

2014

Pupil Premium Task & Finish Group: Report

Page 37



The Pupil Premium Task & Finish Group is a sub group of the Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee

Content

Section	Page/s
1.0 Introduction	2-4
2.0 Executive Summary	4-5
3.0 Context & Themes	5-7
4.0 Examples of Good Practice	8
5.0 Recommendations & Sharing the Report	9-11

DRAFT

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Children Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee set up the Pupil Premium Task & Finish Group to undertake a short term review into the use of pupil premium and its impact on attainment in Sheffield Primary Schools. The review took place between January-March 2014. Membership of the Group was as follows:

- Cllr Gill Furniss, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee & Task Group
- Cllr Diana Stimely, Scrutiny committee member
- Jules Jones, Parent Governor Representative
- Alison Warner, School Governor Representative

1.2 Aim

The aim of the review was to identify best practice and any recommendations in terms of the use of pupil premium and its impact on attainment in Sheffield Primary Schools:

1.3 Background

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 to provide additional support for looked after children and those from low income families. The aim of pupil premium is to provide additional funds to help close the existing attainment gap between pupils from disadvantaged and more affluent backgrounds.

Allocations for 2013-14 & 2014-15

Initially Pupil Premium was allocated to children from low-income families who were eligible for free school meals and those who had been looked after continuously for more than 6 months. In 2012-13 eligibility was extended to children who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years and schools also received a smaller amount of funding for children of service personnel.

In the 2014 -2015 financial year, the total pupil premium budget will increase from £1.875 billion to £2.5 billion, the additional allocations and extensions of eligibility are outlined in the table below¹.

¹ Schools Funding Settlement including pupil premium: 2013 to 2014 financial year:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/a00218077/funding-settlement-2013-14>

Eligibility	2013-14	2014-15	Notes
Free School Meals - Primary Pupils	£956	£1300	Per primary school pupil who is currently eligible for free school meals (FSM) or has been eligible for FSM in the past 6 years ('Ever 6' measure)
Free School Meals - Secondary Pupils	£900	£935	Per secondary school pupil who is currently eligible for free school meals (FSM) or has been eligible for FSM in the past 6 years ('Ever 6' measure)
Looked after children	As above	£1900	From 2014-15 the allocation will increase and eligibility will be extended to all children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have been looked after for 1 day or more (compared with the six months in care currently required). • were adopted from care on or after 30 December 2005 or left care under: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> a Special Guardianship Order on or after 30 December 2005 <input type="checkbox"/> a Residence Order on or after 14 October 1991
Children of service personnel	£300	£300	From 2014-15 this premium has been extended so that any pupil in reception to year 11 who has been identified as a service child since 2011 will continue to receive the premium ('Ever 4' measure).

How the funding can be spent and accountability

Schools can spend the pupil premium as they see fit and are responsible for impact in terms of narrowing the attainment gap for eligible pupils. In terms of accountability new measures have been included in the performance tables to capture the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium. In addition from September 2012 the government has stipulated that Schools need to produce online information detailing the amount of pupil premium they receive and how it has been spent. The Ofsted monitoring framework will also have a particular emphasis on

how attainment gaps are narrowing, both within an individual School and in comparison to both the overall national picture and that of pupils eligible for pupil premium.

1.4 Approach

The Working Group met with Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers from across eight Primary Schools in Sheffield. In addition one of the Schools also had a number of staff, governors and a parent in attendance at their session. The Schools were selected to try and represent those with high, average and low numbers of pupil premium children.

The Working Group has also met with Iain Peel, Interim Director, Inclusion and Learning, Children, Young People & Families (CYPF) to both scope the piece of work and discuss their initial findings and has also received support from other members of the Inclusion & Learning Team, including Janet Doherty, Senior Manager CYPF - Children's Commissioning Services and Pam Smith, Strategic Lead - Targeted Intervention, CYPF - Inclusion and Learning. The Working Group also met with Dawn Walton, Assistant Director, Prevention & Early Intervention, CYPF to discuss the MAST (multi-agency support team) service.

Page 41 The Working Group undertook desktop research which included analysing the performance reports for the eight Primary Schools and a number of additional reports on pupil premium, including:

- The Pupil Premium, How schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement, Ofsted 2013
- Pupil Premium Toolkit: Summary for Schools Spending the Pupil Premium, Sutton Trust & Education Endowment Foundation, May 2011
- Theme Reviews of Practice Recommendations of the Executive Director, Children, Young People & Families, Sheffield City Council December 2013

2.0 Executive Summary

The Task & Finish Group were impressed by the range of activities schools were funding through the pupil premium and how the approach was being tailored to the pupils eligible for this additional support. The Group also recognised that having low numbers of pupil premium children could present an equally challenging set of circumstances as having high numbers, as schools were required to deliver a very

individualised approach which could have additional capacity implications. Some examples of interventions that the schools felt to be “high impact” or that could be considered examples of good practice are highlighted in section 4.0 of the report.

The group also recognise that not all pupil premium children are achieving lower levels of academic progress than their peers and that some were performing at or above national standards. Schools also reiterated this point and gave examples of the types of support being given to these pupils.

The group have outlined a number of areas which they feel capture and outline their findings in terms of their perception of the context of how pupil premium is being used and also some of the broader themes they felt emerged. These areas are outlined in section 3.0 of the report but in brief cover the following areas; the importance of raising self-esteem, the impact of Ofsted, transitions, uptake of free school meals and variance in attendance, the impact of the economic climate, senior leadership vacancies, social and emotional support as a foundation to learning and the value of good quality data both in terms of identifying best practice and monitoring and evaluating children’s progress.

The full set of recommendations are outlined in section 5.0 of this report.

The group identified 4 cross cutting areas in which they have made recommendations, which are:

1. The role of Governors
2. Parental involvement
3. Pupil Premium Policy
4. Links with MAST (Multi-Agency Support Team)

Page 42

3.0 Key Themes & Context

3.1 Key Themes & Context – introduction

Through both discussions with the schools and desk top research the Task & Finish Group identified a number of key areas that they feel capture the main context and themes of their findings.

One of the key areas was the importance of **social and emotional support** as a foundation to a child’s development and in turn their academic progress. A number of schools with larger pupil premium numbers and so financial allocations were funding specific interventions

aimed at delivering this support, such as nurture groups and play therapy sessions. Schools with smaller numbers of pupil premium pupils were more likely to undertake a more individualised approach.

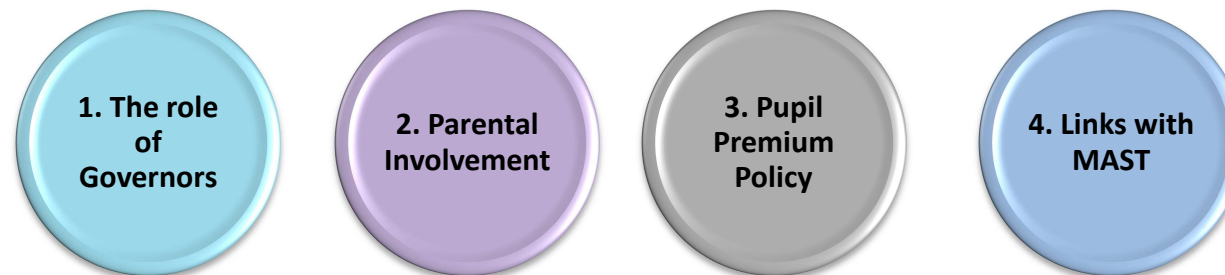
The role of **Learning Mentors** was also cited as key in terms of supporting parents / guardians and their children and addressing issues around **attendance** and sickness levels. In many Schools Learning Mentors were clearly engaging well with pupil premium children and their parents / guardians although there remained instances of parents who were choosing not to engage with this support.

The significance of raising the **self-esteem** of both children and their parents / guardians was also highlighted as being essential to a child's emotional development and academic achievement and schools gave examples of how pupil premium funding was being used to support this.

The current **economic climate** and the impact of reduced incomes and job losses had impacted on some families and communities, with some parents / guardians finding their child eligible for **Free School Meals** for the first time. A number of Schools were clearly taking steps to support these families, in a confidential and sensitive way, as there are still concerns of stigmatization associated with free school meals. There were however still some concerns regarding under-accessing of free school meals and the fact that many families were just above the threshold for FSM

The importance of **good quality data** including **research and guidance** on best practice such as the Sutton Trust Report and Ofsted documentation was clearly seen as valuable by schools and a useful reference point. In addition the need for schools to maintain good quality **data capture systems** was also seen as a mechanism for supporting academic achievement of all pupils. A number of schools commented that they were “data driven” and numerous examples of data capture systems for both academic and non-academic data were shared with the Group. These data capture systems were clearly being used to monitor and evaluate children's progress and in some cases the impact of specific pupil premium interventions and seemed to aid both teachers understanding of pupils and the overall school planning approach.

These findings led the group to make **recommendations** within these 4 subheadings, which cross over the themes that were identified.



3.2 Key themes & Context – (please note these are not arranged in any particular order)

1. Self-Esteem

The importance of raising children's self-esteem as a foundation to their development and academic learning, this can include raising the self-esteem of parents / guardians too.

2. Ofsted

There were some concerns about the impact of a negative Ofsted inspection, in terms of staff morale/stress and available support; also a lack of consistency in inspections (subjectivity).

3. Transitions

There is a potential impact on children's attainment

4. Free School Meals (FSM)

Some concerns that a lack of advice and support / fears about stigmatization can result in under-access of FSM. Also the introduction of FSM for under 7s and the potential impact on the number of pupils eligible for pupil premium.

5. Attendance

In general there appears to be a gap in terms of attendance levels between pupil premium and non-pupil premium children, some schools have employed Learning Mentors to assist with this.

6. Economic Climate

The impact of the current economic climate in terms of reduced incomes / job losses.

7. Senior Leadership Vacancies

Concerns regarding difficulties in recruiting to senior leadership posts resulting in long periods of vacancies, this mirrors a current national trend.

8. Social & Emotional Support

This was seen as a crucial foundation for academic achievement. Some schools cited a requirement to focus on these areas of a child's development, prior to looking at more academic needs.

9. Good Quality Data

The importance of using best practice e.g. Sutton Trust and having good quality data systems, to capture both academic and non-academic data that can be used to monitor and evaluate children's progress.

4.0 Examples of Good Practice

All the Schools gave examples of targeted interventions and improvements they were delivering to support the academic achievement of pupil premium children, these ranged from funded dedicated posts, to freeing up teacher time to spend with children on feedback, to projects more specifically focused on social and emotional development and the raising of self-esteem.

Schools were clearly making use of existing research and best practice to inform their decision making and a number frequently referenced the Sutton Trust and Ofsted research and guidance in this area.

The Working Group recognise that schools develop their approach based on the needs of their children and the community and that as such their approach aims to be tailored to address the specific challenges they face. In particular Schools highlighted the following examples as interventions which had been seen to have a high impact and could be considered examples of good practice:

- **Nurture Rooms** – which were seen as being key to providing social and emotional support
- **Play Therapy** – this was cited by one school as being a very powerful tool in supporting the social and emotional development of children.
- **Easter Schools** – and using creative approaches to make learning fun.
- **Structured Conversations** – this was cited by one school as an alternative approach to a “traditional parents evening” in that it promoted a two way conversation with the parent / guardian and so helped develop a mutual understanding of the child.
- **Use of Effective Feedback** – this was cited by one school as being a powerful tool to help raise self-esteem, the School would however query this as being a “low cost” intervention as classified by the Sutton Trust report as it requires a lot of teacher time.
- **Highly Individualised Interventions** – tailored to meet the specific needs of a child.
- **Peer to Peer Support** – these were also seen as keen to raising self-esteem and for some children offered an effective mechanism for constructive feedback.
- **Booster Groups** – around core subjects of maths and English
- **Learning Mentors** – were clearly seen to have an impact in terms of engaging with parents / guardians and improving attendance levels.
- **Targeted Teaching Assistants** – one school had employed two Teaching Assistants of Roma Slovakian origin to help engage and support families and children who were from a Roma Slovakian background.

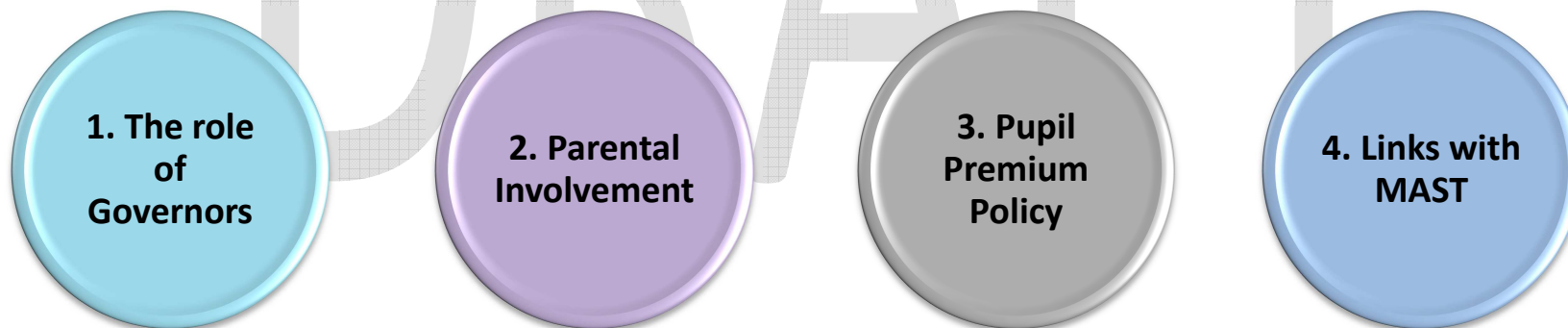
5.0 Recommendations & Sharing the Report

5.1 Recommendations

The Task & Finish Group value and appreciate the excellent work that is undertaken by Schools, Governors and the Local Education Authority in terms of delivering the outcomes associated with the pupil premium.

Furthermore the Group recognises that their recommendations will need to be considered in the light of present practice through which the bodies identified may already undertake some or all the recommended actions.

The group identified 4 cross cutting areas in which they have made recommendations, these are:



1. The Role of Governors

1.1 **That the Chair of Governors** agendas the re-examination and educational character and ethos of the school in relation to pupil premium, ensuring that this addresses pupil premium as:

- a. Enhancement of existing provision, or
- b. One off interventions, or
- c. Enabling in terms of facilitation of access to experiences, or
- d. It not being a separate component of the experience in school

1.2 **That Governing Bodies** consider the possibility of:

- a. Identifying a governor to act as a pupil premium champion, and
- b. That this individual speaks directly to pupils receiving pupil premium to understand their experience, and
- c. Contributes to the Annual Report to governors including details of any roll over and reasons for this.

1.3 **That the Local Education Authority (LEA)** – explores options for involving governors in opportunities for sharing best practice and learning and training opportunities.

2. Parental Involvement

2.1 **That Schools:**

- a. Ensure parents / guardians receive information regarding the impact of the support their child is receiving through pupil premium, and
- b. That where appropriate schools explore opportunities whereby pupil premium funding could be used to provide resources / support in the home that could further progress the child's development and attainment.

3. Pupil Premium Policy

3.1 **That the Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee** write to the Secretary of State impressing the need for pupil premium funding to follow the child and outlining two mechanisms of concerns whereby this may not take place, 1. In terms of any underspent monies held by the school which are rolled into the next financial year 2. If a child moves schools after the census point.

4. Links with MAST (multi-agency support team)

4.1 **That the Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee** - following the planned review of Early Intervention and Prevention in schools and looking at the future role of MAST (multi-agency support team) service in 2014 requests a report on the revised service including the impact on their relationship with schools.

5.2 Sharing the report

The Task & Finish Group recommends that this report is shared with Iain Peel, Interim Director, Inclusion and Learning, Children, Young People & Families, Cllr Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People & Families, the CityWide Learning Body and Head teachers of Primary Schools in Sheffield.