

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet **DATE:** 15 December 2014

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**WARD(S):** All

**PORTFOLIO:** Cllr Pavitar Kaur Mann – Education and Children’s Services

### **PART I** **NON-KEY DECISION**

#### **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN PUPIL PREMIUM POLICY**

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

To present the draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy, which sets out how the Council will allocate and manage the pupil premium for looked after children grant allocation from central government, in line with its statutory responsibilities.

##### **2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Cabinet is requested to resolve that the draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy is adopted by the Council.

##### **3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan**

Operational Priority 1 in the Council’s Corporate Plan is to improve customer experience and as part of this we will:

- Be more ambitious for the education of looked after children, listen to them and prioritise their aspirations and attainment by improving the quality and monitoring of their personal education plans and setting challenging targets.

The draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy will support our ambition, as Corporate Parents, for the education of our looked after children by ensuring that Pupil Premium grant funding is allocated according to their individual needs, in order to support their educational achievement. In doing this the draft Policy requires that every looked after child has a high-quality Personal Education Plans that includes clear targets with outcomes that can be measured or otherwise evidenced.

##### **3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Adoption of the draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy will contribute to the delivery of the Economy and Skills priority of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy by supporting the achievement of the stated aim to:

- improve educational attainment opportunities of the most deprived pupils through ensuring quality of education and standards are maintained where they are high and improved where necessary.

It also contributes to the following Economy and Skills priority action:

- Work with local schools to support children’s education.

The draft Policy will support achievement of this aim by ensuring that all children looked after by Slough Borough Council are individually supported to overcome any barriers to learning and to improve their educational achievement. Through the designated Virtual School Head (and wider Virtual School arrangements) and Children’s Social Care, the Council will work closely with local schools to support the education of children that it looks after.

#### 4 **Other Implications**

##### (a) Financial

There are no financial implications to the Council in adopting the draft Policy.

The draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy will ensure that looked after children pupil premium grant funding is allocated and managed in line with statutory guidance and the prevailing conditions of grant. The draft policy specifically seeks to ensure that the most effective and efficient use is made of pupil premium funding and to avoid “double funding”, where education provision is an integral part of a child’s residential placement.

##### (b) Risk Management

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating action</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Legal	Ensures compliance with statutory guidance and conditions of grant	none
Property	none	none
Human Rights	none	none
Health and Safety	none	none
Employment Issues	none	none
Equalities Issues	none	none
Community Support	none	none
Communications	none	none
Community Safety	none	none
Financial	none	none
Timetable for delivery	The draft policy should be implemented immediately	none
Project Capacity	none	none
Other	none	none

##### (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications.

##### (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment Relevance Test has been completed, which demonstrates that there is no requirement for an EIA to be completed.

This draft policy has no negative impact on equality and actually seeks to promote equality of opportunity for looked after children, a vulnerable group, who have poorer educational outcomes than their peers.

Furthermore, it seeks to respond to the individual circumstances of each child by ensuring that funding is allocated as needed to reduce the educational inequality between that child and his/her peers. Previously the Council was required to distribute this funding equally, regardless of individual need.

## 5 **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 The Virtual School Head (VSH) became a statutory appointment in every local authority in England, to champion the education of looked after children, under section 99 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which gained Royal Assent on 13 March.
- 5.2 The Pupil Premium for Looked After Children is grant funding that is used to improve the educational outcomes of looked after children. In previous years the local authority has been responsible for distributing this funding to schools, for the looked after children on their rolls, at the same rate that the funding was provided by the Department for Education.
- 5.3 This year the Conditions of Grant for the looked after children pupil premium are significantly different from previous years and there are three main changes:
  - each child looked after by the local authority attracts a pupil premium of £1,900, more than double the amount they attracted in 2013-14;
  - the cohort of children who attract the pupil premium is larger as it now includes children from the first day of care;
  - the pupil premium for looked after children must be managed by the VSH in the authority that looks after them.
- 5.4 The Department for Education publication “Pupil Premium and the role of the Virtual School Head 2014-15 FAQ” provides more information about how the grant should be allocated and managed, including:
  - there is no requirement to pass pupil premium funding to schools, but there is a strong expectation that funding will be passed to schools;
  - there is no requirement to pass pupil premium funding to non-mainstream educational settings;
  - the VSH must decide how much funding to provide to a school in respect of each looked after child and can pay this annually or termly;
  - the VSH will need to demonstrate a direct link between spending and raising standards of achievement for looked after children; and
  - pupil premium may not be used to fund central services that would reasonably be expected to be funded by local authorities or to fund posts that should be the responsibilities of local authorities as corporate parents.

- 5.5 The draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy will enable the VSH and local authority to comply with the conditions of grant and statutory guidance. It also provides clarity and transparency to schools, and other settings where Slough's looked after children are educated, about how the pupil premium will be allocated and managed by the VSH and the requirements that they must meet in order to receive funding.
- 5.6 Under the draft Policy schools will receive £300 per term pupil premium core funding for each looked after child on roll, provided that a high-quality Personal Education Plan is in place and the school shares data and information with the VSH. This will ensure that the minimum pupil premium funding that a school will receive for a looked after child on roll during the 2014-15 school year will be £900, which is was the amount provided to schools by the Department of Education, via local authorities in 2013-14.
- 5.7 The total pupil premium funding for many looked after children will be higher as, in addition to core funding, schools may request additional pupil premium funding for looked after children, where this is necessary to meet their educational needs. All requests must be accompanied by evidence of the need, outcomes to be achieved with quantitative (exceptionally qualitative) targets and details and costs of the proposed interventions. Submitted requests will be considered by the VSH and other appropriate professionals to the circumstances and needs of the child.
- 5.8 The VSH will also use pupil premium to fund other interventions to improve the educational achievement of Slough's looked after children and to provide training to Designated Teachers and other staff who support their education..

## 6 **Comments of Other Committees**

This report has not been considered by any other committees. The draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy was shared with the Corporate Parenting Panel for discussion at its meeting on 13 November.

## 7 **Conclusion**

The draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy will enable the local authority to comply with the conditions of grant and relevant statutory guidance, while providing clarity to schools and other stakeholders about the allocation and management of funding.

The Cabinet is requested to resolve that the draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy is adopted.

## 8 **Appendices Attached**

- 'A' - Draft Looked After Children Pupil Premium Policy
- 'B' - Pupil Premium 2014 to 2015: conditions of grant

## 9 **Background Papers**

None