

# Pupil Premium



A Guide to Pupil Premium for Parents

### **What is the Pupil Premium?**

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and is additional funding that the government gives to schools for each pupil on roll where they are deemed to be disadvantaged. The money must be spent on that pupil to support their education, but it is for the school to determine how it is spent. The Department of Education website is a good source of additional information:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium>

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### **Why is the Government providing the Pupil Premium?**

Poverty or low income is the single most important factor in predicting a child's future life chances, with many pupils having low attainment by the time they leave school at age 16. The Government believes that the Pupil Premium is the best way to address these underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most.

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### **Who receives the Pupil Premium?**

Pupil Premium is allocated to pupils in school year groups from Reception to Year 11 from low-income families who are registered for FSM, or who have been registered for FSM at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever 6'), together with children that have been in care continuously for 6 months or more.

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### **What is the Service Premium?**

The Service Premium grant is for pupils who have a parent serving in the armed services. Unlike the Pupil Premium, this grant is not solely for raising attainment but for providing additional (mainly pastoral) support.

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### **Who receives the Service Premium?**

Pupils with a parent currently serving in the armed services and supporting their family, pupils who have a parent who died in action and those whose parents have left the service since April 2011 for other reasons, including injury. To be eligible, the parent must be supporting their family, so where they are separated or divorced a pupil will not be eligible.

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### **How do parents register their child's entitlement for Pupil Premium?**

Parents must apply for free school meals via the County Council or their child's school, this is a quick and simple process. Telephone 0845 155 1019 with your National Insurance Number, date of birth, name and child's details and an eligibility check can be carried out using the Department for Education's Eligibility Checking System, this will confirm if details have been matched or not. It will not tell us what benefits you are in receipt of, dates when a benefit was awarded or say how much you receive. Confirmation will be sent to you and the school within 5-10 working days.

Further information is available on Westminster Council's website at:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/free-school-meals>

Pupils do not have to take up their entitlement to a free meal but Local Authorities and schools recommend that they do. The government is made aware of each pupil claiming

FSMs each term via the school census so they have up-to-date information on those eligible

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### **How much are the Pupil Premium Grants worth?**

The Pupil Premium for the financial year 2014-15 was £1300 and for Looked After children is £1900. This is significant additional money for schools to spend on supporting disadvantaged pupils and schools are very keen to ensure that all eligible pupils are 'signed up'. Grants are based on those pupils included in the January schools' census.

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### **How will schools spend the grant?**

Schools must spend the grant for the educational benefit of their eligible pupil. The grant can be spent on services that benefit pupils at the school or their families, in the locality in which the school is situated. Pupil Premium grants can be carried forward to the next financial year if all the money is not spent in the year in which it is allocated.

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### **What is the role of the local authority?**

Local authorities are responsible for passing on the Pupil or Service Premium to maintained schools and for managing its distribution in respect of 'Looked After' children. The Education Funding Agency, not the local authority, allocates the grant to Academy Schools but the eligibility criteria is exactly the same. However, neither organisation is responsible for how schools spend the Pupil Premium, except for pupils in care, where the Local Authority has responsibility for their wellbeing.

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### **What obligations are placed on the school?**

Schools will need to monitor the impact of their selected approaches to improve provision for pupils entitled to the Pupil or Service Premium. The Pupil and Service Premium is not ring-fenced and schools are free to spend it as they wish to improve pupils' attainment.

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### **How are parents informed about the use of the Pupil Premium grants?**

The school's governing body must publish information on the school- website every year on the Pupil and Service Premium expenditure. For those parents that are not able to access the internet, a paper copy of this information will be provided. It should detail the funding received for the current academic year, as well as details of how it will be spent; there should also be details of how the previous academic year's allocation was spent. For example, the report should include:

- A brief description of the school, its catchment area, numbers on roll, the percentage of pupils in receipt of Free School meals, 'Looked After' children, and pupils from Service Families.
- A brief explanation of what the pupil premium is for, an explanation of the school's freedom to decide how to spend the additional funding, the allocation and their plans to spend it.
- A brief summary of how the school routinely plans and provides to meet the needs of all pupils.

Parents should be aware that school staff are bound by 'confidentiality rules' on all matters pertinent to pupils' educational needs, their care and health needs and their wellbeing.

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### **How are schools held accountable?**

The Ofsted Inspection Framework ensures that their inspectors focus on the attainment of vulnerable pupils and in particular those who attract the Pupil and Service Premium. They have published a series of reports about how the pupil premium can be spent, these can be found on their website at:

[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/search/apachesolr\\_search/pupil%20premium](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/search/apachesolr_search/pupil%20premium)

The Department for Education's performance tables detail the achievement of those pupils entitled to FSM and the Pupil Premium Grant(s). Individual pupils will never be identified through published information, this will only relate to groups of pupils, and in small schools numbers may not be published. Individual school information can be found on the Department for Education's website at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/> .

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### **Who should parents contact for further information?**

Contact the school administrator if you would like to find out more about registering your child for free school meals. This information will be held confidentially by the school. The administrator should also be able to direct you to any reports the school has produced relating to the use of the pupil premium.

The head teacher or the Chair of the governing body on behalf of the governors can offer further information to those parents enquiring about the use of the Pupil Premium.

Should you require assistance with completing the Pupil Premium form, please contact the school office.

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### **Application**

For pupils attending a school in *Westminster City Council* –

Application forms are available from all Westminster schools or Pupil Benefits at

[www.westminster.gov.uk/fsm](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/fsm)

You can also call 0207 641 3412.

- ✓ **Eligible for Free School Meals?**
- ✓ **Sending your child to school with a packed lunch?**
- **You still need to complete the Free School Meals application form so that the school receives the correct funding to support your child's learning.**