

Pupil Premium Grants



Information for Parents
February 2026



This leaflet covers

- The Pupil Premium
- The Service Premium



What is the Pupil Premium?

Pupil Premium represents additional funding that the government gives to schools for each pupil considered to be 'disadvantaged'. The money must be spent on these pupils to support their education, but it is for the school to determine how it is spent. Our schools ensure PP grant is focused on effective approaches to raising the educational attainment of eligible pupils, we use their PP grant in line with the 'menu of approaches' set by the Department for Education (DfE). The Department of Education website is a good source of additional information:

<https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/initiolearning>

Why does the Government provide a Pupil Premium?

Poverty or low income is the single most important factor in predicting a child's future life chances, with many pupils in low-income families having low attainment by age 16. The Government believes that the Pupil Premium is the best way to address these underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most.

Who receives the Pupil Premium?

Pupil Premium is allocated to pupils in school year groups from Reception to Year 11 from low income families who are registered for FSM, or who have been registered for FSM at any point in the last six years, together with children that have been in care continuously for 6 months or more. Adopted children who have been in care continuously for 6 months or more prior to adoption are also eligible.

What is the Service Premium?

The Service Premium grant is for pupils who have a parent serving in the armed services. Unlike the Pupil Premium, this grant is not solely for raising attainment but for providing additional (mainly pastoral) support. Who receives the Service Premium? Pupils with a parent currently serving in the armed services and supporting their family, pupils who have a parent who died in action and those whose parents have left the service since April 2011 for other reasons, including injury. To be eligible, the parent must be supporting their family, so where they are separated or divorced a pupil will not be eligible.

How do parents register their child's entitlement for Pupil Premium?

Applying for Pupil Premium

Although all pupils in years R, 1 and 2 now receive free school meals as part of the Government's universal hot school meal provision, this does not mean that any child automatically qualifies for the Pupil Premium. Parents must still apply for free school meals via the County Council. This is a quick and simple process: https://dorset-self.achieveservice.com/service/Free_school_meals_application with your National Insurance Number, date of birth, name and child's details and an eligibility check can be carried out using the Department for Education's Eligibility Checking System, this will confirm if details have been matched or not. It will not tell the County Council what benefits you are in receipt of, dates when a benefit was awarded or say how much you receive, it will just confirm whether or not you are eligible. Confirmation will be sent to you and the school within 5-10 working days. Pupils do not have to take up their entitlement to a free meal but Local Authorities and school recommend that they do. The government is made aware of each pupil claiming FSMs each term via the school census so they have up-to-date information on those eligible. Parents working in the services need to ensure that the school is made aware of this. Office staff can provide relevant paperwork for parents to complete to ensure that children with parents in the services receive the Service Premium.

How much are the Pupil Premium Grants worth?

The Pupil Premium for the financial year 2025/2026 is £1515. The Service Premium is £350 per pupil. This is significant additional money for schools to spend on supporting disadvantaged pupils and schools are very keen to ensure that all eligible pupils are 'signed up'. Grants are based on those pupils included in the October schools' census. How should schools spend the grant? Schools must spend the grant for the educational benefit of their eligible pupils. The grant can be spent on services that benefit pupils at the school or their families, in the locality in which the school is situated. Pupil Premium grants can be carried forward to the next financial year if all the money is not spent in the year in which it is allocated.

Examples of how the Pupil Premium is used at School

- to pay for additional support staff hours to ensure that eligible children receive targeted support with learning in the classroom.
- help fund structured intervention programmes with eligible targeted children.
- help fund the role of Emotional Literacy Support Assistant, enabling the school to provide adequate pastoral support for eligible pupils.
- to support the funding of whole-school programmes which enrich the opportunities of eligible children beyond the main school offer.
- to assist with payment for additional educational provisions which families of eligible children could not fully afford, e.g. instrumental tuition (one per child).
- to assist with payment for enrichment and extra-curricular activities which families of eligible children could not fully afford (one per child - any more is to be discussed in a meeting with the school)

- to assist with payment for educational visits, including residential visits, which families of eligible children could not fully afford.

What is the role of the local authority / trust?

For maintained schools, local authorities are responsible for passing on the Pupil or Service Premium to their schools and for managing its distribution in respect of 'Looked After' children. The Education Funding Agency, not the local authority, allocates the grant to Academy Schools but the eligibility criteria are exactly the same. However, neither organisation is responsible for how schools spend the Pupil Premium, except for pupils in care, where the local authority has responsibility for their wellbeing.

What obligations are placed on the school?

Schools need to monitor the impact of their selected approaches to improve provision for pupils entitled to the Pupil or Service Premium. The Pupil and Service Premium is not ring-fenced and schools are free to spend it as they wish to improve pupils' attainment. The impact of the spending can be found on the Pupil Premium review statement on our website.

How are parents informed about the use of the Pupil Premium grants?

The school publishes information on the school website every year on Pupil and Service Premium expenditure. For those parents that are not able to access the internet, a paper copy of this information can be provided on request. It details the funding received for the current academic year, as well as details of how it will be spent; there should also be details of how the previous academic year's allocation was spent.

How are schools held accountable?

The Ofsted Inspection Framework ensures that inspectors look closely at the achievement of vulnerable pupils and in particular those who attract the Pupil and Service Premium. They have published a series of reports about how the pupil premium can be spent. These can be found on their website.

Who should parents contact for further information?

Contact the school office team if you would like to find out more about registering your child for free school meals. This information will be held confidentially by the school. The administration officer should also be able to direct you to any reports the school has produced relating to the use of the pupil premium.

If you have any further questions, or wish to speak to the headteacher specifically about your child's Pupil Premium grant, please contact the school office to make an appointment.

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