focus as lower attaining eligible pupils when it comes to spending funding. Evidence shows that eligible pupils who are among the highest performers at key stage 2 are more likely than their non-eligible peers to fall behind by key stage 4.

Funding for looked-after children

Virtual school heads are responsible for managing the funding given to local authorities for the children in their care. They work with schools to ensure the funding is used to help deliver the outcomes identified in the children's personal education plans.

They can pass all the funding on to schools or retain some to fund activities that will benefit a group of, or all, the authority's looked-after children.

There is separate guidance about [virtual school heads' responsibilities](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities>) for using pupil premium.

Accountability

Schools must show how they are using their pupil premium effectively:

- by publishing a statement on their website which presents an overview of their pupil premium strategy, and demonstrates that their use of the funding meets the requirements of the [conditions of grant](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024>)
- through [inspections by Ofsted](https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/) (<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>) - inspectors may discuss plans schools have to spend their pupil premium
- through scrutiny of pupil premium plans by governors and trustees

Virtual school heads demonstrate to Ofsted how they are managing pupil premium for looked-after children in their virtual school annual report.

Schools are also held to account for the outcomes achieved by their disadvantaged pupils through published [performance tables](https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables) (<https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>).

Further information

For more information, read the guidance for school leaders on [using pupil premium](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium>) and the [EEF's guide to using pupil premium](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/pupil-premium-guide/) (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/pupil-premium-guide/>).

The allocations and [conditions of grant](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024>) show:

- the funding given to each school
- the totals at national, local authority and parliamentary constituency level
- how pupil premium funding must be spent

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