



St. Helens Council

Children and Young People's Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Pupil Premium

May 2013

Task Group

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Chairman's Foreword and Acknowledgements



Councillor Jimmy Jackson
Chairman of the Scrutiny Task Group

The Government believes that the Pupil Premium, which is additional to main school funding, is the best way to address the current underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most.

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and is allocated to schools to work with pupils who have been registered for FSM at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever 6 FSM').

Schools also receive funding for children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months, and children of service personnel.

In 2012/2013 schools in St Helens received approximately £4.2 million in Pupil Premium monies. We feel it is vital that schools use this money effectively to improve the performance of those pupils in St Helens who are disadvantaged financially in order to close the attainment gap.

From September 2012, all Schools have been required by the Secretary of State for Education to publish on their web site, the amount of Pupil Premium they receive, what they spend this additional funding on and the impact on the attainment of those pupils who qualified for Pupil Premium.

Whilst undertaking this review we were extremely pleased with the quality of the information published by most schools, however there were still a handful of schools who had failed to meet the legal requirements set out. We are pleased to say that after a number of reminders all of the borough's schools now have some level of information published on their website.

Research shows that effective schools can enable disadvantaged children to succeed, effectively helping them to catch up, re-establish and reinforcing a positive perception of school and turn their life around. Pupil Premium funding can help achieve this.

I would like to thank the Task Group for all their contributions to the review and would particularly like to thank Paul Tomkow who has supported members throughout the review process. I would also like to offer my sincere thanks to Catherine Ireland the Headteacher at Thatto Heath Primary School for her willingness and enthusiasm and her contribution to our review process.

1.0 Introduction and Terms of Reference

- 1.1 During the process of agreeing the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2012/13 the Council's Children and Young People's Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed to look at the allocation of Pupil Premium to schools in St. Helens
- 1.2 The aim of the review was to investigate how schools were using and reporting Pupil Premium monies and whether we, as a council, could identify and disseminate any good practice. We also aimed to use the process to ensure that all schools were sharing information about Pupil Premium appropriately.
- 1.3 The terms of the review were as follows:
 - To establish the amount of Pupil Premium each school in St.Helens receives.
 - To review the effectiveness of the reporting process by schools.
 - To establish how the Pupil Premium is currently being used in St.Helen's schools.
 - To establish if School Governors are aware of how Pupil Premium is used in their schools.
 - To identify and share best practice.
 - To ensure all schools are meeting the minimum reporting requirements.
 - To make recommendations for improvement where necessary.

2.0 Method of the Investigation

- We received a presentation by Senior Achievement and Inclusion Advisor on background information to Pupil Premium.
- We undertook desktop research and looked at a number of articles.
- We carried out an online search for each school in the borough to view what information they had published and collated the findings.
- We contacted all Headteachers and asked how their Governing Bodies were involved in decisions relating to the spend of Pupil Premium.
- We contacted all Chairs of Governors to ask how Pupil Premium monies were discussed and subsequently allocated.
- We visited Thatto Heath Primary School and spoke with the Headteacher about what her school did with the Pupil Premium monies allocated.

- We evaluated our findings and made a number of recommendations.

3.0 Background

3.1 What is the Pupil Premium?

- 3.2 The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011. It was allocated to children from low-income families who were known to be eligible for FSM and children who had been looked after continuously for more than six months. It was paid to local authorities by means of a specific grant based on January 2011 school census figures for pupils registered as eligible for FSM in Reception to Year 11. For looked after children the Pupil Premium was calculated using the Children Looked After data returns.
- 3.3 In September 2012 Ofsted published a report based on a survey of 262 school leaders that had been gathered through inspections and telephone-interview questionnaires. In autumn 2012, Ofsted sent Her Majesty's Inspectors to visit 68 primary and secondary schools (one of these schools was a St.Helens School) to see how effectively they were spending their Pupil Premium funding to maximise achievement and to follow up on their findings.
- 3.4 Some of the key findings from this survey were:
- School leaders commonly said that they were using the funding to maintain or enhance existing provision rather than to put in place new initiatives.
 - Schools did not routinely separate the Pupil Premium funding from their main delegated budgets, especially if they received a smaller amount.
 - Over two fifths of the schools had used the funding a least to part fund new or existing teaching assistants and over one quarter used the funding to fund new or existing teachers.
 - A third said they used the grant to fund additional out of school hours curriculum opportunities, also one third used it to subsidise or pay for educational trips or residential visits.
 - It was clear that in some schools that not all the funding was being spent on the specific groups it was intended for.
 - There was little evidence of a strong focus by Governors or Management Committees.
- 3.5 The report was drawn together to gather some of the effective practice that the inspectors saw. Further documents have been produced and made available by Ofsted to help schools to analyse gaps in achievement and plan their actions effectively. Ofsted now review Pupil Premium as part of each routine school inspection and comments are made in their published reports.
- 3.6 Having considered this report the Council's Children and Young People's Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel decided to look at how Pupil Premium was being used in St.Helens schools.

Table to show how the Pupil Premium has risen over the past three years.

	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
FSM Children	£488	£623	£900
Looked After Children	£488	£623	£900
Children of Service Families	£200	£250	£300

- 3.7 For pupils in maintained primary and secondary schools, funding is passed to schools via the local authorities. Academies receive the funding from the Education Funding Agency. For pupils in maintained special schools and pupil referral units, funding is allocated to local authorities. They decide whether to pass on funding to the education setting or to hold back funding to manage it centrally for the benefit of those pupils for whom it is responsible.
- 3.8 A premium has also been introduced for children whose parents are currently serving in the Armed Forces; this was £200 per pupil in 2011–12 which has risen to £250 for 2012–13.
- 3.9 Nationally in 2011–12 total funding through the Pupil Premium was £625m. This was increased to £1.25bn for 2012–13. Up to £50m of the £1.25bn was used to support a summer school programme to help the most disadvantaged pupils make the transition from primary to secondary school.
- 3.10 Pupil Premium is not ring fenced. Schools may spend this additional funding in any way they wish but must be able to demonstrate how it is having a positive impact on the attainment of pupils on FSM.
- 3.11 Pupil Premium will be rising to £1.85 billion for 2013/2014.
- 3.12 National attainment data shows that every year:
- Around 30-35,000 children leave primary school reading and writing at the level expected of a seven year old or below;
 - Around 30-35,000 children leave primary school with mathematical skills at the level expected of a seven year old or below; and
 - Around 23,000 children leave primary school with reading, writing and mathematical skills at the level expected of a seven year old or below.
- 3.13 Those from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds form the majority group of these children. Research shows that the children referenced in the figures above are far more likely to fail at secondary school, more likely to play truant and more likely to be excluded from school.

Unsurprisingly these children are also likely to find themselves without work once they leave school.

3.14 Figures from January 2011 show that there were:

- 1.77 million pupils identified as 'Ever 6 FSM',
- 45,070 children of service families,
- 40,566 children who were looked after.

From the amounts of Pupil Premium grant awarded in subsequent years it is evident that these figures have risen.

3.15 Accountability

3.16 Schools are free to spend the Pupil Premium as they see fit. However, they are responsible for how they use the additional funding to support pupils from low-income families and the other target groups. New measures are included in the performance tables that capture the achievement of those deprived pupils covered by the Pupil Premium.

3.17 From 1st September 2012, the government requires schools to publish online information about how much Pupil Premium they receive and how they have used it. This is documented in The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 as -

'The amount of the school's allocation from the Pupil Premium grant in respect of the current academic year; details of how it is intended that the allocation will be spent; details of how the previous academic year's allocation was spent, and the effect of this expenditure on the educational attainment of those pupils at the school in respect of whom grant funding was allocated'.

3.18 However a school chooses to spend the Pupil Premium grant, the spend must be quantifiable. The Ofsted framework will have a particular emphasis on how well the gaps are narrowing, both within the individual school and in comparison to national data and trends with reference to children eligible for Pupil Premium.

4. Findings

4.1 The Children and Young People's Services Department have collated the total amount of Pupil Premium grant allocated to each of the boroughs schools as follows:

Table to show amount of Pupil Premium Grant allocated to St.Helens Schools

	2011/2012	2012/2013
Primary Schools	£1,600,661	£2,774,993
Secondary Schools	£691,095	£1,301,938
Special Schools	£64,961	£105,637

Total	<u>£2,356,717</u>	<u>£4,182,568</u>

- 4.2 Within the St.Helens borough there are 54 primary schools, 7 secondary schools (2012/2013) and 3 special schools. The amounts of Pupil Premium funding received by individual schools varies greatly, depending on number of pupils eligible. Every primary, secondary and special school within St.Helens received some Pupil Premium funding in both 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.

The range in allocations received by individual schools in St.Helens are tabled below,

	2011/2012	2012/2013
Primary Schools	Between £1,952 & £110,613	Between £5,607 & £173,818
Secondary Schools	Between £23,112 & £171,288	Between £118,852 & £359,488
Special Schools	Between £10,451 & £35,763	Between £16,483 & £58,602

A further breakdown of each allocation can be found at appendix 1

- 4.3 We reviewed all the websites of St.Helens schools to identify if and what information has been published with regards to Pupil Premium. At the outset of the review we could not locate 35% of schools Pupil Premium information on their websites. However, after contacting the schools we were able to establish that all schools do publish some information about Pupil Premium. In many cases this information was difficult to locate and in some instances the information did not meet the minimum reporting requirements.
- 4.4 The amount of information that schools publish varies greatly, from a basic paragraph containing no financial information to in depth reports with explanations of outcomes and financial breakdowns. As stated previously schools have a statutory obligation to publish Pupil Premium financial data and detail what they have spent the funding on and what were the outcomes.
- 4.5 Schools have reported using the Pupil Premium funding in various ways, the allocation is not ring fenced so it is totally up to the individual school to decide on how it is spent. Some of the ways the funding is being spent include-
- Extra staffing to support key subjects
 - Purchase of specific learning materials
 - Specialist staff training
 - Targeted booster classes
 - To support extended school activities
 - Lunch time learning clubs
 - Breakfast and after school homework clubs.

This list is not exhaustive.

- 4.6 The Task and Finish group visited Thatto Heath Primary School to discuss the schools approach to Pupil Premium funding. The school received £110,613 in 2011/2012 and £173,816 in 2012/2013 in funding via the Pupil Premium grant. The Headteacher – Mrs Catherine Ireland gave a comprehensive presentation to the Task and Finish group which included the background to Pupil Premium funding, how it is calculated and who / what it is aimed at.
- 4.7 Thatto Heath Primary School has published, on their website, in depth information with regards to Pupil Premium allocations and outcomes, the Headteacher talked the Task & Finish group through the report. She explained how the school has utilised the Pupil Premium funding in various ways and how it has impacted on the outcomes of the children.
- 4.8 We also contacted all the boroughs Headteachers to ask them how they inform their Governing Body about Pupil Premium allocations and it's use. 90% of schools responded, 10% failed to provide information (despite several reminders).

See appendix 2

- 4.9 All respondees informed the Task & Finish group that Pupil Premium information (including financial and its uses) is presented to the Governing Body at least on an annual basis with the some stating this is undertaken on a termly basis.
- 4.10 Similar contact was made with the Chair of Governors from each of our schools, in order to establish how knowledgeable members of the Governing Body are about Pupil Premium.
- 4.11 55% of the Chairs responded to enquires we made indicating that they were aware of Pupil Premium, how much their schools receive, how this is being spent and the outcomes that this funding brings.

See appendix 3

- 4.12 The Chairs stated that Headteachers kept them informed of the Pupil Premium via the Schools Governing Body meetings and also during general school updates through the meetings that Headteachers hold with their Chair.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Although the schools in the borough have all published some information on the their schools website with regards to Pupil Premium, through our investigations we found it difficult to locate this data on numerous sites.
- 5.2 It is evident that not all of our schools are publishing adequate data with regards to the statutory information required by the Government. The information located on some of our school websites was very poor, did not include budget allocations, or outcomes for the previous years funding.
- 5.3 Are Schools publishing all the statutory Pupil Premium information to ensure that it also satisfies any Ofsted requirements? If schools are not complying with

the statutory requirements then this must surely be reflected in any Ofsted inspection. This information should quantify the schools intended use for the Pupil Premium grant allocations, but also in a manner that is understandable to all parents / guardians and gives them an opportunity to engage with the school should they wish to.

5.4 With the 'Digital Divide' becoming more apparent, not all households have access to technology and the internet and we feel that schools should ensure that any Pupil Premium information published is also available in other formats to enable all parents / guardians to be engaged in the process.

5.5 It is evident that the Headteachers of St.Helens schools are aware of the Pupil Premium grant, apply for allocation each year and discuss this with their Governing Bodies at some point throughout the academic school year. Although the Governing Body as a whole is made aware of the funding, in depth financial discussions could also be held within the Finance Committee meetings. Also the impact / effect on attainment that the funding is having could be discussed at the Curriculum Committee meetings were applicable. Schools normally hold Full governing Body and committee meetings on a termly basis.

5.6 Although it was not investigated fully as part of the review, through discussions and documented Ofsted information, the Task and Finish group thought it could be helpful if the Pupil Premium funding was identifiable separately within schools delegated budgets. This would assist with the monthly budget monitoring process and termly financial reports to Governors.

5.7 The Chairs of Governing Bodies that responded to the Task and Finish groups enquires assured us that they are aware of Pupil Premium funding, what it is intended for and that the Headteacher reports on this to them and the Governing Body. Due to just over half of the Chair's responding to our enquires we feel that this report should be issued to all Chairs for information purposes.

5.8 The Task and Finish group feel that the majority of schools are spending the monies as intended, however there needs to be complete clarity with regards to this by way of fully complying with the Governments statutory requirements of publishing adequate data and that Governing Bodies are involved at the appropriate level.

6.0 Recommendations

1. That a copy of this report be sent to every school in the St.Helens borough and that it is tabled for the Governing Body agenda for discussion.
2. That a final copy of this report be sent to each Council Member for information.
3. That a copy of this report be sent to each Chair of Governing Body for information.

4. That consideration is given to a proforma being established to assist schools in what and how much information should be published, and this issued to all schools and its use be considered by the Governing Body.
5. That schools clearly identify how and when the school is going to publish the Pupil Premium information.
6. That Pupil Premium information published on school websites be easy to locate and clearly signposted on the home page of the Schools web site. Parents / guardians should also be made aware that Pupil Premium information is available, and it be made available in other formats if requested.
7. That consideration be given by Schools and Governor Services that Pupil Premium is a standard Full Governing Body agenda item annually and termly updates provided to the relevant committees with regards to effects on attainment and budgetary information.
8. That in depth financial discussions be held within Finance Committee meetings and the impact/effect on attainment that the funding is having be discussed at the Curriculum meetings where applicable.
9. That Pupil Premium funding be identified separately within schools delegated budgets.
10. There are various ways which schools can ensure they are eligible for the Pupil Premium grant and how to monitor and report on performance for example –
 - Exploring ways to ensure parents that are eligible for FSM register on a timely basis, that they are aware that the school could receive extra funding.
 - Ensuring that school systems clearly identify all children eligible for the Pupil Premium.
 - Making sure that the Pupil Premium funding received is clearly identifiable within the school budget plan.
 - Ensuring that the school governors are aware of the Pupil Premium allocations, the purpose and proposed plans for spending the grant.
 - Clearly identifying how and when the school is going to publish the Pupil Premium information and ensuring parents are aware of this. This information should quantify the schools intended use for the Pupil Premium grant allocations, but also in a manner that is understandable to all parents / guardians and gives them an opportunity to engage with the school should they wish to.

7.0 Appendix

"Appendix 1 School
Allocation.pdf"

"Appendix 2
Headteachers.pdf"

"Appendix 3
Chairs.pdf"

Pupil Premium

Rec No	Recommendation	Responsible Officer	Agreed Action and Date of Implementation
1	That a copy of this report be sent to every school in the St.Helens borough and that it is tabled for the Governing Body agenda for discussion.		
2	That a final copy of this report be sent to each Council Member for information.		
3	That a copy of this report be sent to each Chair of Governing Body for information.		
4	That consideration is given to a proforma being established to assist schools in what and how much information should be published, and this issued to all schools and its use be considered by the Governing Body.		
5	That schools clearly identify how and when the school is going to publish the Pupil Premium information.		
6	That Pupil Premium information published on school websites be easy to locate and clearly signposted on the home page of the Schools web site. Parents / guardians should also be made aware that Pupil Premium information is available, and it be made available in other formats if requested.		
7	That consideration be given by Schools and Governor Services that Pupil Premium is a standard Full Governing Body agenda item annually and termly updates provided to the relevant committees with regards to effects		

Pupil Premium

	on attainment and budgetary information.		
8	That in depth financial discussions be held within Finance Committee meetings and the impact/effect on attainment that the funding is having be discussed at the Curriculum meetings where applicable.		
9	That Pupil Premium funding be identified separately within schools delegated budgets.		
10	<p>There are various ways which schools can ensure they are eligible for the Pupil Premium grant and how to monitor and report on performance for example –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring ways to ensure parents that are eligible for FSM register on a timely basis, that they are aware that the school could receive extra funding. • Ensuring that school systems clearly identify all children eligible for the Pupil Premium. • Making sure that the Pupil Premium funding received is clearly identifiable within the school budget plan. • Ensuring that the school governors are aware of the Pupil Premium allocations, the purpose and proposed plans for spending the grant. • Clearly identifying how and when the school 		

Pupil Premium

	<p>is going to publish the Pupil Premium information and ensuring parents are aware of this.</p> <p>This information should quantify the schools intended use for the Pupil Premium grant allocations, but also in a manner that is understandable to all parents / guardians and gives them an opportunity to engage with the school should they wish to.</p>		
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