

Analysing the Pupil Premium Plus for Looked After Children with Social Pedagogy

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Abstract:

Looked after children achieve less well than their non-looked after peers, in a range of educational indicators, including academic attainment, fixed term exclusions, and prevalence of education and health care plans. One of the government's key policies aimed at addressing the attainment gap between LAC and non-LAC is the pupil premium plus, additional funding allocated to schools, via the local authority's virtual school head. Currently, this figure is £2345 per pupil per year and schools must evidence what the impact of this funding has been. This paper analyses the ethos, aims and applications of the pupil premium plus, using social pedagogy. This theory sits at the nexus between education and social care and is underpinned by compassion, social justice, empowerment and holistic development. While there are some areas of alignment between pupil premium plus and social pedagogy (e.g. flexibility in support, and targeting vulnerable learners) there are also areas of disconnect. These include the focus on the attainment gap and the prioritising of short-term goals. This paper recommends that the policy is expanded to support a broader spectrum of goals, beyond attainment, and is adapted to enable interventions and targets to be planned for and implemented over a longer period of time.

Key words: achievement; attainment; children in care; education policy; social policy