



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Pupil Deprivation Grant to support the educational attainment of looked after children

Frequently asked questions

What is Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG)?

The PDG is made available by the Welsh Government to improve outcomes for learners eligible for free schools meals (eFSM) and children who are looked after by the local authority. It is intended to overcome the additional barriers that prevent learners from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving their full potential.

How is PDG funding to support children who are looked after administered?

Historically, funding to support children who are eligible for eFSM and looked after is paid to regional education consortia on a bi-annual basis. The grant has been 100% delegated to schools. However, from April 2015 the grant distribution assigned to support looked after children will be administered by regional education consortia instead of it being delegated to individual schools.

Why are these changes being made?

The new arrangements are being developed to deliver better outcomes which more effectively support the education of looked after children through the PDG. The new arrangements will also introduce flexibility to support previously looked after children who are adopted, who are subject to a special guardianship order, a child arrangement order or a residence order.

Evidence provided by stakeholders suggests that the previous arrangements where money was allocated to schools resulted in resources being poorly targeted and did not deliver effective outcomes.

How will the arrangements work in practice?

The new approach will enable regional education consortia, working with schools, looked after children in education coordinators and a range of other partners to determine more effective, strategic interventions to support the educational arrangements regardless of care or school placement changes.

Who will be eligible for be supported under these revised arrangements?

In addition to children who are presently looked after, we will give regional education consortia the discretion to support children who have left local authority care for one of the following reasons:

- adoption
- a special guardianship order
- a child arrangement order
- a residence order.

Within this discretion, it will be possible for consortia to develop and implement interventions which will have a beneficial impact on all children, but our expectation will be that they will have a greater benefit on children who are or were looked after.

Why are children adopted from care and those who leave care under the specified court orders eligible for PDG?

Many of these pupils who have left care will have experienced grief and loss and will have had traumatic experiences in their early lives. These early experiences can have a lasting impact, particularly at school.

It is important that these children are helped emotionally, socially and educationally through specific support to raise their attainment and address their wider needs.

Can monies administered under the School Effectiveness Grant (SEG) still be used to support children who are looked after?

The new Educational Improvement Grant for Schools (EIGS) was introduced in April 2015. This new grant streamlines and replaces funding previously delivered through a range of grant mechanisms, including the SEG. Consortia are able to consider how the new arrangements being introduced through the EIGS might also support the education of looked after children.

How much funding is available?

Allocations to regional education consortia will be calculated on the basis of numbers of looked after children within their area, which should provide a sufficient quantum of resource to identify strategic interventions to support their educational needs. In 2015-16 for each child aged 4-15 who is looked at 31 March of the previous year as reported in the Social Services Departments Activity (SSDA) data, the regional consortia will receive £1,015 through the PDG. In 2016-17 for each child who is looked after at 31 March of the previous year as reported in the SSDA data, the regional consortia will receive £1,150.

Where can I find information on how the PDG funding can best be used to support looked after children in schools?

You can contact your strategic PDG coordinator within the regional education consortium for information on how the region is supporting improving the educational attainment of looked after children. Alternatively, you can contact your Looked After Children in Education (LACE) coordinator within your local authority for more localised information. Contact details are provided in **annex 1**.

How should regional consortia manage differences in numbers of looked after children at the census point on which funding is based, and actual numbers of looked after children in their areas?

We recognise that the actual number of looked after children will change between the data collection point and the funding period, and may also change over the course of the funding period. However, we anticipate that the problems this will cause will be minimal and it is important that the new arrangements are simplified where possible, to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and administration.

Where a looked after child is cared for and educated out of county, does the host regional education consortium transfer funds to the receiving regional education consortium where the child is educated?

No. Funding is not ring-fenced for each child and under the new arrangements the regional education consortia will be expected to retain their original funding allocation rather than transfer small amounts of money in response to individual pupil moves. In cases where a child moves out of region, the receiving consortium should ensure the provision and continuity of support for the child continues.

We anticipate that regional consortia, working with local authorities, will develop reciprocal arrangements when a child moves outside the consortia's area.

Where a looked after child receives an alternative curriculum, either in or out of the consortium's area, should the funding transfer to the place of education where that child is registered?

No. Funding is not ring-fenced for each child and under the new arrangements funding will not follow the child to a new place of education, but the consortium should ensure that the child continues to receive appropriate educational support.

Where looked after children are placed in private (not LA maintained) residential placements for which LAs are already paying, should the funding transfer to the provider?

No. The move to the new arrangements with the regional education consortia will end this practice. There may be instances where the consortium provides the service, rather than the provider.

Are Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) eligible to receive PDG funding?

Full time pupils registered at a PRU are not included in the dataset on which grant allocations are determined, so the PRU is not eligible to receive the PDG allocation for these pupils. Where pupils are dual registered at a mainstream school and a PRU, it is at the discretion of regional consortia where to direct additional support.

For any looked after child from England who are cared for and educated in Wales, should the English local authority that is the corporate parent transfer its Pupil Premium allocation for those children to the relevant education consortia?

Where the child is placed from a local authority in England into a school in Wales it is the responsibility of education consortia and local authority to reach an agreement on passing on Pupil Premium funding. There is currently no formal arrangement between the Department for Education in England and the Welsh Government's Department for Education and Skills in relation to the passporting of the PDG or the Pupil Premium.

For any looked after children from Wales who are cared for and educated in schools in England, should the PDG allocation for that child be transferred across the border?

Where the child is placed from a local authority in Wales into a placement in England it is up to the local authority and the regional education consortia to reach an agreement on passing on the PDG funding. There is currently no formal arrangement between the Department for Education in England and the Welsh Government's Department for Education and Skills in relation to the passporting of the PDG or Pupil Premium. Under such agreements, it is not expected that the Welsh contribution will match the rate of the Pupil Premium.

Numbers of looked after children fluctuate in-year. If children move between schools in or out of the consortia area during the year, does the funding follow them?

No. Funding is not ring-fenced for each child and will not follow the child when they change school. The decision to enable regional education consortia to administer the

grant should ensure the provision of more effective services on a regional, rather than school, level. It is important that the new arrangements are simplified where possible, and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and administration.

Is the funding adjusted mid year to account for any new looked after children entering the system in September?

No. The data is not currently adjusted mid year to reflect any children entering or leaving the system. PDG coordinators, local authorities, schools and other partners must work together within the annual budget allocation to ensure the best outcomes for looked after children.

Why is the SSDA data used to determine allocations for the looked after children element of the PDG rather than the PLASC data? The SSDA data is over a year old when the current year's PLASC data is available?

The SSDA data is used to try to ensure as broad a basis as possible for the allocation of the grant. It includes the total number of children aged 4-15 who are looked after at 31 March of the previous year. PLASC data is restricted to school settings and is less representative of the actual number of looked after children. Both data sets are taken at a point in time and provide a basis only for calculations of allocation to regional consortia to ensure a quantum of resource to support looked after children in their area. It is imperative that regional consortia, local authorities and others have regular communication to ensure best use of the funding.

Should the funding be targeted at preferred activities, such as one to one sessions, for children who are looked after, over and above a school's core responsibilities?

Yes, the PDG provides targeted grant funding to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after to overcome the barriers that may prevent them reaching their academic potential. It should not be used to support a school's core activity.

How will the effectiveness of the extra money be measured?

Regional education consortia must be able to demonstrate the gap in attainment between looked after children and all pupils has reduced through the administration of these new arrangements for PDG. The Welsh Government will expect an evaluative report from consortia including an analysis of how expenditure has impacted on educational outcomes.

**Diverse Learners and Safeguarding Team
Support for Learners Division
April 2015**

Annex 1

Looked After Children in Education (LACE) Coordinators – Contact Details

North Wales Region (GWE)

Name	Local Authority
Chris Moore Chris.moore@wrexham.gov.uk	Wrexham County Borough Council
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South West and Mid Wales (ERW)

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Gwent Region (EAS)

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Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) Coordinators – Contact Details

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