**CASE STUDIES**

### Case Study: Primary use of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

*Below is an anonymised example of how the East Midlands Adoption Support Service (EMASS) has helped families. Provided by Laura Wilson, Senior Adoption Support Worker, EMASS.*

**Family context**

Adam is an adopted child living with two parents and two older adopted brothers. His brothers are the birth children of Adam’s adopted parents. His adoptive parents are also foster carers and have a deep knowledge and understanding of the needs of children who have suffered from abuse and neglect.

**Pre-adoptive experience**

Adam’s birth mother was only 16 when she had Adam and due to her own adverse childhood experiences she was unable to care for Adam. When Adam was 2 years old his maternal grandmother was granted a Special Guardianship Order (SGO). During the time he was with his grandmother he was subject to chronic abuse and neglect, and witnessed domestic violence between his grandmother and her partner.

At 4 years old Adam was removed from the care of his grandmother and placed in foster care. A full care order was granted to the local authority by the court. Just 2 months into foster care Adam had to be removed by police from his foster care due to them leaving him unsupervised for a long period of time. He went to live with his younger half brother Aaron in Essex with blood relatives of Aaron.

He was then removed from that placement when he was 5 due to an incident where Aaron was injured; he was still only 4 at this time and Aaron was 2.

Adam was then placed in multiple foster placements until an adoptive placement became available when he was 6 years old.

**School context**

Adam is now 9 and attends a local primary school. There are 127 children on roll at the school with 0% SEN children and 0% children with an EHCP.

**Adopters’ and school relationship**

Adam’s adopted parents have always been very proactive in regards working with the school to ensure that Adam’s social, emotional and academic needs are met. Adam’s parents meet with the school regularly. Together with the school they regularly explore ways in which the PP+ can most appropriately support Adam. The adopted parents do have an advantage due to their knowledge and experience and always attend any meeting fully equipped with up to date information.

**At school**

Adam presents with attachment difficulties within school, and at the start of Year 1 he would present as being in a state of heightened anxiety quite regularly. He had moved from a previous school where Adam had been assessed as being ‘very academic’; however the new school did not find this. The adopters had also found that this was not the case when completing homework with Adam at home. He did therefore access support via interventions during his first year. He started his Year 2 at age 6 with levels of attainment just below that of his peers. Adam is now in Year 5 and is at the national average for all subjects.

The school have been in agreement with the parents that Adam’s main issues were down to his executive functioning. He has difficulties with his working memory, planning and organising, focus and concentration. Adam can be immature in his behaviour and can make poor choices with his friendship groups, gravitating towards those that are constantly getting themselves into trouble. He has difficulty expressing his emotions. He finds transitions within school difficult and needs to be prepared for, and supported through, any changes. In class he often fidgets, he is hypervigilant, and he is very easily distracted. Adam’s adopted parents have worked with the school on visual timetables and reminders, as homework, books and clothes are more often than not forgotten at the end of the day.

**Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)**

The school understands that without Adam’s social and emotional needs being addressed he will not thrive academically, so they have been more than happy for the PP+ to be utilised for activities outside of school, as this has been identified as effective in supporting Adam.

The PP+ has been used in a variety of ways throughout Adam’s school progression to respond to his age and developmental needs. Previously the PP+ has been used to purchase an iPad for homework as this has increased his engagement in the task and made short sessions easy and accessible for him to complete. He regards the iPad as both a recreational and educational tool, which has contributed to breaking down barriers to learning. PP+ has also funded Adam attending local stables on a Saturday morning, having riding lessons and ‘mucking out’; this has enabled his self-esteem to improve as he has taken on positive responsibilities. This also improved his executive functions, where he has been motivated to initiate horse care and learn the care routines, as he knows the horses ‘rely’ on him for care.

The school are now considering using the PP+ for a home tutor to support Adam’s specific learning needs and to build his confidence in class as he will pre-learn and over-learn curriculum elements. This would be intended to increase Adam’s class contribution and self-esteem in class, as well as improving his overall attainment.

Adam also attends a Friendship Group to support the development of his peer relationships. The school developed a pupil profile, involving Adam, his teachers and his adopted parents in various assessments to inform the planning within school to ensure that his needs are met holistically; with this information they developed a provision plan which details any help that Adam needs and is used to continually measure his progress.

**Child’s views**

Adam feels increasingly positive about his school. He has verbalised that he does not feel different or singled out. He enjoys going to school and feels that he has some good friends.

**The impact**

With the combination of interventions and constant adjustment to his changing needs, Adam can now effectively reflect on situations that he finds himself in. He feels secure in the knowledge that his adopted parents and the school are consistent with him and that if he is worried about anything he can speak to his teachers. He is not as anxious during times of transition and his adopted parents report that during holiday periods Adam presents as being much more relaxed and can enjoy them more.

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| Further information Family Action has been awarded a grant by the DfE to deliver a pilot adoption support service across Lincolnshire and the East Midlands. Working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council and the East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency, the East Midlands Adoption Support Service (EMASS) aims to improve outcomes for adopted children and their families. The service will focus on providing attachment training and support for schools, as well as individual support for adoptive families. Find out more about the project from: [www.learning-exchange.org.uk](http://www.learning-exchange.org.uk)  Produced by Family Action: Unit 24 Angel Gate, City Road, Islington, London EC1V 2PT  [www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)  Registered charity in England and Wales no: 264713 Registered company limited by guarantee in England and Wales no: 01068186  Read our disclaimer: [www.family-action.org.uk/disclaimer](http://www.family-action.org.uk/disclaimer)  Copyright © Family Action 2018This handout has been produced as part of the EMASS project. Permission is granted to reproduce for personal and educational use only. Selling without prior written consent is prohibited (eg as part of a commercial training programme).  *Last updated: 18.3.18* |