



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

Guidance

Pupil premium 2023-24: conditions of grant for academies and free schools

Updated 28 March 2024

This guidance was withdrawn on 4 September 2024

Find the latest information on pupil premium in our [Local authorities: pre-16 schools funding collection](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authorities-pre-16-schools-funding) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authorities-pre-16-schools-funding>).

Applies to England

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024/pupil-premium-2023-to-2024-conditions-of-grant-for-academies-and-free-schools>

1. Introduction

The Secretary of State for Education lays down the following terms and conditions on which assistance is given in relation to pupil premium grant (PP grant) payable to academies (including free schools) for the financial year beginning 1 April 2023.

The following terms and conditions apply to single and multi-academy trusts (MATs).

PP grant rates and detailed eligibility criteria for the financial year 2023-24 are set out in the PP grant [technical note](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-allocations-and-conditions-of-grant-2023-to-2024/pupil-premium-2023-to-2024-technical-note--2>

PP grant is allocated to academies for 2 separate objectives:

- raising the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities to help them reach their potential
- providing support for children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces

2. Eligibility criteria

There are different eligibility criteria for each objective set out above.

2.1 Raising the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils

PP grant is allocated to academies based on the number of pupils in year groups reception to 11, who are:

- recorded as eligible for free school meals (FSM) or have been recorded as eligible in the past 6 years (FSM Ever 6). This includes eligible children of families who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF)
- previously looked-after children (PLAC): pupils who were looked after by a local authority or other state care immediately before being adopted, or who left local authority or other state care on a special guardianship order or child arrangements order (previously known as a residence order).
From 1 April 2023, PP grant eligibility for pupils who have been adopted

from care or have left care will include children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales

PP grant is also allocated to local authorities based on the number of looked-after children (LAC) supported by the authority, including those who attend academies. LAC are defined in the Children Act 1989 as those who are in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English local authority. It is for the local authority to decide how much of this funding to pass on to the child's academy.

The portion of PP grant funding for LAC and PLAC pupils is referred to as 'pupil premium plus' (PP+).

2.2 Providing support for children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces

The portion of PP grant for children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces is referred to as service pupil premium (SPP). SPP is allocated to academies based on the number of pupils who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full-time reserve service). This includes pupils with a parent who is in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England
- registered as a 'service child' on any school census in the past 6 years
- one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme

3. Permitted use of PP grant

PP grant must be spent to deliver the objectives and support eligible pupil cohorts as described in sections 2.1 and 2.2 above.

The grant can be spent:

- for the benefit of pupils registered at the academy that receives it
- for the benefit of pupils registered at other state funded schools or academies - for example, when hosting summer schools which welcome pupils from other schools

- on community services whose provision furthers the benefit of pupils at the academy - for example where Virtual School Heads (responsible for LAC PP grant) deem it beneficial to do so, such as art therapy outside of the classroom, or training of local authority staff to raise awareness of LAC

Academies may use a portion of PP grant funding to support pupils who do not meet any of the PP grant eligibility criteria set out at sections 2.1 and 2.2 above where they deem it beneficial to do so. For example, PP grant can be used to support other pupils with identified needs, such as pupils who have or have had a social worker, or pupils who act as a carer. It can also be used for whole class approaches, for example high-quality teaching, which will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils.

MATs may pool resources and set a plan for use of PP grant across multiple academies. MATs must ensure that any plan is flexible enough to accommodate the specific needs of each academy's disadvantaged pupil cohort and the plan must be in addition to the pupil premium strategy statement for each academy – see section 5 for further information.

3.1 The 'menu of approaches'

To ensure PP grant is focused on effective approaches to raising the educational attainment of eligible pupils, academies must use their PP grant in line with the 'menu of approaches' set by the Department for Education (DfE). The menu of approaches is in the [using pupil premium \(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1066915/Using_pupil_premium_guidance_for_school_leaders.pdf\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1066915/Using_pupil_premium_guidance_for_school_leaders.pdf) guidance.

The menu has been developed in line with the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF's) 3-tiered approach to help schools allocate spending across the following 3 key areas:

- support high-quality teaching, such as staff professional development
- provide targeted academic support, such as tutoring, including through the National Tutoring Programme (NTP)
- tackle non-academic barriers to academic success, such as difficulties with attendance, behaviour and social and emotional wellbeing

In line with the EEF's recommended approach, academies should particularly prioritise high-quality teaching, though the exact balance of spending between tiers will vary depending on the specific needs of their pupils.

Academies are not required to allocate PP grant to every approach on the menu, but any activity funded by PP grant must fall under one of the approaches listed.

For PLAC, it is the responsibility of the academy to ensure that their use of PP grant addresses the specific needs of PLAC attending the academy.

For LAC, it is the responsibility of the Virtual School Head in the local authority that looks after the child, in consultation with the child's school, to ensure that PP grant is used to support the child's educational needs. This should be in accordance with their personal education plans and in line with the menu of approaches.

The primary purpose of SPP is to enable schools to offer pastoral support to eligible pupils during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact of family mobility or parental deployment on service children. It can be used to help improve the academic progress of eligible pupils if schools deem this to be a priority.

See the [using pupil premium](#)

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1066915/Using_pupil_premium_guidance_for_school_leaders.pdf) guidance for further information.

4. Use of evidence

As set out at section 3.1, DfE introduced the menu of approaches to ensure that PP grant is focused on effective approaches to raise the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils. Academies must be able to demonstrate in their published strategy statement (see section 5) how they have considered the evidence and an understanding of the needs of their pupils when using the menu to plan how they will use their PP grant.

5. Accountability

Academies whose PP grant allocation for the financial year 2023-24 is based on 6 or more eligible pupils are required to publish an updated pupil premium strategy statement annually. Those whose allocation is based on 5 pupils or fewer are not required to publish a pupil premium strategy statement.

Although MATs can pool resources and set a plan for use of PP grant across multiple academies, a separate pupil premium strategy statement must be published for each academy within the MAT.

All academies that are required to publish a strategy statement for the academic year 2023/24 must do so by 31 December 2023, using the template available in the [guidance page](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium>). The template is designed to help academies develop their pupil premium strategy and to demonstrate that their use of the funding meets the requirements of these conditions of grant.

DfE will review a sample of schools' published strategy statements to ensure that PP grant has been spent in line with these conditions of grant.

Given their role in ensuring that academies use funding appropriately and in holding academies to account for educational performance, trustees should scrutinise academies' strategy statements, including their plans for and use of their PP grant and the outcomes achieved in the previous academic year.

Academies are held accountable for the outcomes they achieve with all their funding, including through Ofsted inspections and by trustees, and the PP grant is no exception.

6. Allocation and payment arrangements

DfE will publish initial allocations in March 2023 for all academies that complete the October 2022 census.

Allocations will be confirmed in June 2023, before the first payment. The June allocations will include AP academies that complete the January 2023 census.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will pay PP grant to academies in quarterly instalments as follows:

- 10 July 2023 - for academies open by, and on, 1 April 2023
- 9 October 2023 - for academies open at 1 April 2023
- 8 January 2024 - for academies open at 1 September 2023
- 9 April 2024 - for academies open at 1 January 2024

7. Carrying PP grant forward

Academies are not required to spend all of the PP grant they receive in the financial year beginning 1 April 2023; some or all of it may be carried forward to future financial years.

Any funding that is carried forward must be used in accordance with the conditions of grant for PP grant for the financial year in which the funding is spent. It must be accounted for in the academy's pupil premium strategy statement for the academic year in which it is spent.

8. Variation

The basis for allocation of grant may be varied by the Secretary of State from that set out above, if so requested by the academy.

9. Non-compliance

If an academy fails to comply with the terms and conditions set out in this document, the Secretary of State may recover some or all of the PP grant that has been allocated. This will be notified in writing to the academy.

10. Overpayments

If an academy identifies that it has been overpaid, it must contact ESFA to arrange repayment of the excess. Where ESFA identifies an overpayment, it may seek to recover the excess. The academy will be notified of this in writing.

11. Further information

The books, other documents and records relating to the recipient's accounts (for the purposes of this grant, "recipient" is the academy) must be made available for inspection by the Secretary of State and by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Comptroller and Auditor General may, under section 6 of the National Audit Act 1983, carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and

effectiveness with which the recipient has used its resources in discharging its grant-aided activities.

The academy must provide such further information as may be required by the Secretary of State for the purpose of determining whether, or to what extent, it has complied with these terms and conditions. Failure to provide this information may result in the Secretary of State withholding subsequent instalments of PP grant.

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