The Pupil Premium
A quick guide to maximising the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils
The pupil premium is additional funding to help schools close the attainment gap between children from low-income and other disadvantaged families and their peers. It was introduced in April 2011 to raise the attainment of 1.8 million disadvantaged pupils.

The Government believes that the pupil premium is the best way to address the current inequalities between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers.

The attainment gap is substantial. The Department for Education (DfE) Statistical First Release, January 2013 showed that:

- 36% of pupils eligible for FSM achieved five good GCSE grades compared with 63% of other pupils
- 66% of pupils eligible for FSM achieved the expected levels in both English and maths by the end of primary school, compared with 83% of other pupils.

Funding

The total funding available through the pupil premium has risen from £625 million in 2011–12 to £1,875 billion in 2013–14, with a further rise to at least £2.5 billion in 2014–15. It is not ringfenced.
The actual amounts allocated per eligible pupil can be found at www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/a00218077/funding-settlement-2013-14/

Who is eligible?

Schools will receive funding for those pupils aged five to 16 within Reception to Year 11:
- who are eligible for FSM, or have been eligible at any time over the last six years (known as ‘Ever 6 FSM’)
- who are in care and have been ‘looked after’ continuously for more than six months. From April 2014, the eligibility criteria for the pupil premium for looked-after children will change. Funding will commence as soon as children enter the care system, and will also be available for those adopted from care or who leave care under a special guardianship or residence order
- whose parents are serving in the armed forces.

Be sure to check the latest guidance from the Department for Education in case the eligibility criteria change.

Disadvantaged groups

The pupil premium is aimed specifically at pupils eligible for FSM and should not be used directly to support other disadvantaged groups. However, some pupils from other disadvantaged groups will also be eligible for FSM. For example, there is an established link between SEN and deprivation and it is estimated that 30% of pupils with SEN will benefit from the pupil premium.

On the other hand, some pupils eligible for FSM will be achieving in accordance with age expectations or will be high achievers. The pupil premium must still be used to benefit these pupils.

While support must be targeted at pupils eligible for the pupil premium, some provision will inevitably benefit other pupils. For example, improving
the feedback pupils receive on their performance will benefit all pupils.

Which schools receive the pupil premium?

The pupil premium follows eligible pupils and so can be received by:
- maintained mainstream schools
- academies
- maintained special schools
- non-maintained special schools
- independent schools
- children whose education is not in school
- hospital schools
- pupil referral units
- further education colleges that admit 14 and 15 year olds.
In most cases, the pupil premium is paid directly to schools, allocated to them for every child who receives FSM. It is paid to academies via the Education Funding Agency.

For pupils from low-income families in non-mainstream settings, the local authority decides how to allocate the pupil premium. The local authority must consult non-mainstream settings about how the premium for these pupils should be used. Local authorities are responsible for looked-after children and make payments to schools and academies where an eligible looked-after child is on roll.
How can the pupil premium be spent?

Schools are expected to use their pupil premium funding to:
- raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils
- close the attainment gap between eligible pupils and their peers.

The Government believes that headteachers and school leaders should decide how to use the pupil premium to meet the particular needs of their disadvantaged pupils, but they will be held accountable for the way the money is spent and the impact it has had. Accountability and self-review are looked at in more detail later in this guide.

Ofsted investigation into how effectively schools use the pupil premium

In 2012, Ofsted surveyed 262 schools to identify how schools were using the pupil premium. In its 2012 report, *How schools are using the Pupil Premium funding to raise achievement for disadvantaged pupils*, Ofsted expressed a number of concerns about the way in which schools were spending the money:
- Only one in ten school leaders said that the pupil premium had changed the way they supported disadvantaged pupils.
- It was often used to maintain or enhance existing provision and schools were not disaggregating it from their main budgets.
- Nearly half of the schools used the pupil premium to fund new or existing teaching assistants (TAs), and over one quarter to fund new or existing teachers.
- In some schools, funding was not focused on the needs of eligible pupils.

- There was little evidence of a strong focus on pupil premium by governors or management committees.

From this, Ofsted made the following recommendations:
- School leaders and governors should separate pupil premium funding from mainstream budgets.
- School leaders and governing bodies should evaluate the impact of their pupil premium and spend it in ways that have an impact on the achievement of eligible pupils.
- Schools should encourage parents and carers to apply for FSM when they meet the eligibility criteria.
- Ofsted should evaluate the use of pupil premium funding in relation to the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
Making a difference

1 Identify the attainment gaps in your school

There are several tools that can help you identify the attainment gaps in your school between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers, and these include:

- The School Data Dashboard – www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/statistics/school-data-dashboard/ Data can be filtered to show the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils (ie those eligible for the pupil premium) and other pupils.
- The Pupil Premium: Analysis and challenge tools for schools – www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/pupil-premium-analysis-and-challenge-tools-for-schools/ This document contains a series of tools that you can use to help you analyse where there are gaps in achievement between pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who are not, and to plan the action you need to take.

Knowing the attainment gap between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and those who are not provides a baseline from which you can measure the impact of the way you are using pupil premium to narrow that gap.

Nasen’s quick guide, Tracking Progress and Managing Provision, gives more detailed advice about data tracking and managing provision.
2 Know your pupils

You need to know which pupils in your school are eligible for pupil premium (you will need to consult government guidance for the precise eligibility criteria as these may change year on year):

- Those eligible for FSM – is every pupil in your school who is eligible for FSM registered as such? You may need to encourage eligible parents to apply for free school meals. Make sure they are aware of the potential for the school to receive additional funding and of the impact this could have.
- Children in care.
- Children whose parents are in the armed forces.

Once you have identified pupils eligible for the pupil premium, gather data and other evidence to identify their strengths and vulnerabilities, including data/evidence on:

- academic attainment to identify whether pupils are achieving at a level above expectations, achieving in certain areas or across the board, achieving in line with expectations or underachieving
- attendance, behaviour and exclusions
- personal and social development
- the level of parental involvement.

Analysing school progress data and other evidence will help you identify more precisely where progress needs to improve for pupils who are underachieving, the factors that may be hindering that progress and where and what kind of extra support is needed.
For those performing in line with or above pupils who do not attract the pupil premium, you will need to consider actions that will:

- raise attainment further, for example through whole-school initiatives
- raise aspirations, for example by visits to universities or further education colleges
- extend opportunities, for example by funding extra-curricular clubs, music tuition or residential visits
- ensure, when appropriate, that pupils are identified as ‘gifted and talented’.

3 Plan to close the gaps

Identify what works

Schools are free to use the pupil premium to fund approaches that they know will work to improve pupils’ attainment. Many different approaches are being taken. For example, recommendations arising from the headteachers’ consultation on the pupil premium included:

- employing additional qualified and well-trained teachers
- creating smaller classes to enable more personalised learning
- paying existing high-quality teachers more to work with the most complex and vulnerable pupils
- increasing the number of highly skilled teachers to model good practice in working with disadvantaged pupils
- funding extra-curricular activities, such as sports coaching, music tuition, residential trips and other enrichment activities
- employing additional high-quality support staff, such as learning mentors and higher level teaching assistants, with specific roles
- extending the school day so a more extensive range of after-school activities can be made available
- purchasing additional ICT and multimedia resources to extend support and enhance learning in school and at home
- establishing nurture groups, breakfast clubs and so on
- providing therapeutic interventions for pupils with emotional needs
- pooling money with other schools to purchase specialist support from practitioners in health, social care, education or the voluntary and
community sector to undertake intensive work with pupils and families

- enhancing the school’s pastoral system, for example providing professional counselling or academic coaching and mentoring for identified pupils
- enhancing pupil voice, choice and participation through pupil-led action research into what works best in raising aspirations and achievement.

There is, at present, little robust, evidence-based practice and research to indicate what approaches work best, but you may find the following useful in helping you to decide what will work best for your pupils:

- Evidence from the Sutton Trust EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit – http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/ This summarises educational research and provides guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The team, from Durham University, ranked interventions in terms of their impact (using months of progress gained) and then plotted them against cost per pupil to give an indication of value for money. Some of the results are set out and summarised on the next two pages, but a full analysis for these and other approaches can be found on the website.
**Approaches that work**

**Feedback**
Research indicates that providing pupils with feedback on their performance can be very effective when it:
- is specific, accurate and clear
- compares what a learner is doing correctly now with what they have done incorrectly before
- is challenging but also supports further effort
- provides specific guidance on how to improve, not just telling pupils when they are wrong
- is supported with effective professional development for teachers.

Feedback can come from other peers as well as adults.

**Independent learning and self-regulation**
Teaching older and lower-achieving pupils strategies to motivate themselves and plan and monitor their own learning can be highly effective in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. It is usually more effective in small groups so learners can support each other and make their thinking explicit through discussion. To be successful, this approach requires careful implementation. Pupils must be taught strategies explicitly and be given opportunities to use them with support before being asked to work independently.

**Peer tutoring**
Peer tutoring encompasses a range of approaches in which learners work in pairs or small groups to provide each other with explicit teaching support. The approach is effective when it supplements or enhances day-to-day teaching, rather than replaces it. There are benefits for both tutors and tutees. Short, intensive periods of tutoring over four to ten weeks are likely to be more effective than longer, more routine sessions.

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**The Sutton Trust EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches that work (high impact/low cost)</th>
<th>Approaches that work (medium impact/medium cost)</th>
<th>Approaches that have little impact (variable costs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback&lt;br&gt;Independent learning and self-regulation&lt;br&gt;Peer tutoring&lt;br&gt;Homework</td>
<td>Learning styles&lt;br&gt;Phonics&lt;br&gt;Individualised learning&lt;br&gt;Summer schools&lt;br&gt;Parental involvement&lt;br&gt;ICT&lt;br&gt;One-to-one tutoring&lt;br&gt;Early years intervention</td>
<td>Ability grouping&lt;br&gt;Performance pay&lt;br&gt;After-school tuition&lt;br&gt;Smaller classes&lt;br&gt;Support from teaching assistants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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10 • www.nasen.org.uk
**Phonics**
The evidence suggests that phonics can be an important component in supporting the development of early reading skills, particularly for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, it is also important that pupils make progress in all aspects of reading, including vocabulary development, comprehension and spelling, which should be taught separately and explicitly.

**Parental involvement**
Activities that involve parents in supporting their children’s learning can be effective, although such initiatives can be difficult to sustain. Schools can encourage parental involvement through creating a welcoming environment, listening to parents and running workshops to help parents develop the skills to support children at home.

**ICT**
Investing in digital technologies to support learning can be effective, particularly if it supplements rather than replaces other approaches.

**One-to-one tutoring**
Evidence indicates that in reading and mathematics, one-to-one tuition can enable learners to catch up with their peers. Short, regular sessions over a set period of time appear to be most effective. However, there is no strong evidence that individual tuition is better than paired or intensive small group tuition, and some evidence that pairs make better progress than individual pupils. Tuition is most effective when it supplements rather than replaces day-to-day teaching.

**Early years intervention**
Research indicates that high-quality early years provision, with a strong educational focus and activities which support early reading and number concepts, is beneficial for disadvantaged children.
Support from TAs

Ofsted found that the most common use of the pupil premium was in employing additional TAs. However, worryingly, research from the University of London’s Institute of Education (IoE), identified that the more support pupils received from a TA, the less progress they made. It suggested that:

- pupils who found learning most difficult were spending least time with a teacher
- TAs were more likely to be focused on completing tasks than on promoting thinking and understanding
- 75% of TAs did not have planning and feedback time with teachers.

The research did indicate, however, that using well-trained TAs on small group literacy and maths intervention programmes demonstrated a significant impact – it could almost double the rate of progress.

You can hear one of the IoE researchers, Rob Webster, summarising the research and its findings on nasen’s YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3E-a7H1fan0&feature=c4-overview-l&list=PLo71rs7uZTvUe8WJ_SRJq7LOjOyCw7trm/

Strategies to improve the impact of TAs include:

- deploying TAs to deliver specified interventions rather than to provide unspecfied, in-class, individual support
- allocating time for teachers and TAs to plan together
- tracking the impact of TA support or interventions led by TAs against the attainment/achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium.

Match strategies and interventions to current learning needs

Consider the particular needs of the pupils in your school who attract the

- Ofsted’s 2013 report, *The Pupil Premium: how schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement*. In the autumn term 2012, Ofsted visited 68 primary and secondary schools to find out how far pupil premium funding was being used effectively to maximise achievement. The subsequent report draws together some of the effective practice that inspectors observed. You can read the full report at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/pupil-premium-how-schools-are-spending-funding-successfully-maximise-achievement/ It contains some useful case studies showing how schools in a range of different circumstances maximised the impact of their pupil premium spending.

pupil premium and agree the best action for individuals and groups. Be clear about what will be done and why you think it will work. As well as evidence from national research and inspection, you should draw on your school’s analysis of progress data and evaluated provision mapping to support the decisions you make. Remember, in order to close attainment gaps, you will need to help some pupils to make accelerated progress.

**Set success criteria**
Identify how you will know if particular approaches and interventions have been successful – what evidence will you need within what timescale?

**Ensure accountability and quality assurance**
Establish who is leading on each approach/intervention and who is accountable for the progress that individuals and groups make. Make sure that staff leading pupil premium initiatives are:
- well briefed
- well trained
- highly skilled.

Decide how the quality of delivery of your chosen strategies or interventions will be monitored. Inform parents and involve them, where appropriate, in supporting their child’s progress at home.
4 Evaluate impact

Maximising the impact of the pupil premium will involve using effective assessment and tracking procedures to identify the progress made by individuals and groups attracting the funding. To evaluate the impact of strategies or interventions you will need to:

- ensure that your school data tracking and provision management systems allow you to identify individuals and groups attracting pupil premium
- monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils in relation to pupil premium-funded strategies and initiatives through regular progress review meetings
- intervene quickly where any strategy or intervention fails to show impact – analyse attainment and other relevant data carefully and take action to improve the effectiveness of the provision.

Nasen’s quick guide, Tracking Progress and Managing Provision, gives more detailed advice about how the progress of individuals and groups can be tracked and how data can be used to assess impact and inform provision management.

Accountability

School leaders and the governing body are ultimately responsible for the way the pupil premium is spent and the impact it makes on those pupils for whom it was intended. That difference needs to be
quantifiable. They will be held accountable in various ways:

- New measures have been included to capture the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium in the performance tables.
- The Ofsted inspection framework will have a particular emphasis on how well gaps are narrowing both within the school and in comparison to national trends, with specific reference to children eligible for the pupil premium.
- Schools are required by law to publish on their websites, details of their pupil premium allocation and the way they plan to spend it for the year ahead. They will also have to publish a statement for the previous year confirming their pupil premium allocation, how much they spent and the impact it has made.

The Ofsted booklet, *The Pupil Premium: Analysis and challenge tools for schools* (www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/pupil-premium-analysis-and-challenge-tools-for-schools), includes a series of self-review questions that can be used by senior leaders and governors to assess whether or not the pupil premium is being used effectively.

**Questions you need to ask**

**Governors’ knowledge and awareness**

- Have leaders and governors considered research and reports about what works to inform their decisions about how to spend the pupil premium?
- Do governors know how much money is allocated to the school for the pupil premium? Is this identified in the school’s budget planning?
- Is there a clearly understood and shared rationale for how this money is spent and what it should achieve? Is this communicated to all stakeholders, including parents?
- Do governors know how the school spends this money? What improvements has the allocation brought about? How is this measured and reported to governors and parents via the school’s website?
- If funding is combined with other resources, can governors isolate and check on the impact of the funding and ascertain the difference it is making?
- Do governors know whether leaders and managers are checking that the actions are working and are of suitable quality?

**Leaders’ and managers’ actions**

- Do the school’s improvement/action plans identify whether there are any issues in the performance of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium?
- Do the actions noted for improving outcomes for pupil premium pupils:
  - give details of how the resources are to be allocated
  - give an overview of the actions to be taken
  - give a summary of the expected outcomes
  - identify ways of monitoring the effectiveness of these actions as they are ongoing and note who will be responsible for ensuring that this information is passed to governors
– explain what will be evaluated at the end of the action and what measures of success will be applied?
• Is the leader who is responsible for this area of the school’s work identified?
• How do governors keep an ongoing check on these actions and ask pertinent questions about progress ahead of any summary evaluations?
• Are the progress and outcomes of eligible pupils identified and analysed by the school’s tracking systems? Is this information reported to governors in a way that enables them to see clearly whether the gap in the performance of eligible pupils and other pupils is closing?

Pupils’ progress and attainment
• Does the summary report of RAISEonline show that there are any gaps in performance between pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those who are not at the end of key stages?
• Do the school’s systems enable governors to have a clear picture of the progress and attainment of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium in all year groups across the school, not just those at the end of key stages?
• If there are gaps in the attainment of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who are not, are eligible pupils making accelerated progress – are they progressing faster than the expected rate – in order to allow the gaps to close? Even if all pupils make expected progress, this will not necessarily make up for previous underperformance.

Next steps for senior leaders
• Identify the gap between the attainment of pupils for whom pupil premium is being received and other pupils.
• Use data to help you decide how best you can use funding to raise attainment and close the gap.
• Inform the governors of your pupil premium allocation, its purpose and your proposed plans for spending it.
• Explore ways to encourage eligible parents to register their children for free school meals.
• Update your school website to meet pupil premium requirements.
• Ensure that your school systems can identify and track the progress of all pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
• Make sure the pupil premium funding you receive is identified within your budget.
• Monitor the impact of your pupil premium spend to see whether it is raising achievement and narrowing the gap between pupils entitled to the premium and other pupils.
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