

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 12th October 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Headteacher of Halton Virtual School

SUBJECT: Planned Expenditure of Pupil Premium Plus for Children in Care 2015-16

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide an update to Schools Forum on the planned expenditure of the Pupil Premium Plus grant for Children in Care 2015-16.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

2.1 School Forum accept the report as an accurate representation of the planned expenditure for the PP+ grant for 2015-16.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) for Children in Care (CIC) is governed by the conditions of grant published by the Department of Education (DfE). Page 9 of the conditions of grant clearly states that:

‘The grant allocation for Looked After Children must be managed by the designated Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after those children to be used for the benefit of the looked after child’s educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP).’

3.2 The DfE also produced further statutory guidance (March 2014) that described the ‘Role of the Virtual School Head in managing the PP+ for Children in Care’. A summary of the key points that govern how the grant can be used are as follows:

- The PP+ grant allocation does not have to be distributed on a per capita basis, as there is recognition that children and young people in care have differing levels of need at different stages of their journey through the education and care systems.
- There is no requirement for the Virtual School Head to pass the funding onto the school where the child is on roll to contribute to meeting the needs identified in their PEP.

- There is no requirement to pass on the PP+ to non-mainstream schools.
- Schools cannot insist that they get the full PP+ grant for each child on their roll as it is up to the Virtual School Head to manage the PP+ grant allocation.
- It is for the Virtual School Head to decide the amount of PP+ and the frequency of payments. This means that there is no set amount that each child is eligible to receive and that the Virtual School Head can link payments of the completion of the PEP.
- The Virtual School Head can pool some of the budget allocation and keep this centrally for activities that are of holistic benefit to the LA's looked after children.

3.3 Halton has adopted a 'child's individual needs driven model' of allocation that is linked to the completion of effective, timely and high quality PEPs. Ofsted deemed this model good practice during Halton's inspection (Nov – Dec 2014).

4.0 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION OF PP+ FOR CIC 2015-16

4.1 As per the conditions of grant the allocation of PP+ for CIC is based on the Local Authority Children Looked After Data Return SSSDA903. This means that Halton received an indicative grant allocation of £323,000. The final grant allocation will be published in December 2015 once census adjustments have been made.

5.0 PLANNED EXPENDITURE OF PP+ FOR CIC 2015-16

5.1 The Headteacher of the Virtual School and the finance team, will undertake regular reviews of the expenditure as the financial year progresses to ensure that all funding is allocated and there is neither an over or underspend.

5.2 As in the previous year, Halton will be focusing the majority of its PP+ expenditure on school requests for PP+ through the completion of the timely PEPs. The criteria for PP+ requests has been published for schools and is also on the Halton Virtual School website – there are no differences to the criteria used in the previous academic year..

5.3 In line with the previous year, there will be an additional one off payment granted to those children and young people who are in key assessment years and those who will be going through a planned transition. These payments will be made at the beginning of the Spring Term to ensure that personalised support is put in place as per the PP+ guidance and criteria.

- 5.4 Following on from the previous year, adjusted delegated budget payments will also be made to recompense schools who did not receive their full-delegated CIC allocation through their formal budget as this funding is based on the previous year's October census. This payment has been made at the beginning of the Autumn term.
- 5.5 In addition to this, a further budget adjustment will be made for those schools who accept additional children in care on roll and who have not received the correct budget payments. This payment will be made at the beginning of the Spring Term.
- 5.6 The Headteacher of the Virtual School has centrally retained some of the PP+ allocation as per the conditions of grant. Some of this central allocation will be used to provide a comprehensive training programme for Designated Teachers and pastoral staff who work closely with children in care in schools. The training events are published to all Designated Teachers and also on the Halton Virtual School website.
- 5.7 Finally, some of the centrally retained grant will also be used as pump-prime funding for an Attachment Focused Schools Award that will be supported by Halton Virtual School. This award is to assist schools in developing their own attachment support strategies, so putting into practice the training they have received through the Designated Teacher training programme. There will be an expectation that schools will provide some of their own funding to support this work as well as being able to apply for a PP+ allocation. The award will be scrutinised and monitored by a multi-agency team to ensure that the attachment strategies are being implemented and the PP+ allocation is being used in accordance with the school's action plan. This award will also support schools in providing contributing evidence for the new judgements in the school inspection framework.

Sharon Williams
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September 2015