

SecEd

The ONLY weekly voice for secondary education

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Pupil Premium: Special edition



This week's edition of SecEd focuses on best practice, guidance and research evidence relating to the Pupil Premium. Highlights include:

A research and experience-based 10-point Pupil Premium spending plan

Using CPD to narrow the gaps by focusing on high-quality teaching



Creating a Pupil Premium culture

Closing the vocabulary gap – the role of cultural capital in breaking down Pupil Premium barriers

A range of both general and targeted intervention ideas

At a time of budget constraints, we offer 25 low-cost Pupil Premium strategies and ideas

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Free school meals threshold to hit Pupil Premium funding

As estimated one million pupils will miss out on Pupil Premium funding after changes to the Universal Credit system get go-ahead

By Chris Parr

Secondary schools are set to miss out on millions of pounds in additional Pupil Premium funding after the government passed reforms that will mean around one million children will become ineligible for free school meals (FSM).

As Universal Credit – the government's much-maligned reform of how benefit payments are received by claimants – has been rolling out, all families in receipt of the new benefit have been automatically entitled to FSMs.

However, changes to the system will introduce an income threshold, meaning that families with net earnings of more than £7,400 will no longer be eligible for FSM.

Estimates by the Children's Society suggest that about one million children living in poverty in England will miss out on FSM as a result.

The charity says that if the government continued to offer FSM to all families on Universal Credit, then two million children would benefit once roll-out is complete. However, under the threshold plan it says that only 700,000 of an estimated 1,700,000 school children living in poverty will receive FSM.

The government has said that blanket eligibility during Universal Credit roll-out was always intended as an interim measure and that no family currently in receipt of FSM will lose their entitlement.

Secondary schools receive £935 Pupil Premium per year for each child on FSM (with further funding of £1,900 for each looked after child).



Image: Adobe Stock

Speaking in Parliament last month, Labour MP Sharon Hodgson, chair of the School Food All-Party Parliamentary Group, said that by removing the universal entitlement to FSM under Universal Credit, "the government is forcibly creating a cliff-edge that will be detrimental to families, especially children".

"That seems utterly ludicrous," she added.

Ms Hodgson pointed out that a parent with three children in their family who earns just below the £7,400 threshold would lose out on £1,200 in FSM support if they worked only a few hours more, or if they got a pay rise.

Such a family's income would have to increase from £7,400 to almost £11,000 to make up for what

they would lose if they became ineligible for FSM.

She added: "What we want to prevent is families avoiding pay rises or working more hours for fear that they will lose out. That is not making work pay, and it is not what the system was intended to do when it was set up."

The old Working Tax Credit system provided an offsetting income boost at the point that FSM were withdrawn, Ms Hodgson said. Under Universal Credit, however, such mitigation does not exist.

Despite these concerns, a bid by Labour shadow education secretary Angela Rayner to block the changes failed in a Parliamentary vote by 312 to 254 last Tuesday (March 13).

During the debate, Ms Rayner

said that by refusing to make the transitional arrangements permanent, ministers were "pulling the rug from underneath those families". The changes will now come into effect from April.

The removal of automatic FSM entitlement for all Universal Credit recipients is not entirely unexpected. Last year, the then children's minister Robert Goodwill said that all pupils whose parents are in receipt of Universal Credit would be entitled to FSM as "an interim measure". It was always expected that this would be reassessed.

The government says that under its plans, "the vast majority (around 90 per cent) of pupils currently eligible for FSM will continue to be eligible". Furthermore, the

government claims that because the £7,400 threshold is measured before benefits are taken into account – as opposed to the old system when FSM eligibility was based on the number of hours worked – it will see 50,000 additional low-income families become eligible for FSMs by 2022.

Speaking last week (March 13), Iain Duncan Smith, the former work and pensions secretary who was the architect of Universal Credit, said: "Transitional protection was designed to protect those moving from tax credits into Universal Credit so that they did not – if this would have happened to be the case – lose any money in the transition." It was not, he added, about permanently granting access to FSM to all Universal Credit recipients.

The Children's Society said that although Pupil Premium payments are currently based on FSM, there were a range of options open that could allow the two policies to be "decoupled". Indeed, schools already miss out on Pupil Premium funding because many children are not registered for FSM despite being entitled. DfE figures show that nationally 11 per cent of eligible children are missing out.

The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has long called for automatic FSM enrolment and says that the data required to do this is already available and simply needs to be shared with schools.

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of the NAHT, said: "Auto-registration for FSMs would mean that more children get the support they are entitled to, as well as boosting Pupil Premium funding to support their education."

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All schools should be regularly reviewing their Pupil Premium practice to ensure their spending is evidence-based and improving outcomes.

John Dabell looks at the wealth of research and guidance out there to help, including some of Sir John Dunford's best advice

One of the most important jobs in a school is the Pupil Premium champion. Leading the management and delivery of provision for Pupil Premium is a key role and every school needs an effective Pupil Premium champion – but this is not a job for the faint-hearted.

The bottom-line is scary: the attainment of children who attract Pupil Premium must improve or questions will be asked, so Pupil Premium champions must ensure that every penny has an impact and that this money for disadvantaged pupils yields results.

If you are lucky then you will get to work with a focused Pupil Premium support team including a competent Pupil Premium governor who understands “intelligent accountability” and doesn't lump all Pupil Premium (and Pupil Premium Plus) pupils together or become obsessive about accountability targets and box-ticking

Governance

Effective Pupil Premium spending starts with capable governance and an understanding that Pupil Premium isn't about league tables or some sort of bolt-on, but is about children's needs and the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

According to Marc Rowland, director of the National Education Trust, governors' intelligence on Pupil Premium issues can be sketchy and this problem frequently results in ad-hoc spending. Mr Rowland – author of *A Practical Guide to the Pupil Premium and Learning Without Labels* – says that we need to start any thinking around Pupil Premium by focusing on what is a good strategy for raising attainment, rather than questions about what the money is used for.

The Pupil Premium champion and Pupil Premium governor have to collaborate closely to forensically interpret pupil data, analyse interventions that have worked and their “active ingredients” and examine the results of Pupil Premium spending. Regular reviews of impact are a must, including an external review of Pupil Premium spending too.

Individual need and classroom rigour should be right at the heart of discussions and decision-making.

“Money matters, but nothing matters more than a good teacher, which is why schools have to employ teachers with a good track record of working with disadvantaged pupils”

Seeing an impact

Looking at what doesn't make an impact is a good place to start and Ofsted's Pupil Premium evidence has found that less successful approaches include:

- Spending the funding indiscriminately on teaching assistants and not managing their performance well.
- Spending the funding on one-to-one tuition and booster classes that go on forever, do not relate to class teaching, and are not audited or quality-assured.
- Planning spending in isolation and not as part of the school action plan.
- Assuming that pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium will have learning difficulties.
- Comparing the performance of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium with other eligible pupils nationally, rather than all pupils – lowering expectations.



So what does work?

Sir John Dunford knows a thing or two when it comes to Pupil Premium. He was the National Pupil Premium Champion from 2013 to 2015 and so it makes sense to sit up and listen to what he has had to say.

By working with heads and teachers, education trusts, Teaching Schools and local authorities, Sir John was able to observe where the rubber meets the tarmac and identify the features he saw working effectively and what could be learned from those schools that used the government funding best.

Speaking with more than 15,000 school leaders gave him amazing insights into what works and he found that the schools which were most effective in their use of Pupil Premium embraced a variety of strategies, well targeted at the needs of their pupils.

Sir John emphasises 12 commonly found characteristics of effective Pupil Premium practice in successful schools:

- 1 Excellent collection, analysis and use of data relating to individual pupils and groups.
- 2 Unerring focus on the quality of teaching.
- 3 Identification of the main barriers to learning for Pupil Premium-eligible pupils.
- 4 Frequent monitoring of the progress of every Pupil Premium-eligible pupil.
- 5 When a pupil's progress slows, interventions are put in place rapidly.
- 6 Every effort is made to engage parents and carers in the education and progress of their child.
- 7 If poor attendance is an issue, this is addressed as a priority.
- 8 Evidence (especially the Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit) is used to decide on which strategies are likely to be most effective in overcoming the barriers to learning.
- 9 Staff (teachers and support staff) are trained in-depth on the chosen strategies.
- 10 Complete buy-in from all staff to the importance of the Pupil Premium agenda is essential, with all staff conveying positive and aspirational messages to Pupil Premium-eligible pupils. Performance management is used to reinforce the importance of Pupil Premium effectiveness.
- 11 Effectiveness of teaching assistants is evaluated and, if necessary, increased through training and improved deployment.
- 12 Governors are trained on Pupil Premium.

Sir John is well-placed to tell schools how they should spend the Pupil Premium. However, he resists the temptation and instead provides us with a plan in which he sets out a process for deciding what policies best suit each school's unique context. The “Dunford Plan” involves 10 steps:

- 1 Set an ambition for what you want your school to achieve with Pupil Premium funding.
- 2 The process of decision-making on Pupil Premium spending starts with an analysis of the barriers to learning for Pupil Premium pupils.
- 3 Decide on the desired outcomes of your Pupil Premium spending.
- 4 Against each desired outcome, identify success criteria.
- 5 Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of your current Pupil Premium strategies and change them if necessary.
- 6 Research the evidence of what works best.
- 7 Decide on the optimum range of strategies to be adopted.
- 8 In-depth staff training.

9 Monitor the progress of Pupil Premium-eligible pupils frequently.

10 Put an audit trail on the school website for Pupil Premium spending.

You can read more of Sir John's findings, pointers and suggestions online (see further information).

Heineken and Bananarama

Sir John has described Pupil Premium as a “Heineken policy” because it has reached the disadvantaged children that previous government policies didn't reach.

However, while ensuring that the Pupil Premium funding reaches the groups of pupils for whom it is intended so that it makes a significant impact on their education is crucial, throwing money at them doesn't necessarily mean learning is going to happen.

Dr Lee Elliot Major, chair of the evaluation advisory group of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), gets to the heart of the issue. He says that we need to remember the Bananarama Principle: “It ain't what you do it's the way that you do it...” or said another way, “It ain't what you spend but the way that you spend it ... and that's what gets results!”

As such, step six of the 10 above is arguably one of the most important: it is all about the evidence and being evidence-informed. Not throwing money at something

“There is at least one piece of solid evidence that applies to every school – make sure the best teachers work with the most vulnerable”

that doesn't work sounds obvious, yet many schools still do and pour money down the drain by focusing on myths, legends, tripe and trollop.

The best schools have become more far more analytical, informed by excellent resources such as the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit, Guidance Reports, and Promising Projects (see further information), which all offer valuable ideas for evidence-based improvement strategies where impact and value for money count the most.

These resources have made “a clear and distinctive contribution to schools and have had a direct impact on their spending of the Pupil Premium” according to impact research from the University of Durham.

Sir John is clear – we must challenge schools to think about how they could possibly adapt successful Pupil Premium strategies from elsewhere into their own contexts. However, simply transplanting what works somewhere else into our own setting isn't always the answer, as he warns: “There is plenty of evidence about what works well, but not all these successful strategies will be appropriate to the particular context in which a school is working.”

Despite the uniqueness of local situations and the

myriad factors that feed into successful approaches to Pupil Premium, there is at least one piece of solid evidence that applies to every school – make sure the best teachers work with the most vulnerable, as poor teaching disproportionately disadvantages deprived learners.

As Kevan Collins of the EEF has said: “Money matters, but nothing matters more than a (good) teacher, which is why schools have to employ teachers with a good track record of working with disadvantaged pupils.” (Collins, June 2016.)

And finally

Deciding on optimal strategies and knowing what works for you is crucial. The EEF is instrumental in flying the Pupil Premium flag and their report *Putting Evidence to Work* is a must-read for all Pupil Premium champions. Another must-read is Marc Rowland's *32 Pupil Premium ideas to magpie*.

Mr Rowland reminds us that every child should not just survive, but thrive – and that: “The Pupil Premium might just be the key that unlocks the opportunity for everyone to attain well.”

John Dabell is a teacher, teacher trainer and writer. He has been teaching for 20 years and is the author of 10 books. He also trained as an Ofsted inspector. Visit www.johndabell.co.uk

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Using CPD to narrow the gaps

The evidence is clear – the quality of teachers and teaching is one of the most important factors in raising outcomes, and disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately affected by the quality of teaching.

Maria Cunningham looks at the role of CPD in narrowing the gaps

If there were more funds available to schools, 70 per cent of British parents would opt to spend the money on more teachers, or better pay for existing teachers.

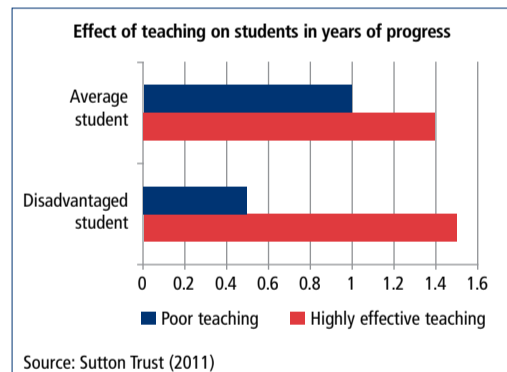
This was the second highest proportion across 29 countries recently surveyed by the Varkey Foundation, and it shows that you don't have to be working in education to recognise the simple fact that teachers matter. Not only that, but if we are to meet the needs of all learners, the quality of teaching matters.

Why focus on teaching?

You may well be familiar with the Teaching and Learning Toolkit published by the Sutton Trust and Durham University in 2011 – since hosted and extended by the Education Endowment Foundation.

One of the main headlines of the toolkit's findings is that the average student makes 40 per cent more progress with highly effective teaching than they do with poor teaching.

Even more remarkably, a disadvantaged student can make 50 per cent less progress than the average student with poor teaching, yet this progress could be tripled to 150 per cent of the average progress if the teaching is highly effective.



Progress: The Teaching and Learning Toolkit has shown how much progress students, especially those who are disadvantaged, can make with high-quality teaching

We can't deny the evidence – disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately affected by the quality of teaching. Schools and leaders must keep this in mind at all times if they are to spend Pupil Premium money effectively.

What should we be spending the funds on?

We at the Teacher Development Trust recently analysed school budgets and found that schools in some local authorities allocated as much as £1,200 per teacher to CPD. However, while Hampshire and Newham topped the tables, schools in Solihull budgeted only £400 per teacher (*Stark differences in per-teacher CPD spending*, *SecEd*, February 2018: <http://bit.ly/2FyQCRz>).

This vast variation in resource across the country is deeply concerning. Effective teacher development is like cooking – you have to invest in good ingredients in order to create quality results. Even a great in-house process won't make any impact if schools don't have the money to find quality experts, courses and training tools. When decision-makers scrimp on teacher development, it will be pupils that ultimately lose out.

Professor Rob Coe of Durham University agrees: "Research evidence is very clear that investing in high-quality support for teachers' professional learning is not just one of the most effective things schools can do to raise standards, but one of the best value choices they can make."

We appreciate that value for money is notoriously



difficult to measure, but by analysing needs and evaluating CPD well, it is possible for school leaders to show measurable impact that justifies spending in this area.

How to focus your CPD

Our charity has intensively supported hundreds of schools with their staff CPD and seen first-hand how investing time and resource into improving professional learning can transform workforce morale, improve teacher efficacy and ultimately boost outcomes for students regardless of their background.

What do these schools have in common? They take care to build a positive culture where trust exists among colleagues, and where staff at all levels maintain a clear and tight focus on pupil needs. Yes, professional learning activities should improve teacher performance, but with a strong school-wide CPD programme this will occur as a result of starting with the pupils in your classrooms rather than vice-versa.

Don't be tempted to hear about strategies for improving pupil learning that have worked in other contexts, only to run an INSET session for all staff with the intention that they will go away and better their practice, e.g. through more effective questioning, or differentiation.

Before taking an idea and running with it, stop and go back to the students whose needs you are trying to address. What will look different for these pupils if you are successful? You may start to re-assess whether asking more effective questions is really the right approach to take. Even if it is, you can now evaluate your impact on the chosen pupils better from the outset.

There are a whole host of strategies which you can draw upon to diagnose needs and these shouldn't just involve reading performance data. Professional judgement made through teacher surveys, lesson observations and witnessing pupil behaviours is crucial to understanding how teachers can make a real difference for target pupils.

For those eligible for Pupil Premium funding, what are the gaps in self-belief, capacity to learn, and variations in expectations, behaviour or attendance? Once these are identified, you can work backwards from there – what do your staff currently know, believe or expect about disadvantaged pupils? What skills and knowledge might be lacking, and how might you challenge myths or preconceptions? Drawing from current staff members' strengths and areas for development, CPD can then be designed to address the gap between the vision and the current reality.

CPD that 'closes the gap'

Many schools that notice a large gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their more-advantaged peers make it a clear and active organisational priority to address this across the academic year. This was the case in one school we recently worked with, where a history teacher was particularly concerned about three boys in his class who came from challenging socioeconomic

backgrounds. These pupils were occasionally disruptive and not making the expected progress, or achieving what this teacher aspired for them.

We suggested that this teacher asked a colleague to observe his lesson – for the specific means of closely observing the behaviour of these three boys (rather than the teaching practice). The history teacher also approached the pupils' other teachers, and in collaboratively comparing the work they produced in different subjects, these colleagues determined that writing was a key issue across the board.

Anecdotally, teachers and classroom support staff were also able to identify that two of them produced little work but would ask questions around the topic area, while the third child was frequently off-task and more likely to show signs of low-level disruption.

“The average student makes 40 per cent more progress with highly effective teaching than they do with poor teaching”

The teacher began to joint-plan with a colleague to lay-out some strategies that research suggested might be effective in supporting disengaged boys. These were then tried out in class, observed by the same colleague. They compared their work and behaviour to their notes from the previous observed lesson. Using these, they were able to adapt a couple of approaches and carry out another observed lesson. Each time, the teacher kept reflective notes on what was noticed in observations and when marking work.

Though not what many would classify as formal CPD, this is a key example of effective professional learning with a clear pupil focus – it involved identifying and diagnosing a need, electing an evidence-informed strategy, and experimenting and evaluating that strategy until it made a desired impact of those specific students.

What we're doing to help

The most disadvantaged children need the best-supported teachers. In a new nationwide project funded by the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF), the Teacher Development Trust has identified five CPD Excellence Hubs that will each use a rigorously evidence-based approach to transform teacher development in some of the most challenged schools and areas in England – Blackpool, Northumberland, Sheffield and

Doncaster, Stoke-on-Trent and South Central. Rather than simply deliver training to leaders and teachers, we are taking an innovative approach to change the way that schools design, commission and implement CPD.

In each hub, a school-based CPD "expert advisor" works closely with up to 10 local partner schools and their senior and middle leaders, supporting them in developing the culture, leadership and structures around CPD. Depending on pupil, teacher and organisational needs in each school, transformation priorities have included:

- Building a developmental staff culture with high engagement in professional learning.
- Developing the way that CPD is evaluated and meets students' and staff needs.
- Supporting evidence-informed practice, where staff engage with high-quality strategies and well-designed CPD processes.
- Reviewing and adapting the timings and structure of professional learning programmes.

Concettina Johnson is an expert advisor in the South Central CPD Excellence Hub. She's been working with a range of partner schools around Luton and Stevenage whose progress is not yet rated as good by Ofsted and where eligibility for free school meals can be as high as 33 per cent.

Having seen first-hand how much progress can be made when a school invests in their CPD programme, she said: "I've taught in both secondary and primary, and I know that we need motivated, well-supported teachers in front of every class, no matter what type of school you're in. I've seen the transformational impact that a more supportive culture has, and teachers feel more confident to talk about what's effective in the classroom."

What are we learning?

As barriers to accessing CPD for teachers and leaders in challenging schools are beginning to be removed and a better tailored, local and sustainable CPD offer is becoming available, we are reminded that collaboration is absolutely key. Addressing educational disadvantage is something we need to do collectively as a sector and it starts with providing the adequate resources and tools for powerful professional learning that enables staff in schools to thrive and every pupil to succeed. **SecEd**

• Maria Cunningham is a former primary school teacher and programme officer for Teacher Development Trust, a national charity for effective professional development in schools and colleges around the UK. To read her previous CPD best practice articles for *SecEd*, visit <http://bit.ly/2GxLuxU>

Further information

- Find out about joining the TDT Network, a national community of schools dedicated to high-quality, evidence-informed CPD at <http://tdtrust.org/network>
- For more information on the CPD Excellence Hubs, visit <http://tdtrust.org/cpd-excellence-hubs>

Ahead of his address at *SecEd's* National Pupil Premium and Ofsted Conference, **Stephen Rollett** offers five steps for ensuring your Pupil Premium spending narrows the gap

There is no single best way for schools to use Pupil Premium funding. The most effective approach is to respond to the need on the ground, within your own context, ensuring that disadvantaged children receive the right support at the right time.

If school funding was a military exercise, the Pupil Premium would be your SAS – agile, responsive and targeted at key strategic objectives.

Overview

Since its launch in 2011, the Pupil Premium has been used by schools to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap with other pupils.

It must be remembered that “disadvantage” in this context is defined by a specific set of criteria. While the Pupil Premium should be spent on those who meet that criteria, you may have other children in your school who are in need of extra support but who are not funded by the Pupil Premium. Obviously, it is important to meet the needs of all pupils – not just those in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant.

It may be that a pupil is identified as being eligible for Pupil Premium before funding is allocated. In this case the school should put support in place as soon as need is identified and not delay until funding becomes available.

The grant should be spent on support which will improve the attainment of eligible pupils, but the strategies which are put into practice may also benefit other pupils. An example might be using the grant to employ a particular member of staff, such as a learning support assistant or education welfare officer. While their work should primarily raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, they can also help other pupils who need additional support.

There are several groups of children who qualify for the Pupil Premium: those who have received free school meals in the past six years (FSM “ever 6”), looked after children (LAC), children who were looked after by the local authority (post-LAC), and armed forces “ever 6 service children”. Full details of the latest funding levels and eligibility criteria can be found on the Department for Education website (see further information).

My five steps

There are numerous online blogs and articles which detail specific activities and examples of the ways in which schools have used Pupil Premium funding. While these may be worth reading, you need to be cautious about replicating another school’s approach without a sense of context and evidence of the impact it achieved.

It is also a good idea to look beyond the immediate priority of improving academic achievement, or at least balancing that need with longer-term considerations. For example, plenty of schools use Pupil Premium funding to buy revision guides for year 11 pupils, and find these benefit their students. However, it may also be a good idea to look at using strategies which will have a long-term impact, such as providing more careers guidance or tackling persistent absence at key stage 3.

The most likely way of achieving your desired results is to develop a strategy from the outset.

Step 1: Identify the gaps

Identify what the gaps are and why they exist. Historic data is important, but it should not be the only evidence. Use your school’s assessment and tracking information, and insights from teachers, parents and pupils to gain a complete understanding of how your disadvantaged pupils are achieving and the barriers they face. Consider factors such as whether a problem with attainment is caused by an underlying attendance issue. Getting the diagnosis right will significantly increase your chances of identifying the right solutions.

Step 2: What works best

Find out what works best. I was struck by Professor John Hattie’s assertion at the Association of School and College Leaders annual conference recently that, to some extent, most teaching approaches work – the challenge for educators, however, is to find what works best.

Evidence is invaluable. This will not only help you to identify the right strategies but also to justify the decisions you have made during conversations with Ofsted. The Education Endowment Fund’s Teaching and Learning Toolkit and its recent report, *The Attainment Gap* (January 2018), is a great place to start.

Improving the quality of teaching is the most impor-



tant factor in raising the achievement of any group. The relevant expertise you need to support your teachers may already exist within your school, as well as in local partnerships.

Step 3: Create a strategy

Having identified gaps, barriers and some possible solutions, your thoughts will turn to implementation. A coherent strategy with clear objectives, milestones and measurable success criteria will help you to do the vital work of evaluating impact. It will also allow you to think about the capacity which exists within your organisation or team and whether this is sufficient to achieve the desired outcomes.

A trap leaders often fall into is to identify too many objectives, particularly when they don’t tackle root causes. Fewer objectives, with a focus on the things that really matter, will give you a better chance of success. Understanding and growing capacity is key. This might be about using the grant to ensure you have the right people in the right places, or that they have the necessary time to undertake the work. It is equally important, however, to build the right culture.

Step 4: Grow the culture

Management expert Peter Drucker coined the phrase “culture eats strategy for breakfast” and the point seems particularly appropriate in the context of improving the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

This does not mean that strategy is unimportant of course. As we have already seen, it is vital. But an effective strategy cannot exist in isolation. It has to emanate from your school’s core mission. As educators we believe that a central purpose of education is to improve social justice – and closing the attainment gap is clearly key to achieving that goal. But to what extent do we explicitly talk about Pupil Premium in this context? To what extent do we relate it back to social justice?

A Pupil Premium strategy is much more likely to be successful if we actively root it in within our school’s ethics, values and vision.

Step 5: Oversight

Ensure rigorous oversight and evaluation. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are a common line of inquiry from Ofsted inspectors. Be certain that your governing body is aware of any gaps, understands the Pupil Premium strategy and is holding leaders to account for its impact. Many schools have a specific link-governor for the Pupil Premium.

The DfE outlines the information schools are required to publish on their website, which includes their Pupil Premium strategy (see further information).

Conclusion

Two final points. First, a key to using the Pupil Premium effectively is to ensure you understand the barriers faced by your disadvantaged pupils, while recognising that they are not a homogeneous group.

This is a point made by Ofsted’s West Midlands regional director Loma Fitzjohn in an excellent presentation at *SecEd's* Seventh National Pupil Premium and Ofsted Conference in March 2017 (see further information).

Second, having a culture of high expectations will tend to give all your pupils, disadvantaged or otherwise, the best opportunity for success at school and beyond.

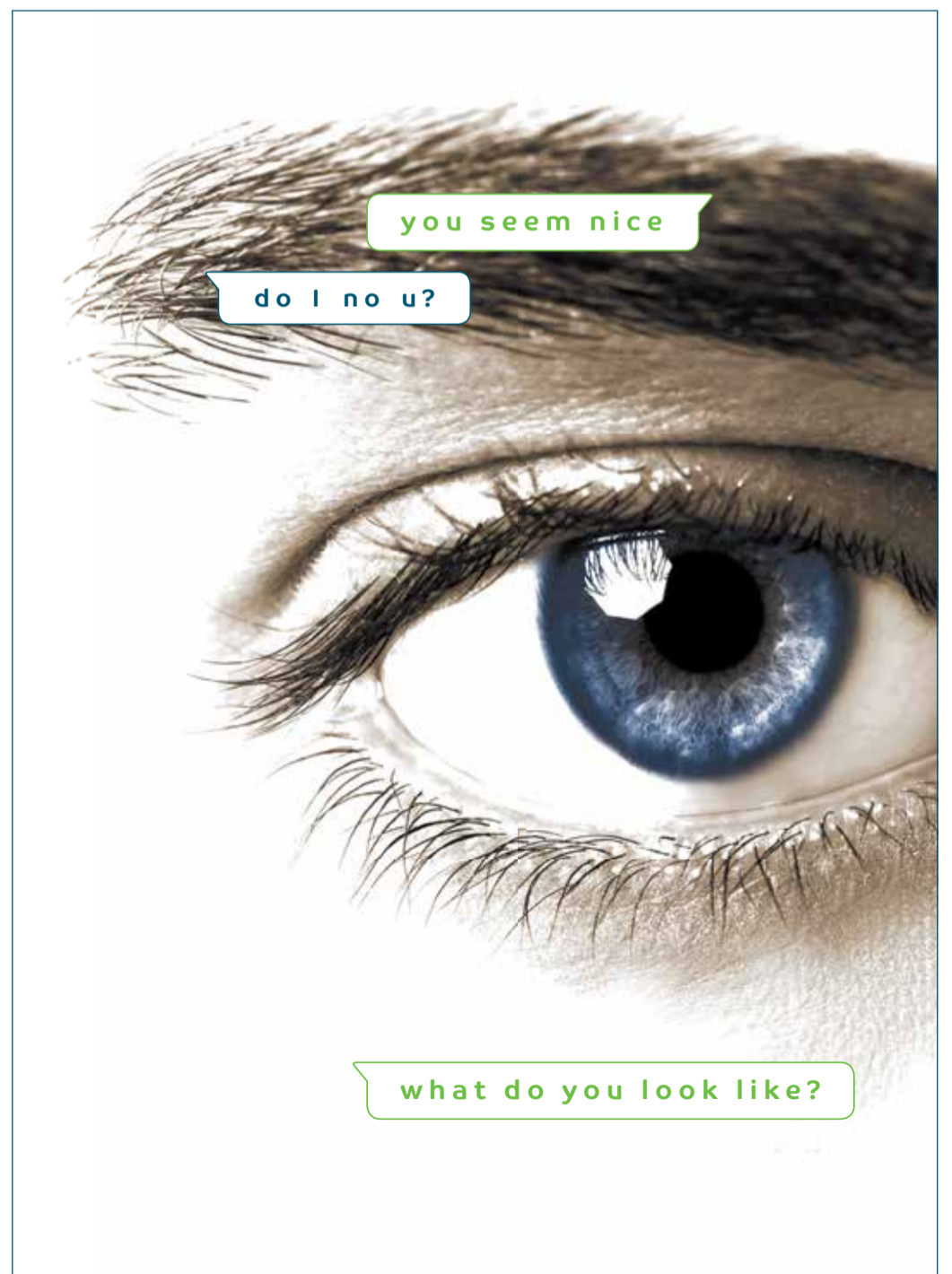
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• *Stephen Rollett is an inspections specialist with the Association of School and College Leaders.*

Further information

- This article is a preview of Stephen Rollett’s keynote session for secondary school delegates at *SecEd's* Ninth National Pupil Premium and Ofsted Conference on Friday, March 23. For details of this and future events, visit www.pupilpremiumconference.com
- *Pupil Premium 2017 to 2018: Conditions of grant*, DfE, December 2017: <http://bit.ly/2DpyeET>
- *Pupil Premium 2018 to 2019: Conditions of grant*, DfE, December 2017: <http://bit.ly/2ph1Uj7>
- *The Attainment Gap*, Education Endowment Foundation, January 2018: <http://bit.ly/2DqdmNL>

- To access the Education Endowment Foundation’s various toolkits, including the Teaching and Learning Toolkit, visit <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/>
- *What maintained schools must publish online*, DfE, June 2017: <http://bit.ly/1Ne476u>
- *What academies, free schools and colleges should publish online*, June 2017: <http://bit.ly/2pejtjU>
- The Pupil Premium: What Ofsted looks at, presentation from Lorna Fitzjohn HMI, West Midlands regional director, Ofsted, at *SecEd* National Pupil Premium and Ofsted Conference, March 2017: <http://bit.ly/2Ey6J1a>



ALFs and seating plans

As part of our Pupil Premium special, our NQT diarist discusses some of his classroom strategies, including the importance of seating plans

MY SCHOOL has a fairly high number of Pupil Premium students, with around 25 per cent of our student body on the Pupil Premium register.

There is at least one Pupil Premium student in every class that I teach, and some of my groups have considerably more than that. For instance, in my set five year 9 English class, just under half of the students are on the register.

Since starting my NQT year, I have been impressed by my school's approach to ensuring that Pupil Premium students are appropriately supported.

Within weeks of taking up my post, I had attended a CPD session focusing closely on working with Pupil Premium students. This was very useful and ensured that my practice chimed with the school's high standards.

As a staff group, we are expected to put in place interventions designed to support the learning of those on the Pupil Premium register; it is crucial that students do not fall behind academically as a result of their circumstances. As such, we use various tools to identify and monitor the students, allowing us to closely track their progress and support their learning.

One such tool is the online MINTclass seating plan programme. I did not use this tool during my training year but have found it to be really helpful this year. It allows me to design and alter my seating plans, ensuring that all of my pupils – especially those on the Pupil Premium register – are situated in an appropriate place within the class.

My Pupil Premium students are generally seated close to the front so that I can access them easily during lessons. This is crucial, as it allows me to approach them in class and make sure that they are accessing the work. When designing seating plans, many other factors must also be taken into account (such as SEND or behavioural issues).

As well as seating the Pupil Premium students

strategically, I use a lot of directed questioning to encourage their engagement. I visit Pupil Premium students frequently in lessons, discussing the work and making sure that they are appropriately challenged by the tasks set.

Pupil Premium students must be relentlessly challenged in class. Throughout my NQT year, my in-class questioning has been a key focus for my professional development and this is something that I am trying to improve upon, specifically with regards to these students.

All teachers in my school must have an Active Learning Folder, which contains our seating plans and details of the interventions that we have put in place to support individual students. Again, this is a valuable tool and gives a clear indication of the strategies that I have implemented to close the gap between Pupil Premium students and their peers – and their impact.

Our "ALFs" must be updated regularly and have to be easily accessible to senior colleagues who may enter my lessons. I have been commended on the thoroughness of my ALF and the intervention strategies that I have used throughout the year.

I am a firm believer in the "every child matters" mantra and this informs my practice at all levels. I am dedicated to ensuring that all of my pupils' additional needs are met, and my school's strict guidelines regarding Pupil Premium students have pushed me to implement myriad strategies to ensure their progress.

My recent assessment results indicate that the majority of Pupil Premium students in my classes are making progress on a par with their peers, and I will continue to do everything that I can to close the gap entirely.

• Our NQT diarist this year is a teacher of history at a comprehensive school in the North of England.

Diary of a headteacher

Social mobility or social justice?

What should be the aim of Pupil Premium spending? As part of our Pupil Premium special, our headteacher diarist reflects on the challenges we face in closing the gaps

THE TERM social mobility has crept into the vocabulary of educationalists in recent years, probably because of the role it has played in the rhetorical arsenal of politicians across the past decade.

I have always had a problem with the term though. For me, it infers that working class people should aspire to be something more than working class. This is inherently insulting.

A more appropriate term, perhaps, might be social justice. As educators we should help the young people we work with to achieve their aspirations without overly concerning ourselves about whether or not they are able to "escape" their working class upbringing.

For many of us who grew up in very traditional working class backgrounds, we are proud of our upbringing. Our experiences form a crucial component of who we are, the values we hold and the way we approach all aspects of our life.

Having said that, the Pupil Premium is an important aspect of the government's education agenda and there is no question that many young people face an uphill challenge because their families have found themselves trapped in a cycle of poverty. This can affect their education and therefore their future life chances in several ways. So what exactly should we be using the Pupil Premium funding for and what are the issues and limitations associated with this funding?

The first issue relates to overall funding levels. While government rhetoric claims that schools are receiving record levels of funding, this is actually incredibly misleading. The cost of running a school has increased astronomically and funding in real-terms is down.

The problem for disadvantaged students is that some schools have used their Pupil Premium funding to plug the gaps in their budget and so this money is not directly benefiting the students it was intended for. Schools, of course, have to publish how their Pupil Premium funding is spent and the impact it has had, but this is often presented in such a vague fashion that it is hard to discern exactly where the money has gone and who has benefited.

Issue number two is parental expectations. Some

parents know that the school receives a certain amount of additional money for their child and they expect every penny to be directly spent on equipment, uniform, transport and trips – i.e. on tangible things.

While providing support for these families by funding the aforementioned items can be a very good use of the money, there are more effective ways in which schools are investing this money that create sustainable systems for improving the educational provision for disadvantaged students over time.

For example, if the funding is invested in employing staff with the specific remit of overcoming the barriers that our disadvantaged students face then this is a good starting point.

The third issue is that when we create our strategies we must ensure that they do not depend solely on the person in that post, therefore the people in these roles must ensure they are creating systems that stand the test of time.

The most successful strategies are also personal to the individual. If you were to line up all the students who qualify for the Pupil Premium and explore the barriers each faced, the answers would be incredibly varied and therefore employing "one-size-fits-all" strategies are never going to have the desired impact.

Ultimately, as headteachers we are accountable for ensuring this funding is having a positive impact. If we are successful, does this mean we are helping our students to become socially mobile? Should we be too worried about this? Or should we be more focused on supporting all our students to have high expectations of themselves, ensuring they aim high in all aspects of their lives and are proud of who they are and where they come from?

Irrespective of your views on social mobility, the important factor here is that we treat our responsibility seriously and that we ensure our disadvantaged students overcome the barriers they face and have all the tools necessary that enable them to lead happy and successful lives.

• SecEd's headteacher diarist is in his fourth year of headship at a secondary school in the Midlands.

Closing the voc

The educational gaps between rich and poor start early and widen throughout a pupil's education. **Matt Bromley** argues that Pupil Premium spending must focus on cultural capital, especially the importance of vocabulary

When I spoke at *SecEd's* Seventh National Pupil Premium and Ofsted Conference last year, I explained that one in four children in the UK grows up in poverty. That figure has since risen to nearly one in three. In other words, nearly a third of young people now grow up in poverty in this country – this western, civilised, affluent nation.

The academic achievement gap between rich and poor is detectable from an early age – as early, in fact, as 22 months – and the gap continues to widen as children travel through the education system.

Children from the lowest income homes are half as likely to get five good GCSEs and go on to higher education as the national average and White working class pupils (particularly boys) are among our lowest performers. What's more, the link between poverty and attainment is multi-racial – no matter the ethnic background, pupils eligible for free school meals underperform compared to those who are not.

In short, if you're a high ability pupil from a low income home (and, therefore, a low social class), you're not going to do as well in school and in later life as a low ability pupil from a higher income home and higher social class. In other words, it is social class and wealth – not ability – that defines a pupil's educational outcomes and their future life chances.

But why should this be?

Why are some pupils disadvantaged?

Educational disadvantage starts early – certainly before a child enters formal education. Children born into families who read books, newspapers and magazines, visit museums, art galleries, zoos, and stately homes and gardens, take regular holidays, watch the nightly news and documentaries, and talk – around the dinner table, on dog walks, in the car – about current affairs and about what they're reading or doing or watching, develop cultural capital.

These children acquire, unknowingly perhaps, an awareness of the world around them, an understanding of how life works, and – crucially – a language with which to explain it all. And this cultural capital provides a solid foundation on which they can build further knowledge, skills and understanding.

The unlucky ones – those children not born and brought up in such knowledge-rich environments, and who therefore do not develop this foundation of cultural capital – don't do as well in school because new knowledge and skills have nothing to "stick" to or build upon. These children may come from broken or transitory homes, be in care, have impoverished parents who work two or more jobs and so spend little time at home or are too exhausted when they get home to read to or converse with their children.

These parents may not themselves be well educated and so possess very little cultural capital of their own to pass on to their children. Maybe these parents came from disadvantaged backgrounds and so books and current affairs never featured in their lives and remain alien to them. Maybe they did not do well at school or did not enjoy their schooling and so do not know how to – or do not wish to – help prepare their child for the world of education.

Let's be clear – educational disadvantage is an accident of birth. It is not about ability, innate or otherwise. But, unfortunately, a child's birth is often their destiny...

The Matthew Effect

The Matthew Effect is a term coined by Daniel Rigney in his book of the same name, using a title taken from a passage in the Bible (Matthew 13:12) that proclaims: "The rich shall get richer and the poor shall get poorer."

In the context of academic disadvantage, the Matthew Effect posits that disadvantaged pupils shall get more disadvantaged because they do not possess the foundational knowledge they need in order to access and understand the school curriculum.

It is not, as I said earlier, that these children are



less able, but that they don't have the same amount of knowledge about the world with which to make sense of new information and experiences. Put simply, the more you know, the easier it is to know more and so the culturally rich will always stay ahead of the impoverished, and the gap between rich and poor will continue to grow as children travel through our education system.

The best use of Pupil Premium funding, therefore, is to help disadvantaged pupils to build their cultural capital. Once you're clear about this solitary aim, all the hard work of action planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating intervention strategies, and reporting the impact of your Pupil Premium activities becomes easier. The big question is: how?

Building cultural capital

Cultural capital takes one tangible form: a pupil's vocabulary. The size of a pupil's vocabulary in their early years of schooling (the number and variety of words that the young person knows) is a significant predictor of academic attainment in later schooling and of success in life.

Most children are experienced speakers of the language when they begin school but reading the language requires more complex, abstract vocabulary than that used in everyday conversation.

Young people who develop reading skills early in their lives by reading frequently add to their vocabularies exponentially over time. In *The Matthew Effect*, Daniel Rigney explains: "While good readers gain new skills very rapidly, and quickly move from learning to read to reading to learn, poor readers become increasingly frustrated with the act of reading, and try to avoid reading where possible."

"Pupils who begin with high verbal aptitudes find themselves in verbally enriched social environments and have a double advantage. Good readers may choose friends who also read avidly while poor readers seek friends with whom they share other enjoyments."

Furthermore, ED Hirsch, in his book *The Schools We Need*, says that: "The children who possess intellectual capital when they first arrive at school have the mental scaffolding and Velcro to catch hold of what is going on, and they can turn the new knowledge into still more Velcro to gain still more knowledge."

Department for Education research suggests that, by the age of seven, the gap in the vocabulary known by children in the top and bottom quartiles is something like 4,000 words (children in the top quartile know around 7,000 words).

For this reason, when planning to use Pupil Premium funding to build cultural capital we need to understand the importance of vocabulary and support its development so that children who did not develop this foundational knowledge before they start school are helped to catch up.

So what can we do to help the word poor become richer and, with it, to diminish the difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers?

Lexicabulary gap



Word power

One answer is to plan group work activities which provide an opportunity for the word poor to mingle with the word rich, to hear language being used by pupils of their own age and in ways that they might not otherwise encounter.

This runs counter to the approach taken by many schools – setting. Most schools place disadvantaged children together in a “bottom set” and “dumb down” the curriculum to make it more easily accessible. They assume that the best way to close the gap is to expect less of these pupils and to provide more scaffolding. Sometimes this also means a narrowing of the curriculum because disadvantaged pupils are withdrawn from classes to attend more English and maths lessons.

Unfortunately, this doesn’t work very well and often widens the gap because the word poor get poorer and the word rich get richer, and what’s more the word poor become increasingly reliant on the scaffolds and less able to cope with the demands of the curriculum.

A better approach is to ensure disadvantaged pupils have equal access to a knowledge-rich diet and provide cultural experiences in addition to, not in place of, the

“The more you know, the easier it is to know more and so the culturally rich will always stay ahead of the impoverished”

school curriculum. This might involve spending Pupil Premium money on museum and gallery visits, or on mentors who talk with pupils about what’s happening in the world, perhaps reading a daily newspaper with them before school or at lunchtime.

Another answer is to provide additional intervention classes for the disadvantaged (taking place outside the taught timetable to avoid withdrawing pupils from classes) in which we teach and model higher-order reading skills because, as the literate adults in the room, we teachers use these skills subconsciously all the time so we need to make the implicit explicit. For example, we could use these intervention sessions to model:

- Moving quickly through and across texts.
- Locating key pieces of information.
- Following the gist of articles.
- Questioning a writer’s facts or interpretation.
- Linking one text with another.
- Making judgements about whether one text is better

than, more reliable than, or more interesting than another text.

We can also use Pupil Premium funding to promote the love of reading for the sake of reading – encouraging pupils to see reading as something other than a functional activity. It is the responsibility of every adult working in a school (not just teachers, and certainly not just English teachers) to show that reading because we like reading is one of the hallmarks of civilised adult life.

Community outreach

Finally, it is worth remembering that, although Pupil Premium funding for the educational benefit of pupils registered at the school which is in receipt of the money, it can also be used for the benefit of pupils registered at other maintained schools or academies and on community facilities such as services whose provision furthers any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families, or people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated.

We know that the attainment gap emerges early in a child’s life and that, therefore, the child’s family is crucial in helping to close that gap. We know, too, that reading books from an early age is a vital weapon in the battle for social mobility. As such, Pupil Premium funding can legitimately – and wisely – be used to support community projects such as reading mentor schemes, helping improve parents’ literacy levels and encouraging parents and members of the community to engage with education.

The Pupil Premium grant can be used, for example, to fund a community outreach officer who helps educate disadvantaged or hard-to-reach parents in the locality about the work of the school, how best to support young people with their education, and as an advocate for the use of community facilities such as libraries, museums and galleries. They could lead cultural visits after school, at weekends and in the holidays for those children who would not otherwise enjoy such experiences.

If the impact of such activity can be linked to an increase in literacy levels and cultural capital, then it is money well spent and will help to close the gap in a sustainable way.

Admittedly, this will involve some bravery – secondary schools will not know with absolute certainty which pre-school or primary-age pupils are likely to attend their school aged 11, but they can make an educated guess and, even if some Pupil Premium money is spent on young people who do not go on to attend that school, it is still money well spent within the school community and schools have a duty to look beyond their gates and be a force for good in society.

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• Matt Bromley is an education journalist and author with 18 years’ experience in teaching and leadership. His latest book, *How to Learn*, is available in paperback and various ebook formats. Find out more at www.bromleyeducation.co.uk and follow on Twitter @mj_bromley. To read Matt’s archive of best practice articles for SecEd, visit <http://bit.ly/1Uobmsl>



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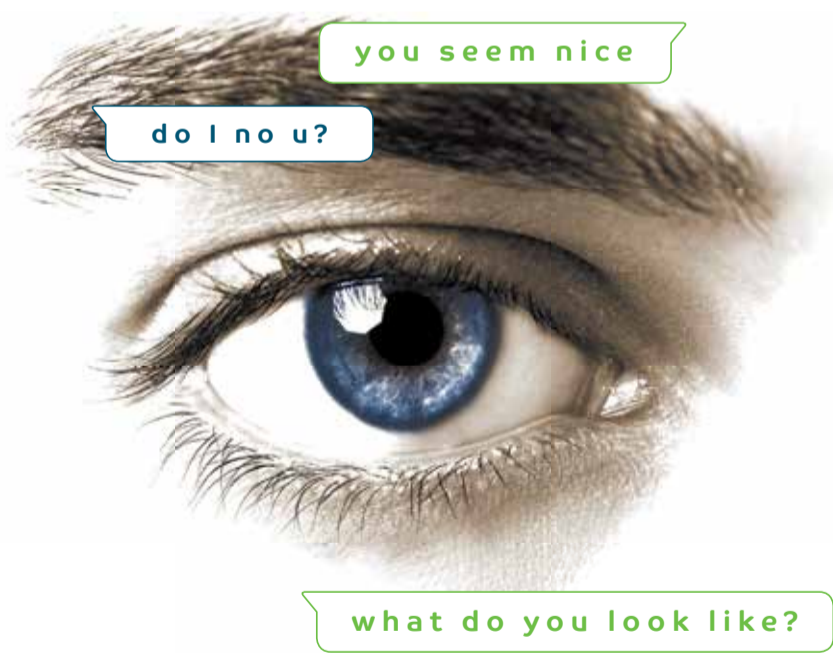
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Raising the university aspirations of high potential Pupil Premium students is a specific challenge for some schools. **Holly Henderson** discusses her approach to raising students' goals and aspirations



Raising university aspirations

Working with students from disadvantaged backgrounds can be challenging – particularly when you are encouraging them to pursue high aspirations and goals. Our Pupil Premium students make up 41.9 per cent of our cohort and many of these also fall into the category of “high attainers”.

Research, such as that by Nabil Khattab (2015), suggests that students with low expectations of themselves, and low aspirations, will achieve less in their educational lives. This is exactly what we want to avoid happening to our learners.

In an environment where they may never have seen anyone go on to university or certain careers, we needed to create an atmosphere of encouragement and lots of opportunities for success. In my role, I was tasked with developing higher aspirations and opportunities for our “high potential” learners.

High potential learners are students who are, academically, categorised as having the potential to achieve the highest grades. These students, although gifted in different ways, often lack confidence. This could be due to them having few goals and no drive, an inherent lack of confidence due to high expectations or very little resilience to failure.

These issues all have an impact on the attainment of high potential students, and of Pupil Premium students within that data group particularly.

As a school, we changed the term “gifted and talented” to “high potential” – a semantic shift. Using “potential” was instrumental in signposting that learners had the prospect of success, regardless of whether they are yet attaining high grades. It also helped to establish an ethos of high expectations of their futures, for them as well as for the other people in their lives.

As part of this “rebranding”, we knew the current gifted and talented programme had to be reformed and expanded. This would be done in several ways:

- 1 By giving students ample opportunity to experience as many extra-curricular activities as possible.
- 2 By giving them experiences they may not get in any other mainstream school.
- 3 By offering them ways in which to mould their future goals and aspirations.
- 4 By expanding the gifted and talented cohort to include learners who have the potential to attain high grades.

These four principles would drive our main

vision: our high-potential Pupil Premium students deserve the very same opportunities as our most able. In order to make this happen, we would have to engage the students with the opportunities, make sure they were funded where possible and engage parents with our efforts.

As Khattab (2015) suggests, parental encouragement can have a profound impact on student progress and this, coupled with our school programme, should develop the aspirations of Pupil Premium students.

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Parent information

Once we had clarified the vision and goals of the high potential initiative, we then had to formulate an action plan and involve all stakeholders. This first began with parent information evenings for high potential learners. We organised an exciting set of speakers, including subject leads who could talk about the elusive grade 9, speeches recorded by Matthew Syed and informative sessions by university outreach officers.

The goal was to provide opportunities for parents and students to understand what high potential means, and gain a clearer understanding of the university experience in order to encourage high aspirations. The events were well attended by parents and the university workshops garnered the most positive feedback.

Parents had lots of questions as well as concerns about us encouraging their children to attend university. We had one huge barrier to overcome in particular – so many students from areas of deprivation believe that university will be too expensive and will get their parents into debt. These fixed ideas put a cap on aspirations and cultivate an ethos of “settling” for less than what they had the potential to achieve.

At the end of the presentations, time was given to allow parents to ask questions so we could alleviate their concerns. As expected, the first question was about fees.

Parents expected the answer to be that the debt was crippling and that parents would be liable if their child couldn't pay. When their fears were laid to rest, attendees were much more receptive and lots of questions were asked about courses and where they could go.

This was particularly evident at the visit from the Oxford University outreach officer. Parents were convinced it was much too expensive for students to go to Oxford or Cambridge. When the officer explained how it may actually be cheaper, their moods and attitudes changed completely. It was exciting to see how quickly barriers could be broken down. These evenings have continued for parents. We are also considering other forms of engagement with parents, including career events and award ceremonies.

Enrichment

After informing parents about their child's abilities

and potential, we then set about the task of expanding our enrichment offering. The most important factor for me was that, wherever possible, these opportunities should be free. This would ensure that all learners could take advantage as opposed to just those who could just afford to go.

Therefore, we looked at funding and sought out new ways to fund our enrichment programmes. The funding from Pupil Premium is often utilised to create opportunities for high potential students to make rapid progress and access these opportunities, as well as many others for the whole Pupil Premium cohort. Further funding from Aimhigher West Midlands, which we managed to win a bid for this year, is also utilised for advancing our extra-

“ Lots of universities will offer programmes for young people that are completely free and these were some of our most successful enrichment activities ”

curricular provision for Pupil Premium students.

The programmes that incur a cost are allocated to the students who require the most help to achieve their aspirational targets. However, it might surprise you to hear that there are a lot of interventions and enrichment opportunities that are free. Lots of universities will offer programmes for young people that are completely free and these were some of our most successful enrichment activities.

Our students are now exposed to a wide range of activities and lots of different university experiences. This is vital to their progress. They need to see a range of possibilities, not just those in their local area.

Some enrichment clubs do cost the school money, yet they are so valuable that we feel they are worth

it. The Brilliant Club is one such example as it has been highly influential to the students involved. It is an example of one way we have used our Aimhigher and “high potential” funding.

The aim of the club is to give socially disadvantaged high potential learners the experience of university-style teaching and an opportunity to write a university essay. The tutor comes into school five times and teaches the students in small groups. They then produce the essay. It is a topic they have never experienced in school and something they are excited about learning.

The skills they have learned are things we are hoping we can ask them to pass on to other students in the school. Their confidence has grown and this has given them a real insight into what their university life could be like.

Many other trips and interventions have been put in place that offer motivational rewards for excellence in order to further develop their resilience and growth mindset. These experiences will be essential to them as they move forward into key stage 4, as well as life after secondary education.

Conclusion

Doing this project with our most able, and yet most vulnerable students, has taught me many things. First, I have learnt the value of parental engagement and how powerful a tool this can be. Second, I have seen the importance of addressing the question of funding, and now we have more students getting involved in trips and clubs than ever before. Third, I have also seen the benefit of our students having high aspirations and clear goals.

We still need to do a lot more work on this, but I do feel that our students are more motivated, are secure in their own abilities and keen to pursue new challenges. We are currently in the process of creating a sharing board for students, where they can express how they have shown grit with a piece of work to develop their resilience in the face of challenge.

Finally, we would also like to expand our careers programme to expose our students to a broad range of careers. This is starting in July this year with a careers fair when once again we will invite the parents.

Creating a culture of aspirational thinking is never going to be easy in a disadvantaged area, yet the high potential programme has provided a vehicle to do so. It has given high potential students choices

“ The aim of the club is to give socially disadvantaged high potential learners the experience of university-style teaching and an opportunity to write a university essay. The tutor comes into school and teaches the students in small groups ”

and options that they may never have considered before, and this will hopefully be an instigator for raising the progress, and overall attainment, of this core group of students. SecEd

• *Holly Henderson is the high potential coordinator and a teacher of English at Bristnall Hall Academy in the West Midlands. She is a current participant on the 2017 Teaching Leaders programme, run by Ambition School Leadership.*

Further information

- Aimhigher West Midlands: <http://aimhigherwm.ac.uk>
- The Brilliant Club: www.thebrilliantclub.org

Ambition School Leadership

Ambition School Leadership is a charity that runs leadership development programmes in England to help school leaders create more impact in schools that serve disadvantaged children and their communities. Visit www.ambitionschoolleadership.org.uk

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Focusing on Pupil Premium Plus

Pupil Premium Plus is a specific stream of Pupil Premium funding, but are schools spending it as intended and what impact is it having? **Julie Johnson** looks at the specific needs of looked after pupils, which often include attachment problems

In England and Wales the Department for Education (DfE) provides £1,900 (£2,300 in 2018/19) extra funding for any pupil that has been adopted, has a special guardianship order, or child arrangements order, and has been in local authority care for one day or more.

While under local authority care, the funding goes to the virtual school head, but once the orders have been made the funding goes direct to schools in quarterly instalments, beginning in the April following declaration in the January school census.

In its early consultation over changes to the National Funding Formula, the DfE stated: "Children's experiences prior to entering care have a long-lasting effect on their educational attainment. When children leave care, through for example adoption, it is unlikely that their educational needs will change significantly simply because their care status has changed."

"Recent school performance data shows that children who have left care significantly underperform compared to children who have never been in care. We believe the funding system should treat both children in care and those who have left care equally." (DfE, March 2016)

The question, therefore, is what are schools spending this funding on and what impact is it having?

Is Pupil Premium Plus simply added to the general pot without regard to how the needs of these disadvantaged children may be different to those receiving Pupil Premium due to their eligibility for free school meals?

Children with a background of trauma may have many barriers to learning and the Pupil Premium Plus

funding is designed to break these down so they can learn.

In November 2015, a report into children and attachment by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommended that: "Schools and other education providers should ensure that all staff who may come into contact with children and young people with attachment difficulties receive appropriate training on attachment difficulties."

Indeed, the first priority has to be quality training in the long-lasting effects of developmental trauma and attachment difficulties. These children have

So how is your school spending the Pupil Premium Plus funding? The rationale is to improve outcomes for these children – what does your school do and can you demonstrate that interventions are tailored and have a positive impact?

Maybe they need a quieter place to eat their lunch as the hall is too noisy and overstimulating for a child on high alert?

Maybe the child struggles with transitions and needs a key worker to support them and reassure them that their parents will return to collect them later.

“Is Pupil Premium Plus simply added to the general pot without regard to how the needs of these disadvantaged children may be different to those receiving Pupil Premium due to their eligibility for free school meals?”

experienced relationship trauma and the key to their healing is relationships. Medical needs are quite rightly met through training before a child starts in a class, but mental health concerns are not often considered as vital. The consequences of schools not understanding how the brain changes in traumatic circumstances and then using this information to better support these children will be far-reaching.

Could it be that they struggle to regulate, as their birth parent was unable to do that for them as a baby, and they need help to develop these skills, taught explicitly?

Perhaps they have sensory difficulties and need to have regular sensory input to calm their vestibular and proprioception senses, could the school provide equipment to meet those needs?

Many schools offer various therapies, such as play therapy, but are they ensuring the therapist is trained in developmental trauma? Is the child accessing other therapies outside of school through the Adoption Support Fund?

Schools are advised to liaise with parents as to the child's needs and discuss various interventions and it is good practice to regularly review the effectiveness of these interventions and then consider next steps.

School improvement partners and Ofsted need to be asking questions about how these Pupil Premium Plus interventions differ from the regular Pupil Premium activities and what impact they are having. Schools need to provide a Pupil Premium strategy that includes specific reference to this aspect of practice.

Millions of pounds are being spent, but where is the evidence that it is making a real difference to these children?

In *Settling to Learn* (2013), Louise Bomber said: "Do these children really need more access to study opportunities, better teaching, different reading schemes, more computers, more effective discipline?"

"What if they just needed access to you and me? A genuine relationship. Is that a possibility? What if it really wasn't any more complicated than that? What if the tool we had overlooked – ourselves – was the bridge into a world of possibilities, that a genuine relationship with us, perhaps acting as a buffer, could switch on the pupils' 'thinking brain' and integrate it with their 'emotional brain'?"

SecEd

• Julie Johnson is a teacher and attachment in schools trainer with *Square One Attachment*.

Further information

- Julie Johnson has produced a guide for schools with practical examples of how we might support children using the Pupil Premium Plus funding. Visit <http://squareoneattachment.co.uk/resources/>
- *Children's Attachment: Attachment in children and young people who are adopted from care, in care or at high risk of going into care*, NICE, November 2015: <http://bit.ly/2DogdXB>

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9.25-9.30	Welcome & introduction Pete Henshaw, editor SecEd & Headteacher Update			
9.30-10.45	KEYNOTE SESSION 1 CROSS-PHASE: Inspecting the Pupil Premium: Advice and guidance from Ofsted Peter Humphries, Senior Her Majesty's Inspector, Schools, West Midlands Region (Delegates are invited to submit questions in advance for this session via pete.henshaw@markallengroup.com)			
10.45-11.05	Refreshments & exhibition viewing			
11.05-12.05	KEYNOTE SESSION 2 A PRIMARY: Ofsted and the Pupil Premium: Lessons from experience Tony Draper, CEO, Lakes Academies Trust, Bletchley & former president of the NAHT B SECONDARY: Ofsted and the Pupil Premium: Lessons from experience Stephen Rollett, Inspections Specialist, ASCL			
12.15-1.05	WORKSHOP SESSION 1 A PRIMARY: Identifying and supporting the additional needs and SEN of Pupil Premium pupils Beccie Hawes, Head of Service, Rushall Inclusion Advisory Team, Rushall Primary School, West Midlands			
		1.05-1.55	Lunch and exhibition viewing	
		1.55-2.55	KEYNOTE SESSION 3 A KEYNOTE: CROSS-PHASE: How effective employer engagement can raise aspirations and outcomes for Pupil Premium students at both primary and secondary level Dr Elnaz Kashedpakdel, Head of Research, and Katy Hampshire, Director, Operations and Programmes, Education & Employers, London B KEYNOTE: SECONDARY: Pupil Premium innovation, improvement and inspection Helen Everitt, Deputy Headteacher, and Ryan Sallows, School Business Manager, Oriol High School, West Sussex (PP: 15%)	
		2.55-3.15	Refreshments & exhibition viewing	
		3.15-4.05	WORKSHOP SESSION 2 A PRIMARY (INFANTS): Parental Engagement and the Pupil Premium in Reception & Key Stage 1 Paul Jordan, Headteacher, and Claire Smith, Deputy Headteacher, Thames View Infants, Barking, East London (PP: 46%) B PRIMARY: Parental engagement to support Pupil Premium families Fiona Sadler, Pastoral Lead & Parent Support Advisor, Catton Grove Primary School, Norwich (PP: 45%) C SECONDARY: Identifying and tackling speech, language and communication needs to raise Pupil Premium outcomes Carmen De Pablo López, Head of Inclusion, and Marina Breed, Language Support Centre Manager, Tor Bridge High, Plymouth (PP: 32%) D SECONDARY: From rapid to sustained improvement: A Pupil Premium journey moving from short to long-term planning Dan Roberts, Deputy Headteacher, Coleridge Community College, Cambridge (PP: 40%) E SECONDARY: Mental health: Coping strategies to help Pupil Premium students thrive in key stages 4 and 5 Ruth Golding, Head of School & Plymouth Secondary Mental Health Lead, Tor Bridge High, Plymouth (PP: 32%)	
		4.05	Close of conference	

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There is a wealth of research showing what can work with the Pupil Premium.

Steve Burnage offers us five general approaches and eight targeted interventions

The Pupil Premium is a valuable and accountable resource to enable schools and academies across the UK support those learners who struggle to make progress. For schools to make best use of this funding, it is important that:

- Interventions are precisely targeted with clear intervention strategies to support learning and progress.
- The impact of interventions is clearly monitored, and changes are made when interventions are proven to be ineffective.

Of course, we mustn't overlook that effective interventions we put in place for our targeted learners will also be effective for all learners. In other words, the interventions we are going to explore in this article are also excellent good practice to support outstanding learning, teaching and progress across any school or group of pupils.

Five general interventions

Although the interventions below are very generic, encouraging all those that lead learning in a school to adopt these simple strategies can make a significant difference to all learners, especially those in receipt of Pupil Premium. The five are:

Know your Pupil Premium learners: Find out how your Pupil Premium learners prefer to learn and plan accordingly; taking in their hobbies and interests, their social context and academic background.

Think about your learning environment: Think carefully about where Pupil Premium learners are sitting and who they are sitting next to. Highlight Pupil Premium learners on all your seating plans. Use the reflective and predictive data you have on your Pupil Premium learners to identify the specific support they need to make progress.

Plan your behaviour management strategies: Pupil Premium learners respond best to a positive learning environment so meet and greet learners at the door to welcome them into the classroom. Develop mutually respectful relationships with Pupil Premium learners and use praise and rewards for positive contributions, good work, exceeding expectations.

Think carefully about where Pupil Premium learners are sitting and who they are sitting next to. Highlight Pupil Premium learners on all your seating plans

Target Pupil Premium learners for support: Approach Pupil Premium learners first to see if they understand the task set or need support to complete it. Target Pupil Premium learners for questioning and ask them to respond in full sentences. Use Bloom's Taxonomy to extend and stretch their answers. Ensure Pupil Premium learners know exactly where they are working at or what are aiming for in the lesson. Continually check the progress of Pupil Premium learners throughout the lesson. Make sure they know their current attainment, their target attainment and what they need to do to improve.

Remove barriers to learning: Provide equipment and resources where necessary along with revision and homework materials.

Eight targeted interventions

Moving on from generic interventions, there are specific areas of intervention that can be particularly effective...

1, Feedback

By which we mean effective and timely teacher-student feedback. Providing effective feedback is not difficult

General and targeted interventions



since it is just giving information to the learner and/or the teacher about the learner's performance relative to learning goals. Feedback redirects the learner to better achieve their goals and can be verbal, written, or can be given through tests or by means of ICT.

Providing effective feedback is challenging but we can best support Pupil Premium students by providing feedback at the right time, with a specific purpose and desired outcome. In addition, by ensuring feedback is specific, accurate and clear, we model correct work/processes where possible and appropriate, and we provide opportunities for learners to make improvements following feedback. We can ensure that our Pupil Premium learners have a clear understanding of where they are, where they need to be and possible routes to get there.

2, Peer support/feedback

When learners are encouraged to work in pairs or small groups to provide each other with explicit teaching support and feedback, learners take on more responsibility for aspects of teaching and for evaluating their success.

We need to ensure that activities are sufficiently challenging so learners can benefit from peer support but not too difficult that they cannot succeed without a teacher's support. Setting up ground rules for peer activities in advance will ensure learners stay on task and are focused on the activity at hand. Reviewing challenges and successes of the peer work will ensure it has a positive impact upon learners' progress.

3, Independent learning

Learning strategies (sometimes known as "learning to learn" strategies) are teaching approaches which make learners think about learning more explicitly and take ownership of their learning by teaching learners specific strategies to set goals, monitor and evaluate their own learning.

These strategies are more effectively learned when they are taught, modelled and applied in a range of contexts by teaching learners explicit strategies to plan, monitor and to evaluate their learning, and giving them opportunities to use them with support and then independently.

The key is encouraging and supporting learners to identify the steps they need to be aware of as they go through a task to keep it on track. Modelling and explaining the strategies being taught so that learners understand what they are learning also helps to develop this culture of independent learning for our Pupil Premium students.

4, Differentiation

There are three main categories of differentiation:

- Differentiation by task, which involves setting different tasks for learners of different abilities.
- Differentiation by support, which means giving more help to certain learners within the group.
- Differentiation by outcome, which involves setting open-ended tasks and allowing pupil response at different levels.

If we consider the most advanced skills, concepts and facts that the most able student in the class will just manage to get and then move on to consider the skills,

concepts and facts that the least able student in the class will just manage to get with appropriate support, we can then ensure the middle ground is covered to stretch the average student in the class.

5, Timely interventions

Using strategies and methods used to narrow the gap between the identified target group and individuals to ensure all learners attain well and make the expected levels of progress is central to our work with Pupil Premium learners. This should be both within and beyond the classroom and should be timely and appropriate to the specific skills gaps and needs of individual learners. It can help to think of intervention in three stages.

Stage 1

- The effective inclusion of all children in high-quality teaching and learning.
- A nurturing environment with relevant, tailored and differentiated opportunities for learning.
- Scaffolding of activities and modelling of exemplar work and responses.
- Using practical activities and experiential learning.
- Opportunities for learners to transfer/generalise their learning in different contexts and between different subjects.
- Opportunities for revision and over learning.
- Group work with learners of the same ability and of differing abilities.
- Changing direction and reshaping tasks to enhance pupil progress and understanding.

Stage 2

- Additional time-limited provision in the form of small-group intervention outside the normal classroom.
- Interventions for learners who can be expected to "catch-up" with their peers as a result of the intervention.

Stage 3

- Specific targeted interventions for identified learners outside the classroom.
- Additional time-limited intervention and provision to enhance the progress of identified children where stages 1 and 2 are not, on their own, having the desired effect.
- Intensely focused teaching activities which tackle fundamental gaps in skills, knowledge and understanding which are preventing progress.
- Conducted on a one-to-one basis if the teacher does not expect learners to make the expected progress in a group situation.

6, One-to-one interventions

One-to-one interventions where a Pupil Premium learner is removed from their class and given intensive support through short, regular sessions (about 30 minutes, three to five times a week) over a set period (six to 12 weeks) can often result in optimum impact.

For one-to-one interventions to have maximum impact, we need to ensure that learners are effectively selected, the intervention is in addition to high-quality whole-class teaching, and time is given to allow the

student to apply their new knowledge and skills to learning activities.

For the Pupil Premium learner to have some ownership of the intervention, it is important that the planned outcomes are communicated to the learner and evaluated with the learner. We should ensure we involve the learner in self-assessment and use the celebration of success to help build positive and trusting relationships.

7, Collaborative learning

Collaborative or cooperative learning, where learners work together in a group small enough for everyone to participate on a collective task that has been clearly assigned, works well to support Pupil Premium learners if we ensure support is in place for learners to practise working together.

We can do this by setting out and agreeing ground rules for group work and collaborative tasks, appointing a chair or "leader" for tasks to ensure learners are on task and focused, and designing tasks carefully so that working together is effective and efficient.

Using competition between groups to support and engage can work particularly well with boy learners, as can encouraging Pupil Premium boys to talk and articulate their thinking in collaborative tasks.

8, Outside the classroom

On average, the impact of homework on learning is consistently positive (leading to on average five months' additional progress). There is also some evidence that homework is most effective when used as a short and focused intervention (e.g. in the form of a project or specific target connected with an element of learning) and when it is an integral part of learning, rather than an add-on.

Making the purpose of homework explicit to learners and ensuring that the focus is upon the quality of homework and not necessarily the quantity will also increase its effectiveness in supporting Pupil Premium learners, as will providing feedback on homework that is specific and timely.

Monitoring and evaluation

Teachers need to be able to determine the effect of any change in their practice. In this case, Ofsted will expect to see the impact that the initiatives, funded by the Pupil Premium, have had on attainment. Although the primary driver for Pupil Premium interventions is raising the attainment and aspiration of our students, we still need to be able to evidence impact through some form of a "before and after measure", or a pre and post-test.

Using suitable evaluation strategies, teachers will have the evidence to determine which practices, policies and interventions are effective in their own contexts. This will be invaluable to inform future practice, including the use of the Pupil Premium.

• Steve Burnage has experience leading challenging inner city and urban secondary schools. He now works as a freelance trainer, consultant and author for staff development, strategic development, performance management and coaching and mentoring. Visit www.simplyinset.co.uk and read his previous articles for SecEd, including his previous CPD workshop overviews, at <http://bit.ly/2u1KW9e>

Some schools are using the Pupil Premium to plug holes in their general funding.

John Dabell warns against this approach and offers 25 low-cost ways to spend the Pupil Premium and make maximum impact

Feeling the pinch, hard up and squeezed within an inch of their lives, schools have been pushed to the absolute limits of their finances. Roughly, £2.8 billion has been cut from school budgets in real terms since 2015, with the average cut to secondary schools standing at a whopping £185,200.

The *Breaking Point* report from the National Association of Head Teachers (January 2017) found that 80 per cent of school leaders said they had no idea how to balance their budgets and economists at the Institute for Fiscal Studies have warned that around 1,000 schools could face a seven per cent budget cut after 2019/20.

Stealing the Pupil Premium

What is becoming clear is that the Pupil Premium pot is being raided by some schools to help them stay on the right side of their budget sheets.

The Sutton Trust surveyed 1,361 teachers in its annual teacher polling in 2017 and found that a third of school heads said they were “using funding for poorer pupils to plug gaps” in their school’s budget.

Can anyone honestly say they are surprised by this? There has been mounting evidence for a few years that the Pupil Premium isn’t being used as intended. Many, including myself, would suspect the figure above to be, in reality, much higher.

It is clear that headteachers have felt forced to do something that is morally out of order, but would they see their schools go under?



Schools enjoy incredible self-government when it comes to Pupil Premium spending but, even if there seems little choice, plundering this funding is a dangerous game to play. This is because if the progress and attainment of Pupil Premium pupils suffers nationally then from 2020 schools might have to wave goodbye to any extra funding.

The government has pledged to keep the £2.5 billion Pupil Premium throughout this Parliament, but there is already discussion about whether the funding should be rolled into the National Funding Formula

from 2020. If progress in closing the gap is not made, then who knows what might happen to this money.

Furthermore, there are clear consequences in terms of Ofsted outcomes and accountability if your Pupil Premium practice is not up to scratch.

Priorities for Pupil Premium

So what do we need in this climate of tight budgets? Low-cost strategies are a must-have for schools and the good news is that the ever-increasing evidence-base shows us that there are steps schools can take that don’t cost the earth.

National reviews of effective practice have created significant evidence of what works best – not least the Education Endowment Foundation’s evidence summaries and Teaching and Learning Toolkit.

The Sutton Trust poll mentioned earlier found a mixed picture in terms of what schools were doing. In terms of priorities for Pupil Premium funding, most teachers cited early intervention schemes (27 per cent), followed by one-to-one tuition (12 per cent) and teaching assistants (12 per cent). Of greatest concern, however, was that almost a fifth (17 per cent) of respondents said they didn’t know what their school’s main priority was.

Former Pupil Premium champion Sir John Dunford recognises the enormous pressures schools are under and he recommends that they adopt high-impact strategies for maintaining the momentum of school improvement. Sir John’s 25 top low-cost strategies are as follows:

- 1 An ethos of attainment for all pupils – high aspirations and expectations for all.
- 2 An unerring focus on high-quality teaching.
- 3 Complete, 100 per cent buy-in from all staff, with all staff conveying positive and aspirational messages to disadvantaged pupils.
- 4 Identifying the main barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils.
- 5 Frequently monitoring the progress of every disadvantaged pupil.
- 6 When a pupil’s progress slows, putting interventions in place rapidly.
- 7 Deploying the best staff to support disadvantaged pupils – developing the skills of existing teachers and teaching assistants.
- 8 Collecting, analysing and using data relating to individual pupils and groups.
- 9 Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching assistants and, if necessary, improving this through training and better deployment.
- 10 Using evidence (especially the Teaching and Learning Toolkit) to decide on which strategies are likely to be most effective in overcoming the barriers to learning of disadvantaged pupils. High-impact, low-cost strategies include the following seven strands (with links to the Teaching and Learning Toolkit evidence):
 - 11 Feedback (<http://bit.ly/2GqNPqX>).
 - 12 Meta-cognition (<http://bit.ly/2FAZ2b0>).
 - 13 Mastery learning (<http://bit.ly/2FzISPb>).
 - 14 Reading comprehension (<http://bit.ly/2FOEqvr>).
 - 15 Collaborative learning (<http://bit.ly/2pgw9pU>).
 - 16 Oracy interventions (<http://bit.ly/2HyTpGO>).
 - 17 Peer tutoring (<http://bit.ly/2paVIOo>).
- 18 Replacing some one-to-one support with small group work.
- 19 Evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and making adjustments as necessary.

20 Agreeing that when staff mark a set of books, they mark the books of disadvantaged pupils first.

21 In-depth training for all staff on chosen strategies.

22 Teachers knowing which pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium.

23 Using performance management to reinforce the importance of Pupil Premium impact.

24 Training governors on Pupil Premium.

25 Having a senior leader in charge of Pupil Premium spending and impact.

So, how many of these recommendations are you following? There is a clear movement towards evidence-based interventions and strategies, which is a significant change in how schools approach Pupil Premium. All schools should be using proven intervention strategies rather than sticking with well-worn approaches or hunches.

Mind the Gap

The Education Policy Institute’s (EPI) 2017 *Closing the Gap?* report found that the most disadvantaged pupils in England are now on average more than two full years of learning behind non-disadvantaged pupils by the end of secondary school. Social mobility is stagnating or even worsening in some areas.

The staggering news from the EPI is that: “At the current rate of progress it would take a full 50 years to reach an equitable education system where disadvantaged pupils did not fall behind their peers during formal education to age 16.”

The EPI report notes that the disadvantage gap is nothing new and has been engrained in our education system for generations. What is making the difference though in places where the gaps are smaller is that the money intended for disadvantaged pupils is actually going to them and the money is being spent on high-impact and low-cost, evidence-based strategies with a sustained focus on improving the life chances on the least fortunate pupils in our society.

Outcomes for economically disadvantaged pupils are central to our education debate but as executive director at the EPI, Natalie Perera, is right to point out, this isn’t a binary world: “It’s not just economically disadvantaged children whom the system often fails.

“There are thousands of others, up and down the country, whose potential is being stemmed somewhere between the ages of five and 16 for a multitude of reasons. We need to keep asking ourselves why.”

SecEd

• *John Dabell is a teacher, teacher trainer and writer. He has been teaching for 20 years and is the author of 10 books. He also trained as an Ofsted inspector. Visit www.johndabell.co.uk and read his previous best practice articles for SecEd via <http://bit.ly/2gBiaXv>*

Further information

- Annual Sutton Trust teacher and school leader polling data (2017): <http://bit.ly/2pfB2iC>
- To access the Education Endowment Foundation’s various toolkits, including the Teaching and Learning Toolkit, visit <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/>
- *Closing the Gap?* Education Policy Institute, August 2017: <https://epi.org.uk/report/closing-the-gap/>



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Batter them with kindness

I'M WITH a low stream 9th year, giving back homework. I get to Daisy Plum, a painfully shy and lonely pupil, who badly lacks confidence – a situation that is not improved by having been labelled Level 3 and plummeting for the last three years.

It causes her to be mighty glum. It would cause you to be mighty glum. It's not much fun being called rubbish for so long.

Daisy spends most of her time failing something or other. She's just another poor, comprehensively under-nourished child. Still, she's done her homework, written a poem about her recently deceased cat Dolly. It displays rare effort and much care. There are some lovely illustrations in the margins. The writing is pretty sentimental and banal, but so what? It's a start. She's taken a risk and this is some kind of breakthrough.

"I really enjoyed this," I say, "it's a lovely piece."

Daisy hides her face with her fingers. She starts to weep.

Why? The death of Dolly?

No. She simply can't cope with the compliment.

Her face is smudged with tears.

"No-one ever said I was good at writing."

"Well, it's really good."

"No-one ever said I was any good at anything."

This isn't self-pity, just a statement of fact. No-one has done. Someone should be lynched.

I correct the spellings, type it up and put it on this week's wall of fame. She's secretly dead chuffed.

Most of Daisy's school life passes unremarked. She slips under the teacher's radar. She's not melodramatically dysfunctional, not floridly bonkers enough for the school shrink. She lives a life of quiet desperation, like so many



of our pupils in these bleak times. There are so many Daisies. Attention must be paid. Which is why, of course, Pupil Premium interventions are so essential. How can teachers be cognisant of all their pupils' social, mental and emotional health problems? They can have 30 children from any class, creed, race, tribe, war zone and religion, from high rent, low rent, no rent homes, hostels, hotels, canal barges, Kings Hell mansions and gated palaces.

The teacher can't possibly be aware of all the damage out there – the child who's too tired, too bruised, too hungry, too angry, too drugged, too bored or who works all hours in the family shop, who must take care of his little brothers and sisters, or is running drugs or is an undiscovered dyslexic, a disguised bulimic, a secret anorexic or is carrying a knife or getting groomed or even radicalised.

It goes on. Meanwhile Daisy drifts through school. She needs what a headteacher has recently said all children need – simply to be "battered with kindness".

• Ian Whitwham is a former inner city London teacher.

Gambling aware



THE DEMOS think-tank has been piloting lessons in secondary schools to prevent gambling-related harms among school-age children and resources are now available.

Around 25,000 children in the UK are currently classed as problem gamblers, and around two million adults are classed as at-risk of developing a problem.

The most common form of gambling among pupils surveyed for the project was using money to place bets. This was followed by playing fruit machines and playing cards for money.

For the past two years, Demos, supported by GambleAware, has developed and tested a pilot education programme to teach children about the risks of gambling, and where to go for help and support.

The four lessons are designed to build up the resilience of teenagers to the tactics that gambling companies use to encourage people to gamble.

Schools can now access the lessons via the GambleAware website.

<http://bit.ly/2GwsSL2>

GDPR clarification

IN A recent article on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that comes into force on May 25 (*The countdown continues*, *SecEd*, March 8, 2018), we stated that schools "can't appoint a member of staff" to become their Data Protection Officer (DPO).

However, the Information Commissioner's Office has told *SecEd* that there is no reason why a DPO cannot know the staff or pupils in the school – i.e. why the DPO cannot be a member of school staff.

According to the ICO, what would prevent a member of staff taking on the DPO role are if they didn't have enough experience or knowledge of data protection law, if they didn't understand how data in the school was used, or if their professional duties are not compatible with the duties of the DPO and lead to a "conflict of interests".

In response, article author Al Kingsley still feels there is "too much grey area". He added: "How are schools supposed to evaluate what constitutes a 'conflict of interest'? How can individuals know if their professional duties are not compatible with that of a DPO?"

The ICO has issued general guidance about the DPO role and has education-specific pages on its website. These links have been added to the online version of the article, which has now been updated.

<http://bit.ly/2p9ih14>

Fake News



THE BBC has launched BBC iReporter, an online interactive game to help young people identify "fake news". The game (pictured), developed by Aardman, allows players to experience being a journalist facing the fast-paced pressures behind covering a breaking news story, while having to maintain accuracy and speed, and navigating the various pitfalls thrown up by potential "fake news" elements. The game is designed for 11 to 18-year-olds. It is part of the BBC School Report programme.

www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport

Leaders survey

OUTSTANDING LEADERS Partnership has launched its first annual school leadership challenges survey, supported by Best Practice Network and the University of Chester. The survey aims to provide a detailed insight into the issues facing those in charge of schools. It includes questions on the challenges faced by school leaders and how these affect wellbeing, as well as questions on the CPD and support needs of leaders, workload and resilience. The survey deadline is April 16.

<http://bit.ly/2HCWpSF>

Cyber-bullying



THE EMERGENCE of new digital technologies and online communications has increased accessibility to the online world. However, this accessibility means that young people are vulnerable to online risks and dangers.

The Department of Psychology at Nottingham Trent University is asking school staff to complete a 20-minute survey looking at their perceptions and response towards cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying is a public health concern that has detrimental consequences to those involved in schools. This includes a deterioration in academic achievement and attainment.

The anonymity and accessibility associated with cyber-bullying causes difficulty in the identification and management of this issue in the school and at home.

While teachers, parents and young people have a responsibility to address cyber-bullying, it is important to understand teachers' perceptions and response to the phenomena in order to provide effective recommendations to manage the issue.

The survey findings would provide an important insight and will be used to direct future recommendations and anti-cyber-bullying initiatives.

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