

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM June 2022 for the financial year 2022-2023

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILD, FAMILY AND EDUCATION

LACES and LAC Pupil Premium

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local authorities have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after by them. This includes a specific duty to promote the child's educational achievement, wherever they live or are educated. The authority must, therefore, give particular attention to the educational implications of any decision about the welfare of those children.

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities in England to appoint at least one person for the purpose of discharging the local authority's duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children. That person – the Virtual School Head (VSH) - must be an officer employed by the local authority or, where local authorities agree to collaborate or share the role, another local authority in England.

Directors of Children's Services (DCS) and Lead Members should be aware of the risks of identifying a VSH without creating sufficient Virtual School capacity to deliver the duties placed on the local authority by statute.

Looked-after children attract Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after children and close the attainment gap between them and their peers. Local authorities receive a PP+ grant allocation based on the number of children looked after for at least one day and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August, as recorded in the latest looked-after children data return. This funding currently stands at £2410 per pupil, per annum for 2022-2023 financial year.

2. BACKGROUND - Wirral Virtual School

Also known as Looked After Children Education Services (**LACES**) and made up, in Wirral's case of Education Progress Officers (EPO's) who's responsibility it is to ensure that all children in care have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which recognizes the child's strengths and areas for development and includes smart targets to enable the child to make accelerated progress through targeted use of funding.

Current staffing arrangements for LACES are as follows:

EPO	Post number	Cohort	Number of children on caseload	Funded by
Virtual Head		VSH	784	Council
Education Progress Officer	E522/15/03	Post 16	91	CIN/CP Grant
Deputy	E522/15/11	Secondary	118	Top Slice CIN/CP Grant
Education Progress Officer	E522/15/01		131	PLAC Grant
Education Progress Officer	E522/15/01	Secondary	0	Council/ Schools Forum CIN/CP Grant
Education Progress Officer	E522/15/02	Special	85	CIN/CP Grant
Education Progress Officer	E522/15/01	Primary	116	Council/ Schools Forum CIN/CP Grant
Education Progress Officer	E522/15/01		104	Council/ Schools Forum CIN/CP Grant
Education Progress Officer	E522/15/01	Early Years	141	Council/ Schools Forum for 0.6 Top Slice 0.4 CIN/CP Grant
Data Analyst	ED/08/099	All	784	N/A
Total				

Staffing

4.08 fte staff members are funded corporately / DSG grant

1.83 fte staff members are funded via VHT extension grant

1.00 fte staff members are funded via VHT grant

1.36 fte funded via CLAPP

8.27 fte Total

We have additional funding as follows:

1. Additional £100k for new responsibilities – see below
2. Additional funding for PLAC responsibilities £66.6k – see below
3. Recovery Premium
 - a. £45,603.00 Sep 21 – Mar 22
 - b. £35,743.00 Ap – Aug 22

£81,346.00
4. School led tutoring
 - a. £22,798.13 September 2021
 - b. £21,735.00 December 2021
 - c. £67,876.88 April 2022

£112,410.01
5. There is an underspend of PP+ which we have managed to put in reserve for costs unpaid.



VSH_Extension_Grant
_Determination_Lette



VSH Sec 31 Grant
determination letter 2

Pupil Premium Plus

Previously, PP+ funding was distributed to schools upon production of a PEP on a termly basis. LACES were engaged in trying to get PEPs completed and on the system in order to distribute the funding accordingly.

The process has changed considerably over the past 3 years and EPO's now provide much more **support and challenge** to schools regarding improved educational outcomes for children in care of the local authority. The PEP process now includes a PEP in the first weeks of the academic year setting out how school will use additional funding to support accelerated progress, every school is visited by LACES during the Spring Term to discuss progress of each child and provide both support and challenge to ensure schools are prioritising the children and maintaining high aspirations towards academic and pastoral outcomes. There is a further plan in the summer term to evaluate progress and consider support going forward.

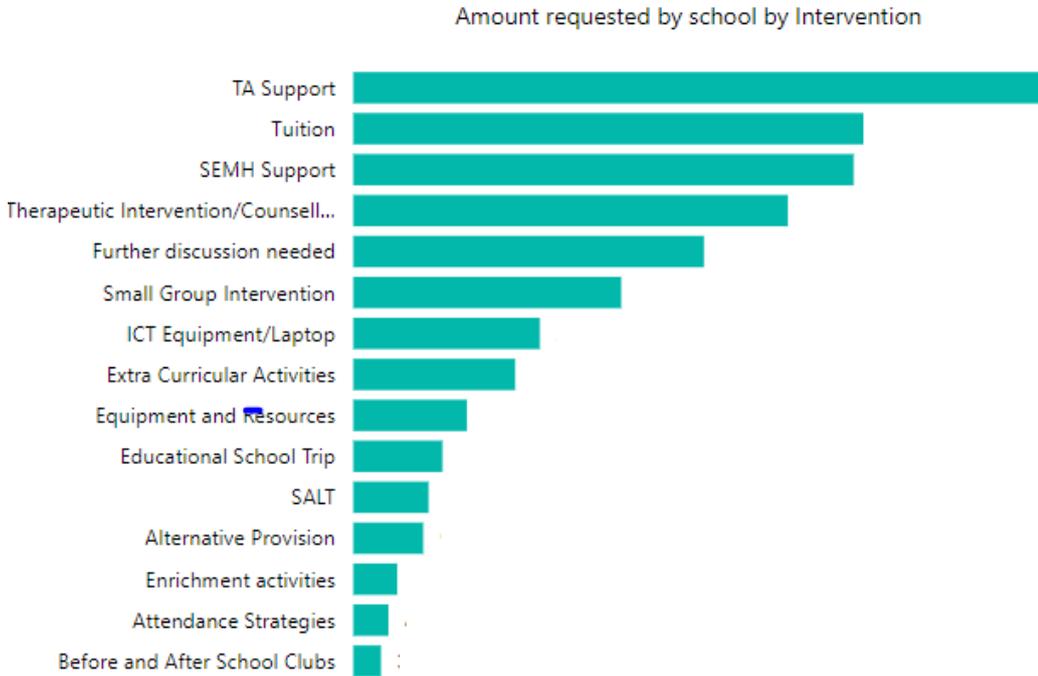
For the financial year 2022-23	
Total PP+ per child	£2410
Top slice for Wirral Virtual School	£410
Funding to school	£2000 £1000 in the Autumn term and £1000 in the Summer term providing progress has been made to accelerate learning.

If numbers remain unaltered from last financial year, this gives funding as follows:

Funding allocation to schools = £2000 x 629 = £1,258,000

Top Slice = £410 x 629 = £257,890

Table 1 Funding distributed to Schools last academic year which is the last recorded due to school visits in Spring Term, what goes in, goes out, any surplus is distributed to schools at the close of the financial year:



Source: PowerBi

Table 1 identifies expected spending of Top Slice in the 2022/23 financial year

Money to be paid	
£410 x 629 = £257,890	
Looked after call Attendance collection tool	£45,000.00
Resources for Teachers	£30,000.00
Alternative Provision – Utopia, Horizons, Cornerstones -	£60,000.00
Virtual school staffing	£67,000.00 *
Randstad Supply Agency for Tuition and Teacher support	£20,000.00
Unallocated funds for unidentified needs	35,890.00
Training	
Total £237,000	£257,890
*needs to include JM and additional 15 days	

The impact of the *new and improved LACES* has been:

- 98% completion of PEPs
- 95% good or better quality
- There have been no children Permanently Excluded from school
- Every School visited to develop relationships and provide support and challenge to raise aspirations and progress of looked after children
- Wirral children in care make better progress generally than their peers (most recent validated data) new reporting systems in progress will inform further regarding groups and percentages
- We have worked with colleagues in data teams to produce reports showing the educational progress of all Wirral CLA in GLD, Phonics, Key Stages 1, 2 and 4 assessment data. This allows us to see at a glance, who is making progress and to share good practice across the authority. It also allows us to identify those not making progress and to provide further support and challenge to school and settings.
- Excellent working relationships between schools and social care.

Recovery Funding

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recovery-premium-funding/recovery-premium-funding>

The recovery premium will be paid to schools during the 2021 to 2022 academic year on the following schedule.

- £45,603.00 Sep 21 – Mar 22
 - £35,743.00 Ap – Aug 22
- £81,346.00**

Recovery Funding total of £81,346.00 has been utilized by commissioning Randstad Tuition Agency to manage NTP for us via their system, Opus. This enables us to see at a glance where the funding has been used and the impact it has had. Furthermore, the amount provided to them is used to

fund the portion required by The Virtual School, 30% meaning that we are able to provide £270k of tuition.

School-Led Tuition

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-led-tutoring-conditions-of-grant/school-led-tutoring-conditions-of-grant>

Payments to Wirral

- a. £22,798.13 September 2021
 - b. £21,735.00 December 2021
 - c. £67,876.88 April 2022
- £112,410.01**

Due to a number of factors:

Lateness of funding,

Lateness of guidance,

Duplication of funding,

Shortage of available tutors,

Financial commitment from Virtual School.

We have not yet utilised this funding but are looking at summer camps for years 5 and 10 through Winchmore Camps.

We are also in conversation with Randstad regarding a teaching assistant across 2 High schools to assist with transition.

In reserve, there is sufficient funding after allowing for commitments to pay for 2 Band H members of staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Forum notes the Report**
- 2. Forum recommends that further information is provided by schools as to how they are using PP+ particularly in relation to 'other'.**
- 3. Further investigation of the impact of the spending of PP+**

Simone White
Director of Child, Family and Education