Pupil Premium Policy 2023

The Link Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, regulated by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (EFSA). All Members of the Board of Trustees of the exempt charity are also Directors of the company; the term 'Trustee' used in this Policy also means Director. This Policy applies to all academies within the Link Academy Trust.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide background information about the pupil premium grant so that all members of the school community understand its purpose and which pupils are eligible
- Set out how the Trust will make decisions on pupil premium spending
- Summarise the roles and responsibilities of those involved in managing the pupil premium in our schools

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the pupil premium conditions as published by the DfE annually. It is also based on guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on virtual school heads' responsibilities concerning the pupil premium, and the service premium.

In addition, this policy refers to the DfE's information on what academies should publish online, and complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Purpose of the grant

The pupil premium grant (PPG) is additional funding allocated to publicly funded schools to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and support pupils with parents in the armed forces.

The Trust will use the grant to support these groups, which comprise pupils with a range of different abilities, to narrow any achievement gaps between them and their peers.

We also recognise that not all pupils eligible for pupil premium funding will have lower attainment than their peers. In such cases, the grant will be used to help improve pupils' progress and attainment so that they can reach their full potential.

Key Principles

By following the key principles below, we believe we can maximise the impact of our pupil premium spending.

Building Belief

We will provide a culture where:

- staff believe that there are "no limits" to what our children can achieve.
- there are "no excuses" made for underperformance.
- staff adopt a "solution-focused" approach to overcoming barriers.
- staff support children to develop "growth" mindsets towards learning Analysing Data

We will ensure that:

- All staff are involved in the analysis of data so that they are fully aware of strengths and weaknesses across the schools in the Trust.
- We use research (e.g. Education Endowment Foundation Toolkit) to support us in determining the strategies that will be most effective.

Identification of Pupils

We will ensure that:

- ALL teaching staff and support staff are involved in the analysis of data and identification of pupils.
- ALL staff are aware of who pupil premium and vulnerable children are.
- ALL pupil premium children benefit from the funding, not just those who are underperforming.
- Underachievement at all levels is targeted (not just lower attaining pupils)
- Children's individual needs are considered carefully so that we provide support for those children who could be doing "even better if….."

Improving Day to Day Teaching

We will continue to ensure that all children across the Trust receive good teaching, with increasing percentages of outstanding teaching achieved by using our team leaders to:

- Set high expectations.
- Address any within-school variance
- Ensure consistent implementation of the non-negotiables, e.g. marking
- Share good practice within the Trust and draw on external expertise.
- Provide high quality CPD.
- Improve accurate assessment judgements through joint moderation both within the Academy and across the Trust.

Increasing learning time

We will maximise the time children have to make progress through:

- Improving attendance and punctuality
- Providing earlier intervention (KS1 and EYFS)

Individualising support

We will ensure that the additional support we provide is effective by:

- Looking at the individual needs of each child and identifying barriers to learning.
- Ensuring additional support staff and class teachers communicate regularly.
- Using team leaders to provide high quality interventions across their year groups.
- Matching the skills of the support staff to the interventions they provide.
- Working with other agencies to bring in additional expertise.
- Providing extensive support for parents.
- To support their children's learning within the curriculum
- To manage in times of crisis
- To support the emotional and mental health of families
- Recognising and building on children's strengths to further boost confidence (e.g. school leaders)

4. Use of the grant

When making decisions about using pupil premium funding it is important to consider the context of each school and the subsequent challenges faced. There may also be complex family situations that prevent children from flourishing and these should be taken into account. The challenges are varied and there is no "one size fits all".

- Consider the context of each school and the main challenges or barriers our pupils face
- Using the latest evidence-based research on proven strategies to narrow the attainment gap
- Encouraging the take-up of FSM by removing barriers or stigma attached to claiming FSM
- Being mindful that being in receipt of the PPG does not mean a pupil is 'low ability'
- Recognising that pupils in receipt of the PPG are not a homogenous group, meaning any strategies should account for group **and** individual needs
- Using high quality teaching and learning as the preferred method of narrowing the attainment gap
- Using the PPG for all year groups, not just those taking tests at the end of the year
- Engage with parents to take their views on the needs of their child into account

Some examples of how the school may use the grant include, but are not limited to:

- Providing extra one-to-one or small-group support
- Employing extra teaching assistants
- Running catch-up sessions before or after school (for example, for children who need extra help with maths or literacy)
- Providing extra tuition where needed (for example, ahead of national assessments such as SATs)
- Funding educational trips and visits
- Support the health and emotional wellbeing of pupils to ensure they are 'ready to learn', including family and parent support.
- Access to more bespoke support through the Improvement & Inclusion Hub (IIH) or other external professionals
- Accelerated Reader Programme, including books
- Subsidised Breakfast Club
- ICT support

We will publish information on the use of the PPG on the individual school websites in line with the requirements set out in our funding agreement and the DfE's guidance on what academies should publish online.

5. Eligible pupils

The PPG is allocated to each individual school based on the number of eligible pupils in Reception and Year 6.

Eligible pupils fall into the categories explained below.

5.1 Ever 6 free school meals

Pupils recorded in the most recent January school census who are known to have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years (as determined by the DfE's latest conditions of grant guidance).

This includes pupils first known to be eligible for free school meals in the most recent January census.

It does not include pupils who received universal infant free school meals but would not have otherwise received free lunches.

5.2 Looked after children

Pupils who are in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, a local authority in England or Wales.

5.3 Post-looked after children

Pupils recorded in the most recent January census and alternative provision census who were looked after by an English or Welsh local authority immediately before being adopted, or who left local authority care on a special guardianship order or child arrangements order.

5.4 Ever 6 service children

Pupils:

- With a parent serving in the regular armed forces
- Who have been registered as a 'service child' in the school census at any point in the last 6 years (as determined by the DfE's latest conditions of grant guidance), including those first recorded as such in the most recent January census
- In receipt of a child pension from the Ministry of Defence because one of their parents died while serving in the armed forces

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Academy Head and Senior Leadership Team

The Academy Head and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Keeping this policy up to date, and ensuring that it is implemented across the Trust
- Ensuring that all Trust staff are aware of their role in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and supporting pupils with parents in the armed forces
- Planning pupil premium spending and keeping this under constant review, using an evidence-based approach and working with virtual Academy heads where appropriate
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium to assess the impact of the school's use of the funding
- Reporting on the impact of pupil premium spending to the governing board on an ongoing basis
- Publishing information on the school's use of the pupil premium on the school website, as required by our funding agreement and in line with guidance from the DfE
- Providing relevant training for staff, as necessary, on supporting disadvantaged pupils and raising attainment

6.2 Trustees & Governors

The Board of Trustees and Local Advisory Committees are responsible for:

- Holding the Academy Head to account for the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring the school is using pupil premium funding appropriately, in line with the rules set out in the conditions of grant
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, in conjunction with the Academy Head, to assess the impact and effectiveness of the school's use of the funding
- Monitoring whether the school is ensuring value for money in its use of the pupil premium
- Challenging the Academy Head to use the pupil premium in the most effective way
- Setting the school's ethos and values around supporting disadvantaged members of the school community

6.3 Other Trust staff

All Trust staff are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy on a day-to-day basis

- Setting high expectations for all pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium

- Identifying pupils whose attainment is not improving in response to interventions funded by the pupil premium, and highlighting these individuals to the senior leadership team

- Sharing insights into effective practice with other school staff

6.4 Virtual Academy Heads

Virtual Academy heads are responsible for managing pupil premium funding for children looked after by a local authority and allocating it to schools. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying the eligible looked after children and informing the local authority

- Making sure methods for allocating and spending ensure that looked after children benefit without delay

- Working with each looked after child's educational setting to put together a personal education plan, agree how pupil premium funding will be spent to meet the need identified in this plan, and ensure the funding is spent in this way

- Demonstrating how pupil premium funding is raising the achievement of looked after children

Virtual Academy heads are in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority they work for.

This Policy is reviewed and approved by the Standards & Curriculum Committee every 2 years.

Reviewed and approved by Standards and Curriculum Committee: 30th January 2024
Next review: Autumn 2025