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08 July 2025

To all local authorities in England

Section 31 Grant Determination Letter for the Extension of the Role of Virtual School Heads to children with a social worker and children in kinship care FY 2025-26 [31/7860]

This determination is made between:

(1) **The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families,**
and

(2) **The local authorities listed at Annex A**

Purpose of the grant

The purpose of this grant is to provide support to local authorities in England to help them to extend the role of the Virtual School Head to promote the educational outcomes of the cohort of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements.

Virtual School Heads should take a strategic leadership role for this cohort of children and work with early years settings, schools, colleges, and social care leaders to create a culture of high aspirations that helps all children with social workers and children in kinship care to reach their potential.

Virtual School Heads should refer to both the non-statutory guidance on this role and statutory guidance '[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)' to implement robust systems for tracking attendance, identifying patterns of absence, and supporting early intervention to address barriers to regular attendance. This includes collaborating with schools, social workers, and other relevant agencies to ensure these children receive the necessary support to attend school consistently and benefit from their educational opportunities.

The grant should therefore be used to support local authorities to take an ambitious and proactive role in monitoring and promoting the attendance of children with a social worker, ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed, whilst providing additional safeguards for vulnerable pupils.

The grant should also be used to extend the virtual school's offer of advice and information to children in special guardianship orders and child arrangement orders where the child has not been previously looked after.

Local authorities can spend this grant to support costs associated with meeting this responsibility. In doing so, they should take account of the [non-statutory guidance](#) to help them implement this new duty.

Annex A attached includes the amount of funding awarded to each local authority for the 2025-26 financial year.

Signed by authority of the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a large loop and a trailing flourish.

May El Komy, Deputy Director, Outcomes, Care Leavers, and Capital Division, Children's Social Care

Sec 31 Extension of the Role of Virtual School Heads to children with a social worker and children in kinship care GRANT DETERMINATION 2025/26: [31/7860]

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, makes the following determination:

Citation

1) This determination may be cited as the EXTENSION OF THE ROLE OF VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADS TO CHILDREN WITH A SOCIAL WORKER AND CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE IMPLEMENTATION GRANT (2025/26) [No. 31/7860]

Purpose of the grant

2) The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them in respect of implementing the role of the Virtual School Head for children with a social worker and children in kinship care. The grant covers the period from April 2025 to March 2026. The total funding available for this period is £20,449,185.

Determination

3) The Minister of State determines the authorities to which grant is to be paid and the amount of grant to be paid; these are set out in Annex A.

Grant payments and expectations

4) Grant will be paid in 3 instalments per financial year of as near equal value as possible in 2025-26. The first instalment will be paid in September 2025. The second instalment will be paid in December 2025. The third instalment will be paid in March 2026. All payments will be paid before the end of the financial year.

5) Local authorities should refer to the Memorandum of Understanding, setting out expectations as to how the funding will be spent. This should be read, signed and returned to DfE by every local authority for each financial year. We will publish the Memorandum of Understanding separately and will provide further details for its completion.

Treasury consent

6) Before making this determination in relation to local authorities in England, the Minister of State obtained the consent of the Treasury.

UK Government Branding

- 7) The Grant Recipient shall at all times during and following the end of the Funding Period:
- 7.1 comply with requirements of the Branding Manual in relation to the Funded Activities; and
 - 7.2 cease use of the Funded by UK Government logo on demand if directed to do so by the Authority.

Branding Manual

8) Branding Manual means the HM Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 'Funded by UK Government branding manual' first published by the Cabinet Office in November 2022 and is available at <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/marketing/branding-guidelines/> including any subsequent updates from time to time.

Signed by authority of the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a large loop and a trailing flourish.

May El Komy, Deputy Director, Outcomes, Care Leavers, and Capital Division,
Children's Social Care

ANNEX A – Local Authority Allocations

Local Authority	2025/26 CWSW grant	2025/26 Kinship grant	Total
City of London	£30,000	£0	£30,000
Isles of Scilly	£30,000	£0	£30,000
Barnet	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Bath and North East Somerset	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Bedford	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Bexley	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Bracknell Forest	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Brent	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Brighton and Hove	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Bromley	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Bury	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Calderdale	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Camden	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Central Bedfordshire	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Ealing	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Hackney	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Haringey	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Harrow	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Havering	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Herefordshire	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Hillingdon	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Hounslow	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Isle of Wight	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Islington	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Kensington and Chelsea	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Kingston upon Thames	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Knowsley	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Lambeth	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Leicester	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Lewisham	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Luton	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000

Medway	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Merton	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Newham	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
North Lincolnshire	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
North Northamptonshire	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
North Somerset	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Oldham	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Peterborough	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Portsmouth	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Reading	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Redbridge	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Richmond upon Thames	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Rochdale	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Rutland	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Sandwell	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Slough	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Solihull	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
South Gloucestershire	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Southend-on-Sea	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Southwark	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Stockport	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Sutton	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Swindon	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Telford and Wrekin	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Thurrock	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Torbay	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Tower Hamlets	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Trafford	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Waltham Forest	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Wandsworth	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
West Berkshire	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Westminster	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Westmorland and Furness	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Windsor and Maidenhead	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Wokingham	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Wolverhampton	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000

York	£100,000	£20,000	£120,000
Greenwich	£100,000	£25,479	£125,479
Walsall	£100,000	£25,582	£125,582
West Northamptonshire	£100,000	£25,685	£125,685
Barking and Dagenham	£100,000	£25,789	£125,789
Dudley	£100,000	£26,099	£126,099
Plymouth	£100,000	£26,202	£126,202
Enfield	£100,000	£26,512	£126,512
Cumberland	£100,000	£26,577	£126,577
Blackburn with Darwen	£100,000	£26,616	£126,616
Croydon	£100,000	£26,616	£126,616
Halton	£100,000	£26,616	£126,616
South Tyneside	£100,000	£26,822	£126,822
North Tyneside	£100,000	£27,029	£127,029
Milton Keynes	£100,000	£27,132	£127,132
Wirral	£100,000	£27,132	£127,132
Warrington	£100,000	£27,339	£127,339
Salford	£100,000	£27,443	£127,443
Tameside	£100,000	£27,649	£127,649
Darlington	£100,000	£27,753	£127,753
Newcastle upon Tyne	£100,000	£28,166	£128,166
Derby	£100,000	£28,373	£128,373
Bolton	£100,000	£28,476	£128,476
Rotherham	£100,000	£28,476	£128,476
Southampton	£100,000	£28,786	£128,786
St. Helens	£100,000	£28,786	£128,786
Redcar and Cleveland	£100,000	£28,890	£128,890
Wigan	£100,000	£28,890	£128,890
Nottingham	£100,000	£29,510	£129,510
Stockton-on-Tees	£100,000	£29,510	£129,510
Hartlepool	£100,000	£29,923	£129,923
Stoke-on-Trent	£100,000	£30,027	£130,027
Coventry	£100,000	£30,854	£130,854
Sefton	£100,000	£30,957	£130,957
Barnsley	£100,000	£32,198	£132,198
Doncaster	£100,000	£32,611	£132,611

Gateshead	£100,000	£32,714	£132,714
North East Lincolnshire	£100,000	£34,678	£134,678
Blackpool	£100,000	£35,092	£135,092
Sunderland	£100,000	£37,159	£137,159
East Riding of Yorkshire	£117,434	£20,000	£137,434
Shropshire	£117,434	£20,000	£137,434
Cheshire East	£118,136	£20,000	£138,136
Dorset	£118,721	£20,000	£138,721
Middlesbrough	£100,000	£38,813	£138,813
Cheshire West and Chester	£119,189	£20,000	£139,189
Kingston Upon Hull City of	£100,000	£40,984	£140,984
Bristol City of	£118,019	£27,753	£145,772
Buckinghamshire	£127,496	£20,000	£147,496
Northumberland	£119,189	£28,580	£147,769
Worcestershire	£128,549	£20,000	£148,549
Wakefield	£116,731	£31,991	£148,722
East Sussex	£121,763	£27,029	£148,792
Kirklees	£121,061	£31,164	£152,225
Liverpool	£120,125	£33,645	£153,770
Wiltshire	£127,964	£26,616	£154,580
Cambridgeshire	£130,889	£27,443	£158,332
Somerset	£131,357	£27,132	£158,489
Manchester	£121,529	£37,573	£159,102
Warwickshire	£129,017	£30,544	£159,561
Bradford	£124,922	£35,609	£160,531
Leicestershire	£132,995	£28,166	£161,161
Sheffield	£120,827	£40,777	£161,604
Leeds	£132,176	£30,130	£162,306
Oxfordshire	£135,101	£29,097	£164,198
Suffolk	£138,026	£27,856	£165,882
Gloucestershire	£135,218	£30,957	£166,175
Cornwall	£132,644	£34,678	£167,322
North Yorkshire	£142,823	£26,409	£169,232
West Sussex	£133,463	£36,539	£170,002
Durham	£131,240	£40,674	£171,914
Devon	£143,174	£29,923	£173,097

Nottinghamshire	£139,430	£35,919	£175,349
Norfolk	£149,609	£26,409	£176,018
Surrey	£146,333	£30,750	£177,083
Birmingham	£151,833	£28,476	£180,309
Lincolnshire	£142,706	£38,296	£181,002
Staffordshire	£146,918	£36,126	£183,044
Essex	£164,937	£20,000	£184,937
Derbyshire	£148,907	£38,193	£187,100
Hertfordshire	£162,246	£33,231	£195,477
Kent	£168,330	£29,613	£197,943
Hampshire	£162,012	£38,090	£200,102
Lancashire	£173,712	£49,667	£223,379