**Date:** 2020/21

**Enquiries to:** Natalie White

**Children, Schools and Families Directorate**

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Dear Headteacher,

**Re: Pupil Premium for previously looked after children (including those who are now adopted)**

As you will be aware, the role of the Virtual School Head and Designated Teacher was expanded when the Children and Social Work Act 2017 came into force. The Act expanded the remit of the Virtual School Head to include the promotion of educational achievement of previously looked after children, including those who are now adopted. I am writing to remind you about the process for claiming the Pupil Premium for previously looked after children. **Please note that this funding is paid by the DfE directly to schools for schools to use and is not managed by the Local Authority/Virtual School Head.**

Children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order will attract the Pupil Premium. The Pupil Premium for previously looked after children is currently £2,345 per pupil, to help provide specific support to raise attainment and address the wider needs of vulnerable children.  Previously looked after children who are not eligible include those children who have been adopted from outside England and Wales, including Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as from overseas.

In order to access the Pupil Premium for previously looked after children, parents and guardians need to self-declare their child’s status to the school where their child is on roll and will be required to provide evidence to the school, for example their Adoption Order or a letter from the local authority that originally looked after the child.

The school should then use this evidence to record the child's status in the January school census. Once schools have declared a child's eligibility on the school census, they can access Pupil Premium funding. This will then trigger the payment of the Pupil Premium to the school for the next financial year starting in April.

You may wish to write to parents and guardians before the end of this term, reminding them of the need to self-declare before the January school census. I have attached a template letter, which you may find useful to amend.

For further information about the Pupil Premium for previously looked after children, please refer to the Pupil Premium 2020 to 2021 conditions of grant which can be found online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2020-to-2021/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2020-to-2021>

You can also contact the DfE through their website, or call the DfE helpline if you can’t find the information you need online.

**DfE helpline**   
Telephone: 0370 000 2288   
Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm   
Please get in touch if you have any queries about this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Natalie White

Virtual School Head

cc. Designated Teacher for LAC

cc. School Business Manager / Bursar

**Appendix A – Template Letter to Parents**

Dear Parent,

***Was your adopted child formally in care and adopted on or after 30 December 2005?***

***Did your child leave care under a Special Guardianship Order on or after 30 December 2005?***

You may be aware that schools receive additional funding for children in receipt of Free School Meals, however you may not know that his additional funding is also available to schools for pupils who:

* left care under a Residential Order on or after 14 October 1991 (under the Children Act 1989)
* left care under a Special Guardianship Order on or after 30 December 2005 (under the Children Act 1989)
* were adopted from care on or after 30 December 2005 (under the Adoption and Children Act 2002)

For confidentiality reasons, the local authority does not identify these pupils and it is for you as the parent /guardian to decide whether to disclose this information about your child to the school. If you are willing to share this information with the school, the school will be able to claim £2300 in funding every year.

Whilst the Pupil Premium funding is not ring-fenced for individual previously looked after children, often all **children in a class will reap some benefit from how the school spends its pupil premium, such as a teaching assistant in the class or specific interventions available.**   The additional funding is designed to provide specific support to raise attainment and address the wider needs of children in this vulnerable group. Children who have spent time “in care” have usually experienced grief and loss, many have had traumatic experiences in their early lives caused by abuse or neglect and this can have a lasting impact even after many years of adoption and care in a loving home.  National statistics show that children who have been in care face unique challenges at school and often struggle to keep up with their peers.  It is vital that they are given the targeted support they need and the education they deserve to help them get on in life.

To inform the school that your child was previously looked after, please contact [INSERT NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS]. You will then be asked to provide supporting evidence, i.e. the Adoption (Court) Order.  In order to claim the funding for the next financial year the school need to include information in the census return that they send to the DfE in **January each year.**

There is no obligation for you to share this information with us, but doing so will help both your child and the school to benefit from this funding. Any information received will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher