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[Home](#) > [Pupil premium](#)



Department
for Education

Policy paper

Pupil premium

Updated 30 January 2020

Contents

[Purpose](#)

[Eligibility and funding](#)

[Eligible schools](#)

[Use of the pupil premium](#)

[Non-eligible pupils](#)

[Accountability](#)

[Pupil premium: effective use and accountability](#) contains separate guidance for school leaders and governing boards. This includes the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) [pupil premium guide](#).

Purpose

Publicly-funded schools in England get extra funding from the government to help them improve the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils.

Evidence shows that children from disadvantaged backgrounds:

- generally face extra challenges in reaching their potential at school
- often do not perform as well as their peers

The pupil premium grant is designed to allow schools to help disadvantaged pupils by improving their progress and the exam results they achieve.

Eligibility and funding

Schools get pupil premium funding based on the number of pupils they have in January each year from the following groups.

The government has announced that pupil premium and service premium rates will increase in line with inflation for the financial year 2020 to 2021 in April 2020.

We have stated the new rates for each type of pupil premium on this page.

Free school meals

Schools get £1,320 for every primary age pupil, or £935 for every secondary age pupil, who claims free school meals, or who has claimed free school meals in the last 6 years.

From April 2020 the new rates will be:

- £1,345 per primary-aged pupil
- £955 per secondary-aged pupil

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

Schools get £2,300 for every pupil who has left local authority care through adoption, a special guardianship order or child arrangements order.

Local authorities get the same amount for each child they are looking after; they must work with the school to decide how the money is used to support the child's Personal Education Plan.

From April 2020, the new rate will be £2,345 per eligible pupil.

Service premium

The service premium is not part of the pupil premium as the rules to attract the [service premium](#) are different.

Schools get £300 for every pupil with a parent who:

- is serving in HM Forces
- has retired on a pension from the Ministry of Defence

This funding is to help with pastoral support.

From April 2020 the new service premium rate will be £310 per head.

Academically able pupils

The pupil premium is not based on ability.

Research shows that the most academically able pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are most at risk of under-performing. Schools should focus on these pupils just as much as pupils with low results.

Eligible schools

Local authority-maintained schools

This includes:

- all mainstream infant, primary, middle, junior, secondary and all-through schools serving children aged 5 to 16
- schools for children with special educational needs or disabilities
- pupil referral units (PRUs), for children who do not go to a mainstream school

Academies and free schools

This includes:

- all mainstream academies serving pupils aged 5 to 16
- academies for children with special educational needs or disabilities
- alternative provision (AP) academies, for children who do not go to a mainstream school

Voluntary-aided-schools

This includes voluntary-sector alternative provision schools with local authority agreement.

Non-maintained special schools

This includes schools for children with special educational needs.

Use of the pupil premium

It's up to school leaders to decide how to spend the pupil premium. This is because school leaders are best-placed to assess their pupils' needs and use funding to improve attainment.

Tiered approach

Evidence suggests that pupil premium spending is most effective when schools use a tiered approach, targeting spending across the following 3 areas below but focusing on teaching quality - investing in learning and development for teachers.

Read the [pupil premium guide](#) from the Education and Endowment Foundation (EEF) for information about the tiered approach to spending.

Teaching

Schools arrange training and professional development for all their staff to improve the impact of teaching and learning for pupils.

Academic support

Schools should decide on the main issues stopping their pupils from succeeding at school and use the pupil premium to buy extra help.

Wider approaches

This may include non-academic use of the pupil premium such as:

- school breakfast clubs
- music lessons for disadvantaged pupils
- help with the cost of educational trips or visits
- speech and language therapy

Schools may find using the pupil premium in this way helps to:

- increase pupils' confidence and resilience
- encourage pupils to be more aspirational
- benefit non-eligible pupils

Non-eligible pupils

Schools can spend their pupil premium on pupils who do not meet the eligibility criteria but need extra support.

Example

Schools can use the pupil premium to support other pupils, for example, if they:

- are in contact with a social worker
- used to be in contact with a social worker
- are acting as a carer

Accountability

Schools must show how they're using their pupil premium effectively:

- by publishing an [online statement](#)
- through [inspections by Ofsted](#)
- through published performance tables

[Pupil premium: effective use and accountability](#) contains information on how schools are held to account.

[Pupil premium conditions of grant](#) explains which pupils are eligible to attract the pupil premium to their school.

Transition period

[Find out what it means for you](#)

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[Crime, justice and the law](#)

[Disabled people](#)

[Driving and transport](#)

[Education and learning](#)

[Employing people](#)

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[Services](#)

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