

Education Plan Guidance for Children Previously Looked After

Children who have been looked after and moved onto a place of permanency often have ongoing and complex needs.

The education plan for children previously looked after has been created to support designated teachers to fulfil their responsibility, 'to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children on the school's roll' as stated in the [DfE 2018 statutory guidance](#).

While the education plan is not a statutory document, the Virtual School considers it best practice for schools to undertake a review of the plan each term for every child on its roll who is previously looked after, with the consent and agreement of any persons with parental responsibility.

Who is the education plan for?

This plan may be used with any child who was previously looked after. A previously looked after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or a child arrangement order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live. From April 2023, this includes children who have been adopted from overseas 'state care'.

Please note that due to the difference in legal status of children previously looked after to those who are currently looked after, this plan may only be initiated with the full consent of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child.

The education plan for children previously looked after is intended to be a continuation of the personal education plan (PEP) for children looked after and used as a working document. The aim is to clearly identify needs and strengths and to create a targeted plan to enhance their education provision. Once completed it will also provide the evidence required for Ofsted around the decisions taken in allocation of specific use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding for children previously looked after.

It is hoped that the collaboration of parent(s), guardian(s), school staff, and any other professional with current involvement, will create a child focused education plan that will protect vulnerability and enable the child to reach their maximum potential. This sharing of information will benefit the understanding around the child's needs.

When should it be used?

It is expected that the initial education plan for children previously looked after will be set up at the start of the academic year, or whenever the child changes education setting, but if there is not already one in place it can be started at any point in the year.

The education plan is tailored to reflect the child's change in legal status, establishing the parent or guardian as a key figure in the plan.

It is recommended that prior to the meeting, the designated teacher distributes the blank education plan document to all parties involved, and invites them to complete any relevant sections, to send back to the designated teacher in advance of the meeting. This gives everyone an opportunity to be familiar with the various sections of the form and have relevant information ready to share.

Chairing of the meeting

It is intended that the designated teacher for children looked after and children previously looked after will be responsible for chairing the meeting, collating the information and circulating the education plan after the meeting. The designated teacher is best placed to carry out this role as they have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of previously looked after pupils who are no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

Presence/involvement of the child in the process

Dependent on the age and understanding of the child, it is intended that they have a part in some of the discussion of this plan; either by attending all or part of the meeting, or to have their view captured in the Child View part of the document. Suggested questions that can be asked to gain the child's view are included in the plan.

Specific guidance about completion of the education plan for children previously looked after

As a working document intended to support educational provision, the Virtual School suggests the use of one document per academic year which is updated termly in colours, so progress can be easily tracked and measured. Autumn updates can be black, spring green and summer blue for example.

Prior to the initial education plan meeting, the designated teacher should discuss the objectives of the plan with the parent/guardian and gain their consent to proceed. The designated teacher should also discuss where the plan will be stored and gain consent from the parent/guardian as to whom the document can be shared with.

Section	Title	Guidance
1	Pupil information	The designated teacher is to complete the school and child information sections of the plan, ensuring the details are updated accordingly prior to each meeting.

2	Attendees and contact details	The designated teacher is to record the details of those who attend the meeting and whether the plan should be distributed to the individual.
3 Optional	Previous experiences	The parent/guardian can choose to share information about child's experiences to date, for example if this adds context to the child's learning needs. This can be completed prior to the meeting and should be discussed before the child joins.
4	Child's views	Prior to the meeting, the designated teacher is to seek the child's views, using the suggested questions included within the plan. The views should be discussed during the meeting, with the child in attendance, if they are able to join.
5	Parents'/guardians' views	Prior to the meeting, the designated teacher is to seek the views of the parent/guardian for discussion during the meeting.
6	Academic progress	The Designated Teacher is to add academic progress and attainment from the class teacher, with the details being discussed during the meeting. National assessment data should also be included.
7	Team Around the Child (TAC) discussion summary	The designated teacher is to add summary information from participants regarding the child's progress. This includes areas going well, areas of concern, social, emotional and mental wellbeing and key priorities. Targets and actions arising from this discussion should be included in the appropriate sections of the document.
8	Social, emotional and mental wellbeing	Where schools use an emotional wellbeing tool, such as strengths and difficulties questionnaires, the designated teacher should add the most recent score. Participants should discuss the score and support currently in place. Targets and actions should be included in the appropriate sections of the document. During subsequent meetings the child's current and previous scores should be updated.
9	Target review and target setting	During the meeting key priorities will arise, which can inform the targets for the term. Participants should contribute to setting SMART targets, with the resource and people responsible being recorded by the designated teacher. Targets previously set, should be reviewed and updated during the meeting. When targets have not been met, these should be included in the current term with any additional new actions or timescales.
10	Pupil Premium Plus funding	The spending of the PP+ for children previously looked after should be transparent and DfE guidance suggests that the designated teacher should <i>encourage parents and guardians' involvement in deciding how the PP+ is</i>

		<p><i>used to support their child and be the main contact for queries about its use.</i> Prior to the meeting, the designated teacher should explore how PP+ funding has been spent or is planned to be spent this academic year. During the meeting participants should discuss this spending and consider how future PP+ could be directed to help improve the attainment of the child. The designated teacher can refer to the DfE guidance for designated teacher: The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (publishing.service.gov.uk) for best practice use, refer to the EEF research on Pupil Premium Using pupil premium EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk), the PP+ information sheet produced by the Virtual School or contact the Virtual School for signposting and advice. Details of the how PP+ will be spent should be recorded by the designated teacher, with feedback updated at subsequent meetings.</p> <p><i>PP+ is separate to funding provided to the school for special educational needs.</i></p>
11	Actions and sign off review	Additional actions should be recorded and updated at the next meeting. A review date for the following term should be agreed during the meeting and an invite sent by the designated teacher.

Following the meeting

The designated teacher should complete the document seeking signatures from the child (when age appropriate), parent/guardian and school, before distributing copies to those who have consent to receive (as per page 1).

A copy of the education plan should **not** be sent to Virtual School but stored and shared as agreed with the parent/guardian.

Virtual School contact details

Clare Houlton Headteacher for Children Looked After, Children Previously Looked After and Children with a Social Worker. Email: clare.houlton@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Cathy McCarthy Education Advisor for Children Previously Looked After and Children with a Social Worker. Email: cathy.mccarthy@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Nicola Blake Assistant Head for Children with a Social Worker.
Email: nicola.blake@brighterfuturesforchildren.org