



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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), eligible learners in Early Years settings where Foundation Phase is delivered 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. The element of the PDG that supports looked after learners within the school improvement agenda is managed and administered by the regional education consortia.

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

The PDG funding that supports looked after children in compulsory education should be used by the regional education consortia to strategically deliver better targeted and flexible interventions on a regional basis. Flexibility has been built into the terms and conditions to enable funding to also support interventions aimed at former looked after children who have been adopted from care or are subject to a special guardianship order.

It is acceptable for consortia to develop and implement interventions which have a beneficial impact on **all** children – and especially those who might require additional support because they might have experienced loss, trauma, neglect or abuse - but the expectation is that they will have a greater potential benefit on children who are or were looked after.

The consortia should consider the additional value that funding and investment through PDG will make and must not top slice funding to sustain permanent and/or statutory roles in respect of a school's or local authority's core activity. The PDG can, however, be used to meet the cost of retaining a lead coordinator within each region who has a dedicated focus and expertise to work with partners to deliver an agreed, strategic programme of work at a regional level.

Consortia, local authorities and schools and other partners are expected to work collaboratively to develop effective interventions that support the improved educational outcomes of learners and to ensure they reach their full potential. This approach should be within a coherent and regionally agreed plan which ensures that PDG is administered to support agreed activities, while ensuring that there is no artificial duplication between the activities of individual local authorities or the creation of unnecessary bureaucracy.

All proposals will need to be considered for sustainability beyond the life time of the grant. Consortia must discharge its responsibilities in accordance with the PDG LAC support plans submitted for 2016-17, taking account of the actions under the headings:

- priorities
- outcomes

- targets
- activity
- regional planning

How do the arrangements work in practice?

The approach enables consortia, working with schools, local authorities (particularly, but not solely) looked after children in education (LACE) 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.

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

The vast majority of children who have been through the care system have experienced levels of trauma, abuse, neglect and loss which may have a detrimental impact on their ability to thrive in a school environment.

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

Equally, we recognise that other children – who might not have entered into the care system – but who nevertheless will from their life experiences will benefit disproportionately from the types of interventions that will effectively support children who are adopted and looked after. This is especially the case where interventions are developed to support the school improvement agenda and where interventions focus on a broad approach to enhancement and pupil well-being

How much funding is available?

Allocations to consortia will be calculated on the basis of numbers of looked after children within their area. This will provide a sufficient quantum of resource to identify strategic interventions to support their educational needs. In 2016-2017- 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 consortia will receive £1,150 through the PDG.

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 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 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 no unnecessary bureaucracy and administration is introduced in the administration of these arrangements.

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

Funding is not ring-fenced for each child and the presumption should be, unless there are very exceptional circumstances, each consortium should retain its 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.

Consortia, working with all 22 local authorities, will develop reciprocal arrangements as part of their strategic planning to ensure that when a child moves outside of the consortia area they remain supported irrespective of where they live or are educated if support is needed.

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 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 arrangements to deliver services regionally have ended 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?

The eFSM element of the PDG is issued to consortia on the basis of the number of pupils who were eFSM at the census point. In 2016-17 this will include learners who are educated in PRUs. In the case of dual registered learners, the grant will be paid to the school or setting registered as the main provider. There will be no in-year

transfer of funding. Practitioners are reminded that the PDG is able to be pooled by schools/providers to deliver interventions which can be shared.

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 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 Public Services in relation to the pass-porting 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 relevant consortium 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 Public Services in relation to the pass-porting 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 consortia to administer the grant should ensure the provision of more effective services on a regional, rather than school, level. It is important no unnecessary bureaucracy and administration is introduced.

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

The SSSA 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 consortia to ensure a quantum of resource to support looked after children in their area. It is imperative that consortia, local authorities and others have regular communication to ensure best use of the funding.

What can the funding be used for?

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 is part of the school improvement agenda and cannot be used to support a school's core activity or replace existing services or entitlement that schools should provide for all pupils e.g. it cannot replace SEN funding.

It should be used as an enhancement to current practice and to provide strategic services to supporting pupils. Pupils living across the region should have the same access to services regardless of the authority in which they live.

All proposals will need to be considered for sustainability beyond the lifetime of the grant.

How will the effectiveness of the extra money be measured?

Consortia must be able to demonstrate the gap in attainment between looked after children and all pupils has been reduced through the delivery of additional arrangements to support looked after children funded by the PDG. The Welsh Government will expect an evaluative report from consortia including an analysis of how expenditure has impacted on educational outcomes.

**Supporting Achievement and Safeguarding Team
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May 2016**

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