

Grant Funding

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Pupil Premium Grants

Pupil premium grant provides funding for two separate policies:

- Raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities to reach their potential
- Supporting children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces

Rates and eligibility

The pupil premium grant per pupil rates for 2025/26 as published by the Department for Education (DfE) in the pupil premium conditions of grant, are as follows:

3. Rates for eligible pupils

The PP grant per pupil rates for financial year 2025 to 2026 are set out below.

Pupils who are recorded as LAC/PLAC and FSM Ever 6 will attract the LAC/PLAC per pupil amount only. Eligible service children will attract the SPP rate in addition to any other pupil premium grant eligibility rate.

Disadvantaged pupils	per pupil rate
Pupils in year groups reception to year 6 recorded as FSM Ever 6	£1,515
Pupils in years 7 to 11 recorded as FSM Ever 6	£1,075
Looked-after children (LAC)	£2,630
Previously looked-after children (PLAC)	£2,630

Service children	per pupil rate
Eligible service children in year groups reception to year 11	£350

Where national curriculum year groups do not apply to a pupil, the pupil will attract pupil premium grant if aged 4 to 15 as recorded in the October 2024 school census for mainstream and special schools, and in the January 2025 school census for PRUs and AP academies. These pupils will attract the same amount of funding as if they were in the year-group that corresponds to their age.

Grant eligibility

Ever 6 Free School Meals

For mainstream and special schools, the PP grant for financial year 2025 to 2026 will include pupils recorded in the October 2024 school census who have had a recorded period of FSM eligibility since (and including) January 2019, as well as those first recorded as eligible in October 2024.

The grant is funded on a financial year basis. The full year's allocation will be published when the information is received in the summer term. The funding will be allocated quarterly in July, October,

January, and March. Any adjustments to the funding due to a change in census figures will be made in December.

Children with no recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

Pupil premium funding will be allocated in respect of children of families who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) who are eligible for free school meals and for whom successful claims have been submitted to the DfE.

Looked-After Children (LAC)

In June 2025, an initial allocation was calculated using the number of children looked after for at least one day, as recorded in the March 2024 children looked-after data return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 on 31 August 2023.

A final allocation in December 2025 will use the number of children looked after for at least one day during the year ending March 2025, as recorded in the March 2025 children looked-after data return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 on 31 August 2024.

Children adopted from care or who have left care

For mainstream and special schools, the PP grant for financial year 2025 to 2026 will include children recorded in the October 2024 school census 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). This includes children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales.

The grant is funded on a financial year basis.

The full year's allocation will be published when the information is received in the summer term. The funding will be allocated quarterly in July, October, January, and March.

Ever 6 Service Children

For mainstream and special schools, the SPP for financial year 2025 to 2026 will include pupils recorded in the October 2024 school census who have been recorded as a service child at any point since the January 2019 census, as well as those recorded as a service child for the first time in the October 2024 school census.

The grant is funded on a financial year basis. The full year's allocation will be published when the information is received in the summer term. The funding will be allocated quarterly in July, October, January, and March.

Schools get £350 in 2025 to 2026 for every pupil with a parent who:

- is serving in HM Forces (including a parent on full-time reserve service or a parent of the armed service of another nation stationed in England).

- a parent who has died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension from the Ministry of Defence.

This funding is primarily to help with pastoral support. It can also be used to help improve the academic progress of eligible pupils if schools deem this to be a priority.

Early Years Pupil Premium

Funding for 9 months to 2 year olds, 2 year olds, 3 and 4 year olds based on various criteria. Funding is paid monthly at £1 per eligible child per hour and is based on funding up to 30 hours per week.

The pupil premium grant does not have to be completely spent by schools in the financial year beginning 1st April 2025. Any funding that is carried forward must be spent according to the conditions of grant.

Schools must use their Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) for the purpose of raising the educational attainment of Post Looked After, Looked After and pupils who are eligible for FSM Ever 6.

This should be in line with the 3-tier approach in EEF's pupil premium guide, activities must be those that:

- Developing high-quality teaching, for example through professional development and recruitment and retention
- Provide targeted academic support, such as one-to-one or small group tuition
- Tackle non-academic barriers to academic success, such as difficulties with attendance, behaviour and social and emotional wellbeing.

To support schools to use PPG in line with the 3 tiers outlined above, DfE have published a 'menu of approaches', which has been informed by evidence of effective practice. Schools must use their PPG in line with this menu from the start of the 2025 to 2026 academic year. Schools are not required to allocate PPG to every approach on the menu, but any activity funded by PPG must fall under one of the approaches listed.

The menu of approaches is in the pupil premium guidance which can be accessed by using the link shown below.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1147853/Using_pupil_premium_guidance_for_school_leaders.pdf

We cannot stress enough the importance of budget setting. It is essential that when schools undertake their budget setting, that they also plan how their grant funding is going to be utilised. Schools will have pupil premium strategies in place in terms of how they intend to use their pupil premium. This is essential to ensure best use of your grant funding. Schools should ensure wherever possible that costs are allocated to the correct fund before they are incurred. As the schools accounting software must show the up to date financial position of the grant and match any other financial records.

Further information on Pupil Premium conditions of grant 2025/26 can be found via the following link:

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)

Rates per eligible pupil.

Each meal taken by an eligible pupil in the academic year attracts £2.58. An allocation assumes that pupils will take 190 school meals over an academic year, providing £495.90 per eligible pupil, as counted below. From September 2025 the rate will increase to £2.61. A single allocation is allocated in two parts as follows:

Provisional allocation

For the academic year 2025 to 2026, we will make a provisional allocation to schools that is the total number of eligible meals taken in 2024 to 2025 multiplied by £2.61 x 190 days and by seven-twelfths.

Final allocation

We calculate a final allocation for academic year 2025 to 2026 in June 2026 using the number of pupils recorded as taking a meal in year 1 and year 2 in the October 2025, and January 2026, school censuses.

We then subtract those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (FSM) in the same censuses, who are taking a meal. This figure is then divided by 2 to give the average number of eligible UIFSM pupils in years 1 and 2.

The number of reception pupils used will be the greater of either:

- the number of pupils recorded as taking a meal in the October 2025 and January 2026 school censuses, minus those pupils taking a meal known to be eligible for FSM in the same censuses, divided by 2 (this gives the average number of eligible UIFSM pupils in reception for academic year 2025 to 2026) **OR**
- the number of pupils recorded as taking a meal in January 2026 school censuses, minus those pupils taking a meal known to be eligible for FSM in the same census

We will count dual registered pupils where they took their meal on the census days, even if it is their subsidiary setting.

The purpose of the grant is to support schools in delivering the legal requirement to offer free school meals, meeting the school food standards, to all their reception, year 1 and year 2 pupils. Subject to meeting this legal duty, schools may spend the grant for the purposes of the school; that is for the educational benefit of pupils registered at that school, or the benefit of pupils registered at other schools.

It is essential that schools plan how best to utilise any underspends for the educational benefits of the children. The conditions of grant state that the funding can also be spent on community facilities, for

example services whose provision furthers any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families or people who work or live in the school's locality.

Schools do not have to spend the entire grant in the financial year beginning 1 April 2025; funding can be carried forward at the end of the financial year. Schools should review overspends and move costs to budget share.

Further information on UIFSM conditions of grant 2025/26 can be found via the following link;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-infant-free-school-meals-uifsm-2025-to-2026/universal-infant-free-school-meals-uifsm-conditions-of-grant-2025-to-2026>

Information for the 2024/25 academic year can be found via the following link;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-infant-free-school-meals-uifsm-2024-to-2025/universal-infant-free-school-meals-uifsm-conditions-of-grant-2024-to-2025>

Academic Year Closedown

In previous years, Schools Finance Team completed an academic year closedown for UIFSM where it identified that schools had large overspends which were accumulating year on year into a larger deficit. An academic year closedown has been completed over the autumn term.

During this process we consider the carry forward from the previous financial year, final allocation for the year and spend for the first five months of the year. If through this process, we identify an overspend then this will be charged back to the school's budget share. We are carrying out this process to prevent schools from carrying over large deficits.

PE & Sport Funding

The purpose of the grant is to enable an additional and sustainable improvement to the provision of PE & Sport for primary aged pupils, to encourage the development of healthy, active lifestyles.

As per the conditions of grant the following is classed as **non-eligible** expenditure.

- capital expenditure (except for goods within the de minimis value – the threshold limit value set for purchases)
- employing coaches or specialist teachers to cover planning preparation and assessment (PPA) arrangements
- staff salaries, for example using your premium funding allocation to:
 - employ someone whose role is to specifically administer the PE and sport premium
 - employ someone that is responsible for arranging and running PE, sport or activity sessions
 - cover teaching during the school day
 - fund the cost of a teaching assistant or apprentice to deliver PE lessons, sport or physical activities instead of teaching staff during the school day.

- to teach the existing PE curriculum (or, in the case of academies, to teach the existing PE curriculum) – apart from top-up swimming and water safety lessons after pupils’ completion of core lessons. Teaching of the curriculum should be funded through a school’s core funding.
- the purchase of services that will be delivered or used in following academic years (this includes the payment of invoices or subscriptions in advance)
- the purchase of staff or pupil PE kit

Allocations for the academic year 2025 to 2026 are calculated using the number of pupils in years 1 to 6, as recorded in the January 2025 census, as follows:

- schools with 17 or more pupils receive £16,000 plus £10 per pupil
- schools with 16 or fewer pupils receive £1,000 per pupil

The premium is funded on an academic year basis and is split into two allocations 50% paid in November and 50% paid in May.

Any previous year underspend and funding for April 2026 to August 2026 must be spent by 31st July 2026. Any underspend at this point will be recovered by the DfE.

Further information on PE & Sport Grant conditions of grant 2025/26, can be found via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pe-and-sport-premium-conditions-of-grant-2025-to-2026/primary-pe-and-sport-premium-conditions-of-grant-for-the-academic-year-2025-to-2026>

Digital Expenditure Reporting return/Academic Year Closedown

All schools must complete the digital expenditure reporting return outlining how the school has used the premium and the impact it has had on achieving the aims and objectives of the funding.

Following its submission, schools will also have the option of downloading copies of the return to meet PE and sport premium reporting requirements.

The information that will need to be entered onto the return includes:

- confirmation of the school’s premium allocation
- figures on the overall spend
- what the funding has been spent on
- whether there is any unspent funding
- swimming and water safety attainment

Following completion of the return, any overspend will be charged back to budget share by Schools’ Finance Team.

The return will become accessible to schools in June 2026 and must be completed by 5:00pm on 31 July 2026.

16 – 19 Bursary

To help with education-related costs for pupils aged 16 to 19 and studying at a school in England.

Eligibility

- Be at least 16 years old and under 19 on 31st August 2025
- Study at a publicly funded school or college, or be on an unpaid training course
- Meet the residency requirements

The bursary can be used to pay for things like:

- Clothing, books, and other equipment needed for their course
- Transport and lunch on days when in education

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursary:

Discretionary Bursary - A school or college will have their own criteria for discretionary bursaries. They'll look at individual circumstances, usually including a family's income. A discretionary bursary can also be applied for if the pupil is over 19 years of age and either of the following apply:

- Continuing on a course started aged 16 to 18
- Have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)

Vulnerable Bursary for defined vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 a year. A pupil may be able to get a bursary if at least one of the following applies:

- They are in or have recently left local authority care
- Receiving Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves
- In receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- In receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their name and either ESA or Universal Credit

Both types of bursary funding are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation that they face, and institutions must ensure the funds go to those who genuinely need them. No student should automatically be awarded a set amount of funding without an assessment of the level of need they have.

The DfE have produced a guide which includes a checklist which can be used when assessing bursary applications from students including a summary that lists the most important things that should and should not be done when administering the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund guidance - GOV.UK](#)

Discretionary funding cannot be carried forward for more than one year.

Holiday Activity and Food Programme

The HAF programme funding is primarily for school aged children from reception to year 11 (inclusive) who receive benefits related free school meals. Benefits related FSMs are available to pupils if their parents are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits and have a claim verified by their school or local authority.

Local authorities are asked to ensure that the offer of free holiday club provision is available for all children in receipt of benefits related free school meals in their area. Though this does not mean we expect all to attend, as the provision is voluntary.

Local authorities have discretion to use up to 15% of their funding to provide free or subsidised holiday club places for children who are not in receipt of benefits related FSM but who the local authority believe could benefit from HAF.

Aims of the programme

There are many benefits for children who attend the HAF programme. We want to encourage all HAF providers to ensure a high-quality experience that will result in children:

- receiving healthy and nutritious meals
- maintaining a healthy level of physical activity
- being happy, having fun and meeting new friends
- developing a greater understanding of food, nutrition and other health related issues
- taking part in fun and engaging activities that support their development and well-being
- feeling safe and secure
- getting access to the right support services
- returning to school feeling engaged and ready to learn

Families can also benefit, when HAF providers include their needs in planning and delivering their programme. This could be through:

- providing opportunities to get involved in sessions, for example cookery classes
- ensuring they are signposted towards other sources of information and support, such as health services or employment and education opportunities

The core offer

Overall, local authorities are expected to offer the equivalent of 6 weeks' HAF provision to eligible children during the Easter, summer and Christmas school holidays.

The dates that HAF provision can take place during those holiday periods are not set out in this guidance and it is for local authorities to decide, taking into account the school holiday periods in their area.

Over Easter:

We expect that all participating children should benefit from face-to-face provision during the Easter school holidays, which should be for a minimum of 4 days.

Over summer:

- For local authorities that have a summer holiday that spans 6 full calendar weeks, participating children should be offered face-to-face provision during the summer school holidays, which should be for a minimum of 16 days.
- For local authorities that have a summer holiday that is less than 6 full calendar weeks, participating children should be offered face-to-face provision, which should be for a minimum of 12 days
- If only 3 weeks are offered at summer, then these local authorities are expected to offer an additional 4 days during another half-term holiday period (February, May or October).

Over Christmas:

We expect that all participating children should benefit from face-to-face provision during the Christmas school holidays, which should be for a minimum of 4 days.

Further information can be found via the following link:

[Holiday activities and food programme 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

Backfill Payments for Time Off Timetable for Early Career Framework (ECF) Mentor Training

Grant funding for mentor training is available to settings who use Department for Education (DfE) funded training providers to deliver early career framework (ECF) mentor training will receive backfill payments to cover 36 hours of mentor time off timetable for training per mentor, over 2 years. Year 1 and year 2 refer respectively to the first year and second year of ECF induction training for a mentor.

This funding will be made in arrears over 2 payments:

1. The first payment will be made after the end of the academic year on completion of year 1. This will be paid on a pro rata basis for each term the mentor participated in training, as confirmed by the lead provider, covering up to 18 hours of mentor time off timetable for training.
2. The second payment for the remaining maximum 18 hours of mentor time off timetable will be made after the end of the academic year on completion of year 2. This will be paid on a pro rata basis for each term the mentor participated in training, as confirmed by the lead provider.

Mentors completing the second year of the training programme will be funded as part of these conditions of grant until the end of the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

Mentor time off timetable for training	England (excluding the London area)
Payment 1 18 hours (1 year of training)	£856.93
Payment 2 18 hours (2 year of training)	£856.93
Total (36 hours)	£1,713.86

The table below provides an illustration of pro rata payments for mentors training in academic year 2023 to 2024, academic year 2024 to 2025 and for second year participants of academic year 2025 to 2026.

Pro rata rate per payment year	1 term	2 terms	3 terms
England (excluding the London area)	£285.64	£571.29	£856.93

For further information please click the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/backfill-payments-for-time-off-timetable-for-early-career-framework-ecf-mentor-training-national-roll-out/backfill-payments-for-time-off-timetable-for-early-career-framework-ecf-mentor-training-national-roll-out-conditions-of-grant-for-academic-year-20--2>

Reminder

We cannot stress enough the importance of setting budgets for your grants as you would as part of the annual budget setting process. It is also important to ensure that all the costs incurred in the accounting system agrees to the budgets set on your MTFP.

It is also important to monitor your grant budgets to ensure they are utilised fully and effectively to best support the pupils in school at that time.