



Premium Pupils

A review of the additional funding
for disadvantaged and service
families pupils in Warwickshire

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Foreword

The National Education Trust has had a continuous focus on closing the attainment gap, an entrenched and stubborn feature of our education system.

This report sets out to do three things:

- To share some of the best practice in the use of the pupil premium that is going on in Warwickshire schools – how individual institutions are bucking local and national trends for disadvantaged learners
- To identify some challenges in narrowing the attainment gap that exists in Warwickshire schools and across the LA
- To offer some sustainable, long term solutions for overcoming those challenges.

In the best schools, in Warwickshire and beyond, there is a relentless focus on sustained high quality, *like Brighton through a stick of rock*. This focus on quality and long term thinking underpins the interrelated priorities for schools and the LA as set out in the report. These are recruiting, **training and retaining the best possible teaching and support staff**, to the benefit of *all* learners.

There is also a need for even better **partnership working**, sharing best practice, and best process – the journey of improvement. Finally, there is the imperative for a sustained approach to improving **attitudes to learning and family engagement** – a vital ingredient for long term improvements for disadvantaged learners.

From working with Warwickshire LA on this review, their commitment to championing better outcomes for vulnerable learners is clear. We hope that this report will make a significant contribution to that commitment, maximising the impact of the pupil premium and providing a catalyst for better outcomes for all.

ROY BLATCHFORD
Executive Director
The National Education Trust
July 2013

Executive Summary

The pupil premium is a national initiative which grants schools extra funding based on the number of disadvantaged pupils they have on roll, and is aimed at addressing the gap in educational attainment between these pupils and their more advantaged peers.

The use of this funding is a priority area for Warwickshire, as although Warwickshire schools' exam results are above the national average, and pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) attain more highly at GCSE than those in similar authorities, attainment gaps at both primary and secondary level remain significant. For this reason, Warwickshire LA commissioned the National Education Trust to look at the use of the pupil premium in Warwickshire schools, and to make recommendations for its improvement.

As part of this review, we held two headteacher focus groups, spoke to school leaders at three headteacher meetings, met with governors at five governor meetings, received responses from headteacher questionnaires, visited seven schools and observed 31 group or one to one sessions with pupils. We found that the most common use of the funding was academic interventions; in particular, small group and 1:1 tuition, and that these were led by teachers in some schools and teaching assistants (TAs) in others. Schools also used funding for pastoral support, such as nurture groups and counsellors, and for enrichment activities and out of school clubs.

The headteachers we spoke to were rich with ideas and suggestions, many of which are incorporated in section 3 of the report, and are summarised below. However, there were also some concerns from headteachers: around funding (whether it would continue); eligibility (whether they could use the funding for non FSM pupils); accountability (how they should evidence the impact); and social stigma (how they could avoid families experiencing this).

We spoke to Ofsted and the Department for Education to address some of these questions. From these conversations, it was made clear that:

- schools can use the pupil premium in any way they think is effective, as long as the attainment gap is closing in the context of whole school improvement



- the pupil premium can be used to proportionally part-fund interventions that include ineligible students, therefore bringing about economies of scale
- the pupil premium can be spent on enrichment activities, as long as these have some educational goal (even if indirect) and the impact is measured
- impact does not have to be measured by academic attainment only; attendance, behaviour, teaching quality, parent surveys etc. are acceptable.

We also spoke to a Local Authority where disadvantaged pupils are performing extremely well by any measurement. Whilst the pupil premium has been beneficial, the LA view is that a key contributory factor to those successes are very positive attitudes to learning originating at home and in local communities, supported and sustained by consistently high quality teaching and leadership.

A major part of our research involved visiting schools where pupil premium pupils were performing well in comparison to disadvantaged pupils locally and nationally, speaking to the headteachers and other key members of staff, and seeing some of the interventions in person. From these case study visits, we drew out the following key findings regarding what made these schools successful at improving the performance of their pupil premium pupils, which other Warwickshire schools can learn from. We expect these to act as recommendations.

Who successful schools spend it on

- They take a long term approach, using the funding for early interventions as well as for preparing students for national tests and exams.
- They take a whole school approach, identifying every child's needs, and proportionally part-funding the appropriate interventions with pupil premium funding to create economies of scale.
- They focus on high attainers too, stretching them academically. This is something that could be done more, even in successful Warwickshire schools.

What successful schools spend it on

- They spend it on a balance of academic, pastoral and enrichment activities.
- The most important feature is not the type of intervention, but the quality of the staff delivering it. Successful schools therefore prioritise recruiting high quality staff and training them well. This applies to both teachers and support staff.
- Successful schools also recognise the importance of knowing their community, and spend funding on community link workers and parental engagement.

How successful schools track it

- They track every pupil's progress and know every child's needs.
- They measure the impact of every intervention, using a variety of impact data.
- Where an intervention is not working, they change how they are doing it or stop doing it all together.
- School governors have a good understanding of the pupil premium funded activities and their impact, and challenge the school to narrow the achievement gap.

Having laid out *school level* recommendations in these findings, we follow with some *county level* recommendations:

1. The Local Authority should work with schools to agree a strategy to ensure Warwickshire attracts the best possible teachers and support staff.
2. The Local Authority should agree a long term strategic focus on improving attitudes to learning and family engagement in Warwickshire as being of fundamental importance.



3. The Local Authority should consider introducing guidance on minimum requirements and professional standards for teaching assistants in Warwickshire.
4. Schools could collaborate financially to make the most of economies of scale. For example, paying for procurement experts to write bids which would pay for themselves, and collaborating to fund a recruitment scheme aimed at getting graduates into schools for teaching and support roles.
5. Schools should share knowledge and expertise through better primary-secondary transition, online forums, 'narrowing the gap advocates' and conferences.
6. Governing bodies should nominate a pupil premium governor, and the local authority should provide training in monitoring and evaluating for these governors.

More details about what schools are doing with the pupil premium, the impact of the funding and how outcomes for disadvantaged pupils might be further improved can be found in the full report and case studies. We believe these recommendations to be of vital importance to Warwickshire schools if they are to realise the full potential of the pupil premium.



1 Context

The national context

The pupil premium was introduced in 2011, providing additional funding to help schools improve the learning of disadvantaged pupils and in doing so, reduce educational inequality. The funding is allocated per pupil, and initially covered looked after children, the children of service personnel and any children who were eligible for free school meals; it has now been extended to include children who have been eligible for FSM at any point in the past 6 years (the Ever6 measure).

The most significant purpose of the pupil premium is to reduce the attainment gap. The headline statistics that illustrate this gap are now well rehearsed but no less shocking for being so. Early achievers from disadvantaged backgrounds are overtaken by their wealthier peers by age 7; the likelihood of a pupil eligible for FSM achieving five or more GCSEs at A*-C including English and mathematics is less than one third of a non-FSM pupil; and a pupil from a non-deprived background is more than twice as likely to go on to study at university as their deprived peer.

In 2011, 84% of non-FSM KS2 pupils in England achieved a L4 or above in both their Maths and English SATs, compared to just 61% on FSM; a gap of 19%. In 2012 the gap reduced slightly to 16%, with the percentage of FSM pupils reaching the threshold rising to a greater extent than their peers.

At secondary level, the gaps grow bigger. In 2011, just 37% of FSM pupils in England achieved a C or above in both English and Maths, compared to 66% of non-FSM pupils, leaving a gap of 29%. In 2012 the gap reduced slightly to 27%, but educators and politicians across the political spectrum recognise that this is still far too high, and the money being allocated per pupil is increasing from £600 to £900 per student for the year 2013-2014.

The Warwickshire context and national comparisons

Warwickshire is divided into the five districts of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon, with a population of 546,600 people and growing, due to in-migration¹. Despite the focus of population in the main towns of the county, a significant proportion of Warwickshire is rural in nature. According to the most recent estimates, non-White-British groups make up approximately 12% of the county's population, and 'Asian-Indian' and 'White-other' are the largest ethnic groups within this. In Warwickshire, 12.3% of school pupils (4,835) are known to be eligible for and claiming FSM, compared to 19.3% nationally.

Benchmarking rationale

This contextual information is important as there are numerous subgroups that make up the broad group called 'free school meals' (FSM), some of which attain at higher levels than others. However, despite differences in contexts across the country, we took the view during this review that it was important to benchmark Warwickshire against the best performers nationally, rather than comparing Warwickshire with similar authorities only. Whilst contexts are different in some of the highest performing authorities, there appear to be some *key ingredients* for long term success in local authorities (LAs) where disadvantaged learners do very well by national standards.

As part of our research, we spoke with a high performing local authority that did particularly well with its FSM pupils. They described the key ingredients as consistently high quality teaching and learning, schools working together in partnership and positive attitudes to learning. These three elements together created a 'virtuous circle', in which the pupils and families recognised the link between hard work and future prosperity, making them more receptive to teaching, which attracts more high quality teachers

and improves outcomes further, with schools working together to provide the best possible opportunities for learners. Generally speaking, this means that pupil premium funded activity is supplementary to (or supports) quality first wave teaching and learning, delivered by effective personnel to receptive pupils.

Underpinning this is a focused programme of CPD and long term partnership working for school leaders (via the borough) that encourages collaboration for sustaining success and the sharing of practical solutions to challenges. Further, good relationships between schools and the LA mean that some of the very best school leaders are working with some of the most challenging schools.

It may seem like an unrealistic expectation to recreate this virtuous circle, but we found similar approaches in successful schools we visited in Warwickshire. These were schools that are bucking both local and national trends in attainment levels for disadvantaged pupils, so we know it 'can be done' in the Warwickshire context, and the case studies in the final section offer some practical 'Warwickshire Specific' ideas and solutions that have had significant impact. In this review and in the wider work of the National Education Trust we have found that the highest performing schools - from Stockton to Southampton, and via Warwickshire - benchmark against the very best schools nationally, rather than those in similar circumstances.

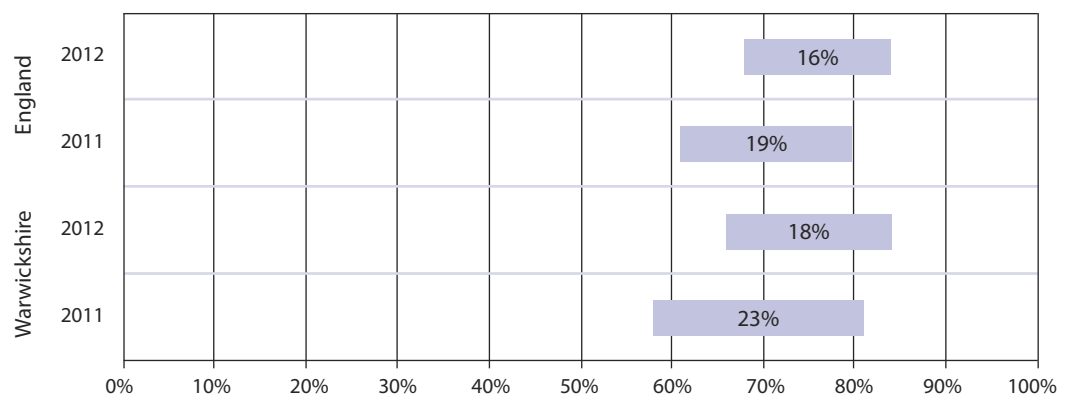
Whilst we fully recognise the difference in context between Warwickshire and inner urban LAs, our concern with simply benchmarking against 'similar' LAs meant we risked not identifying and challenging some of the key drivers for the attainment gap that exists in Warwickshire. It could also lead us to make recommendations that aimed for Warwickshire to be a 'middle ranking' LA in terms of attainment levels for disadvantaged learners. We wanted to aim higher. It is worth noting that even in the highest performing LAs, there are only eight nationally where more than 55% of disadvantaged students got a grade C+ in English and Maths last year.

National comparisons

In terms of school performance, Warwickshire schools perform slightly better than the national average at both primary and secondary level, with 80% of KS2 students getting L4 or above in English and Maths (E&M) in 2012² (compared to 79% nationally) and 63% of KS4 pupils achieving Cs or above in the same subjects (compared to 59% nationally).

However, this overall score hides disparities between the performance of FSM and non-FSM pupils, just as it did at the national level. At KS2, the percentage of pupils meeting the L4 threshold who were not on FSM in Warwickshire was the same as the national figure in 2012, and slightly better in 2011. However, a smaller percentage of FSM pupils in Warwickshire reached this threshold than did FSM pupils nationally, despite Warwickshire doing better in this measure than similar authorities. (See Graph 1)

◆ **Graph 1: The attainment gap at KS2 in Warwickshire and nationally, based on the percentage of FSM and non FSM students getting L4 or above in both English and Maths**



At KS4, the national gap increases, but in Warwickshire it increases more dramatically;

the proportion of non-FSM meeting the English and Maths threshold is slightly better than the national average, but the proportion of FSM pupils doing the same is worse than the national average, leading to a bigger achievement gap of 33% compared to 27%. (See Graph 2)

We can also break down the relative performance of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and other students by looking at the difference in the percentages of students who get an A or an A* in both English and Maths. Nationally, this is 11.1% of non-FSM students compared to only 2.6% of FSM students. In Warwickshire, it is 13.7% of non-FSM students, but only 1.2% of FSM students.

This data puts Warwickshire at LA rankings of 88 out of 150 for FSM performance at KS2 based on the L4s E&M measure, 56 if we look at the proportion of FSM pupils getting L5 or above in English and Maths, 86 for FSM performance at KS4 based on C or above in E&M, and 117 for FSM A/A* performance. Within Warwickshire, some schools do much better on these measures than others, and it has been our intention to highlight the excellent practice taking place in Warwickshire in this area in order to help this expertise to spread and raise the attainment of pupil premium pupils across the county.

Current use of the pupil premium in Warwickshire

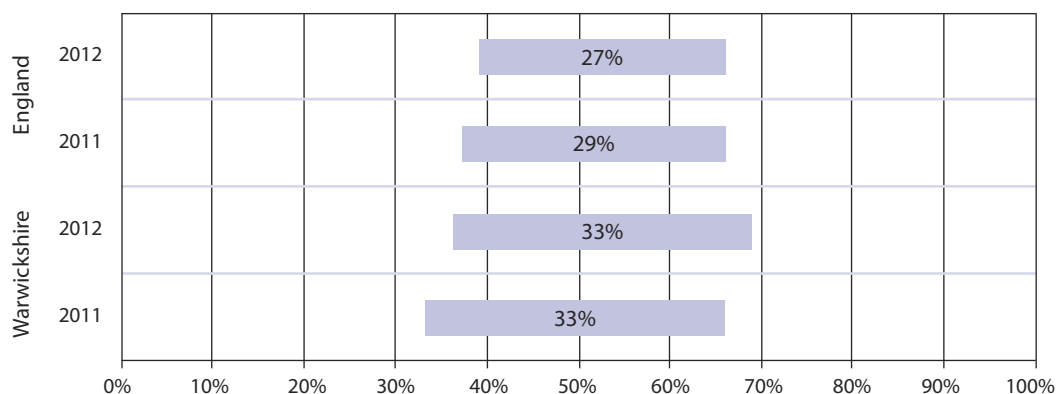
Our information on how schools are currently using the pupil premium came from three sources: conversations with headteachers at focus groups, questionnaire responses at regional headteacher meetings, and the results of an online questionnaire sent to all schools. More information about our data collection can be found in the appendix.

The data we collected suggests that academic interventions are the most common use of pupil premium funding, and include 1:1 tuition and small group tuition, and evidence based reading and maths programmes. In some schools, teaching assistants run these interventions, whereas in others it is teachers.

The second most commonly mentioned use of pupil premium funding was staffing. This covered teaching assistants, teachers and staff CPD, in the order in which they were most often cited. A small number said they spent pupil premium funding on counsellors, mentors, home support workers or behaviour support assistants.

After academic interventions and staffing, the most common use of pupil premium funding was on enrichment (e.g. music and drama tuition) and trips, and then other out of school activities, such as after school clubs and breakfast clubs. Seventeen headteachers in our sample used the pupil premium for non-academic interventions such as nurture groups. Few spent the money on equipment, resources or uniforms.

◆ Graph 2: The attainment gap at KS4 in Warwickshire and nationally, based on the percentage of FSM and non FSM students getting Cs or above in both English and Maths





Warwickshire headteachers' concerns and questions

During our focus groups and other meetings in Warwickshire, headteachers raised various issues surrounding the use of the pupil premium, as well as many ideas and practical suggestions. We will begin by discussing the former, and will come on to effective approaches to the use of the pupil premium in section 3.

Funding

Many of the headteachers we spoke to expressed the view that the pupil premium funding is not new money, as they have lost funding elsewhere. Some are therefore looking at what they are doing successfully to support disadvantaged students already, and putting pupil premium funding towards these activities. There was also a concern raised by a smaller number that the pupil premium might be taken away at some point, which prevented them from putting the funding into any long term use that would require continuing funding, such as employing new staff on permanent contracts.

Eligibility

Another commonly raised issue was the use of students' eligibility for free school meals as a proxy measure for disadvantage. Headteachers felt that although this measure does identify many students who are in need, there are other students who are just above the FSM threshold who are just as needy, and in some cases in more need of additional support.

This led to the question of whether schools could officially use pupil premium funding to support non-eligible pupils, or whether they would be judged negatively for this by Ofsted. Secondary headteachers were also concerned that as the pupil premium funding doesn't cover KS5, many FSM students who do well at KS4 do not continue to KS5, and if they do, struggle for lack of support. This means that bright FSM pupils do not have the same opportunity to develop their talents.

Accountability

The headteachers we spoke to were aware of the importance of accounting for pupil premium spending, and most were also aware of the importance of measuring the impact of this spending. This is relatively straightforward when measuring the impact of an academic intervention such as a reading programme, but some were unsure about how to measure the impact of non-academic interventions, such as nurture groups or trips. Others pointed out that the impact made by an intervention may take months or years to show, and that it is difficult to tell what effects are due to what interventions, or if they are due to something else all together. A final worry around accountability came from the headteachers of schools with small numbers of FSM students, who pointed out that when you have a small number, the performance of just one student can make a huge difference to the school's FSM statistics.

Social stigma

Many headteachers we spoke to said that there were pupils in their schools who were eligible for free school meals, but not claiming them, meaning the school didn't receive the associated funding. A common reason given for this was the social stigma attached to claiming free school meals, and a couple of schools found that after the introduction of a cashless system at lunchtime (hiding the identity of those claiming) the number of families applying for free school meals went up. Another related concern, especially associated with the requirement to publish information about pupil premium funding on the school's website, was that it may create bad feeling between parents, with those not eligible feeling that their children were missing out unfairly.

In our visits to case study schools we found that many of them are successfully addressing many of the concerns raised above, and these approaches will be discussed in section three. Based on the issues raised by Warwickshire headteachers, we also asked the Department for Education and Ofsted a range of questions on the pupil premium. What follows is a summary of their responses.

2 Conversations on the pupil premium

The Department for Education on the pupil premium

The main message from the DfE was encouraging, given some of the concerns above. They emphasised that “the government is quite serious in its ambition not to micromanage schools”, and that “schools should be the decision-makers, using evidence to inform professional judgements”. They therefore had no particular view on using the pupil premium funding on whole school initiatives (for example, teacher CPD on improving marking), as long as the attainment gap was closing, within a school context of generally improving attainment.

They acknowledge the importance of pastoral initiatives to enable a child’s readiness to learn, and point out that their whole Summer School programme is based on this premise, but warn against using the funding as a substitute for social welfare programmes that no longer exist under the current government. The message is that spending pupil premium on pastoral initiatives is fine as long as some thought has gone into how it will affect educational attainment (for example, we need to buy this child a jumper for winter as they cannot concentrate on their lessons without one).

They take a similar line on enrichment activities - it’s important that these have some educational goal if they are funded by the pupil premium (for example, improved science knowledge, or engagement in lessons) – and point out that schools still get a deprivation element in their mainstream dedicated schools grant (DSG), which can be used to subsidise trips that aren’t educational. This could therefore be just a matter of how spending is reported if schools take the approach laid out in section 3, rather than a reason to discontinue trip subsidies for FSM pupils.

Although the DfE have no view on whole school approaches, if there was a situation where funding could either be spent on a non-FSM child who was underachieving, or a FSM child who was performing well, the funding should still be spent on the FSM child. They stress that the pupil premium funding should not be conceptualised as a ‘catch-up’ initiative for underperforming students, and that attention and funding should be focused on those FSM students that are performing well, to help them do even better.



Ofsted on the pupil premium

Ofsted reinforces the DfE’s message that it is up to the school to decide how the pupil premium is spent, and confirm that there are no specific evaluation schedules or specific judgements to be made about pupil premium spending. Pupil premium money can be spent ‘where school leaders feel it is most needed’. However, the attainment gap and the impact of the spending are high profile issues for inspectors, and inspectors will want to see three things:

1. a general trend in the closing of the attainment gap
2. all pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, being tracked and making at least expected levels of progress,
3. ‘robust evaluation’ of any activity which is funded by the pupil premium.

This evaluation could include the impact of short-term academic interventions on pupil attainment, the impact of longer term interventions such as teacher training on quality of teaching or quality of feedback, or for pastoral activities, parental questionnaires about attitudes to learning. They contrast this with a less robust approach, and warn that it is not good practice to simply say, ‘We send pupils on trips to the theatre’ or ‘we spend it on a nurture group led by a TA’. Inspectors will want to hear what impact the theatre trip had, or what training the TA had, who was involved, and what the impact was.



Ofsted recognise the concern raised by Warwickshire headteachers that there are vulnerable students in need of support who are not eligible for pupil premium funding, and give a pragmatic spending solution in response to this issue which remains in line with the DfE's requirement to prioritise pupil premium spending on FSM students.

"Simplistically, the intervention costs £100 for 100 pupils. Of these, sixty were eligible for pupil premium funding, so (for accounting purposes), 60% was funded with pupil premium money, with the remaining 40% funded by other sources".

Several of the schools in our case studies also took this approach, as it allowed them to meet the needs of all the children in their schools, and use the pupil premium funding to make use of economies of scale, while at the same time, ensuring the pupil premium funding was not 'diluted' by being spent on non-FSM students.

Other insights from Ofsted based on their visits to effective schools include having key personnel throughout the school (including governors) responsible for delivery and impact of pupil premium funded activities, and spending the funding on a variety of interventions, some long term and some short term.

3 Effective use of the pupil premium in Warwickshire

A significant part of our research involved visiting a variety of schools that did particularly well with their pupil premium pupils, having conversations with key members of staff and observing interventions. We also discussed the use of the pupil premium with a range of headteachers at focus groups and meetings. No school is perfect, nor are any two schools the same, so the lessons learned below are not a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, but a summary of the approaches that tended to be successful in the schools that we visited, and should therefore act as recommendations for schools seeking to narrow the gap.

Who do they spend it on?

The schools with the smallest attainment gaps in Warwickshire were the ones that took a long-term, whole-school approach to their pupil premium spending. They used some of the funding for early interventions to address potential issues in the early years, or in year 7 in the case of secondary, rather than relying entirely on short term interventions in exam years (although they had these too).

They took a whole school approach in the way described by Ofsted above; every pupil was well known to the school and every child's needs were identified, and these schools used pupil premium funds to part-fund interventions and activities that other students accessed too. In Sydenham primary school for example, pupils accessed interventions based on their need rather than their status. These activities weren't all introduced as a result of receiving the pupil premium funding – some were activities that were running for disadvantaged students already – but this freed up additional funds elsewhere to subsidise trips that weren't explicitly educational.

There are some highly effective approaches to the use of the service premium taking place in Warwickshire – for example, at Temple Herdewyke School, new pupils are sent a book about their new classmates before they arrive, and TAs receive nurture group training to help these pupils integrate more easily. However, an 'even better if' for Warwickshire schools based on our visits would be a greater focus on high performing FSM students, and greater learning challenges for them to ensure they achieve their best in school and continue to do so after they leave the care of the school. Lillington took a bold decision to spend a

significant amount of its pupil premium on 'outstanding teacher training' for five of their staff. Four of the five have been judged Outstanding in recent lesson interventions, and there has been a wider impact across the staff too. This intervention supported FSM students (and others) of all abilities, and is predicted to raise SATs performance in the school for this academic year.

Every school should be able to show what they have done for their higher attainers who are eligible for pupil premium, and what the impact has been. This isn't only a moral imperative, but a clear message from Ofsted too.

What do they spend it on?

All of the schools we saw spent their pupil premium on a variety of activities and interventions, balancing long term and short term interventions and including academic, pastoral and enrichment activities.

Pastoral interventions used were varied, and included nurture groups designed to meet specific children's needs, a counsellor who worked with both students and parents at Sydenham, and mentors who supported children both academically and pastorally at Ashlawn and Lillington. Academic interventions found to be effective in some schools included evidence based interventions such as Reading Recovery and Every Child Counts at a primary level, and small group tutoring and personalised curricula at secondary level. Enrichment activities used are equally varied, with schools offering additional music and drama lessons to improve children's confidence and engagement, 'Forest Schools' lessons outdoors, and subsidised trips and residential.

We could list many more interventions, but to do so would be to miss a critical point. **While choosing an appropriate intervention to meet children's needs is important, this is not enough to ensure it is a success, even if the programme has been shown to work elsewhere.** Two headteachers in our first focus group both used Reading Recovery, but one found it to be successful and one did not. Two interventions delivered in one of our case study schools were both evidence based, but one was very effective and one less so. What is of profound importance for the success of any intervention is the quality of the delivery, and the quality of the people delivering it. Careful selection and training of TAs is particularly important.



The headteachers we interviewed recognised this, and ensured their pupil premium funded activities (and others) were delivered by high quality, trained staff, with a clear understanding of the objectives of the programme. As a result, they invested in teacher and support staff training, and careful recruitment and retention. Lillington Primary and Nursery School invested in 'Outstanding Teacher Training Intervention' for five of its teachers. The Ridgeway Special School takes a long term approach to CPD, and ensures that knowledge and expertise derived from outside expert interventions is cascaded throughout the school and delivered by permanent staff beyond the initial visit. Ashlawn School employs maths and English graduates who want to become teachers to deliver small group interventions alongside the normal timetable for children who need it, and Ridgeway School expects its new Teaching Assistants to be educated to degree level.

Schools that were successful in closing the attainment gap were also those schools that knew their communities, and engaged with the families of every child. Many schools had community link workers funded by the pupil premium to help with this, who would go to children's homes and visit families, especially where the parents didn't come in to school. Some ran after-school clubs and groups that involved parents as well as children.

More details of the impact of these approaches can be found in section 5 case studies.

How do they track it?

In the headteacher and governors meetings, we found that many schools were good at describing what they did with the pupil premium funding, but that fewer could say what impact it had in their school. Tracking where the money is spent and what impact it is having is crucial from an Ofsted perspective, but it also importantly allows for more effective use of the money, as interventions can be tweaked or changed if they are not having the intended impact.

This measurement of impact need not be solely based on attainment data, as for pastoral interventions this may not be appropriate. It could be attendance, exclusion rates, student or parent feedback in questionnaires or performance management, among others. In response to the concern that you can't tell which intervention is having an impact, it could be argued that so long as the attainment gap is closing, or the students are getting more confident, it doesn't matter which intervention is bringing it about (however if the interventions are expensive, a school could stop one for a little while and see if this has an effect).

The schools we visited were thorough in their tracking of every pupil, and their knowledge of every child. Good schools expected their year three pupils to make the same progress over the year as their year 6 pupils, so every member of staff felt equally responsible for the final SATs results.

As part of the review, we also spoke to governors at five regional patch meetings across the local authority. Governors have a crucial role to play in ensuring pupil premium activity has maximum impact and value for money. Informed discussions with governors from many good schools such as **Goodyers End Primary School** in Bedworth revealed that governors not only have an understanding of the activity and impact of the pupil premium in their school, but have discussions about what to stop doing because it is not working so well.

At **Woodlands Special School** in Coleshill, Governors have a detailed knowledge of the range of activities undertaken with pupil premium funding, as well as an understanding of the aims and actual impact. There is a clear channel for regular updates on activity and impact both at and outside of governing body meetings. Governors received details of all pupils (anonymised) in receipt of pupil premium funding. They are informed about what individual pupil

requirements are, what intervention each pupil receives, what impact is expected and a summary evaluation for each pupil.

Information is also provided at macro level, with governors informed about the impact of particular interventions on groups of pupils, as well as the overall impact of a range of interventions on an individual pupil. This allows governors to act as 'critical friends' to the school, and ensure that the pupil premium is being spent in a way that has most impact.

Summary

Schools which had developed effective approaches to narrowing the gap through Pupil Premium funded activity had considered the following in their action planning:

- Attitudes to learning and family engagement
- Quality of teaching and teaching support
- Evidence-based intervention
- Focus on individual pupils
- Leadership and values
- Out of school opportunities
- Tracking and evaluation

Clearly there will be cross over in many activities, and activity was tailored to the individual school community, but we found that schools which operated using this approach were most successful.

4 County level recommendations

Strategic Planning

Long term approaches are fundamental in ensuring that attainment levels for disadvantaged pupils continue to improve. To ensure that the Pupil Premium has maximum impact:

- The Local Authority should work with schools to agree a strategy to ensure Warwickshire attracts the best possible teachers and support staff.
- The Local Authority should agree a strategic focus on improving attitudes to learning and family engagement. A survey of attitudes to learning across Warwickshire would help to guide this strategy.



Professional standards for teaching assistants

Teaching Assistants make up a significant minority of the school workforce, and often deliver interventions to pupil premium pupils. Our work in Warwickshire, supported by wider work nationally and backup up by other research sources suggest that the quality of staff delivering interventions is paramount, so some more consistency in the quality of teaching assistants would be likely to contribute positively to closing the attainment gap. We therefore recommend that Warwickshire should introduce guidance on minimum requirements and professional standards for TAs.

Collaboration between schools – financial

The pupil premium resource could go even further through the use of economies of scale in some areas; especially for schools with fewer FSM eligible students. Our recommendations in this area are:

- Each school could contribute a small amount of pupil premium funding to pay for LA procurement experts to write **bids for further funding**. This further funding could then cover the original costs, and provide funding for district level school programmes.
- ‘Teach for Warwickshire’ – schools could buy into a **recruitment scheme**, aiming to get top quality graduates from local Higher Education Institutions to come and work in Warwickshire schools, either as teachers or TAs.

Collaboration between schools – knowledge and expertise

To encourage the sharing of best practice and best process around the use of the pupil premium, we recommend that:

- Warwickshire nominates some ‘**narrowing the gap advocates**’, who would be experts in effective use of the pupil premium, and could be occasionally released from their own timetable to visit and help other schools in this area.
- The LA sets up an **online forum for sharing best practice** in parental engagement. Despite the good work already going on in the area of parental engagement, many felt that it was an area they needed to develop, and there was some interest in the idea from a senior leader at a secondary school in setting up an online forum where schools could share ideas in this area.
- Primary schools keep a file with a **record of interventions** that FSM children have taken part in, and their impact, which could be passed on to secondary schools to better enable secondary schools to target their resources appropriately.

Governance

Our discussions revealed that knowledge and understanding of how schools are being challenged and supported by their governing bodies in respect of their pupil premium activity was mixed. There were some excellent examples of good practice, but also a significant minority of governors had very limited knowledge of the attainment gap in their school, how much money is received, how it is being spent and what the impact of funding is. We recommend that:

- the LA provides **training** for governors on evaluating the impact of interventions on attitudes, learning behaviours, well-being, aspirations and other outcomes as well as on academic measures..
- governing bodies nominate a **Pupil Premium governor** to work with the school, leadership team to ensure there is secure knowledge of Pupil Premium funded activity and impact in every Warwickshire school, and
- governors should be able to pinpoint activity the school stopped doing or changed as a result of monitoring and evaluation.

Case studies of effective use of the pupil premium

■ CASE STUDY 1: Sydenham Primary School, Leamington Spa

Headteacher: Juliette Westwood

NOR: 200

% of Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding: 29.5%

Pupil Premium Funding 2011/12: £26,043.50

Sydenham primary school is a medium sized primary school serving a mixed community in the Sydenham area of Leamington Spa. It is federated with a nearby village primary school.

The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or school action plus is high at 22%, so for many pupils there is a range of factors that create challenges in ensuring they make sufficient progress to reach expected attainment levels.

Attainment levels across all pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have been steadily rising for the past three years and are now equal to LA and national averages.

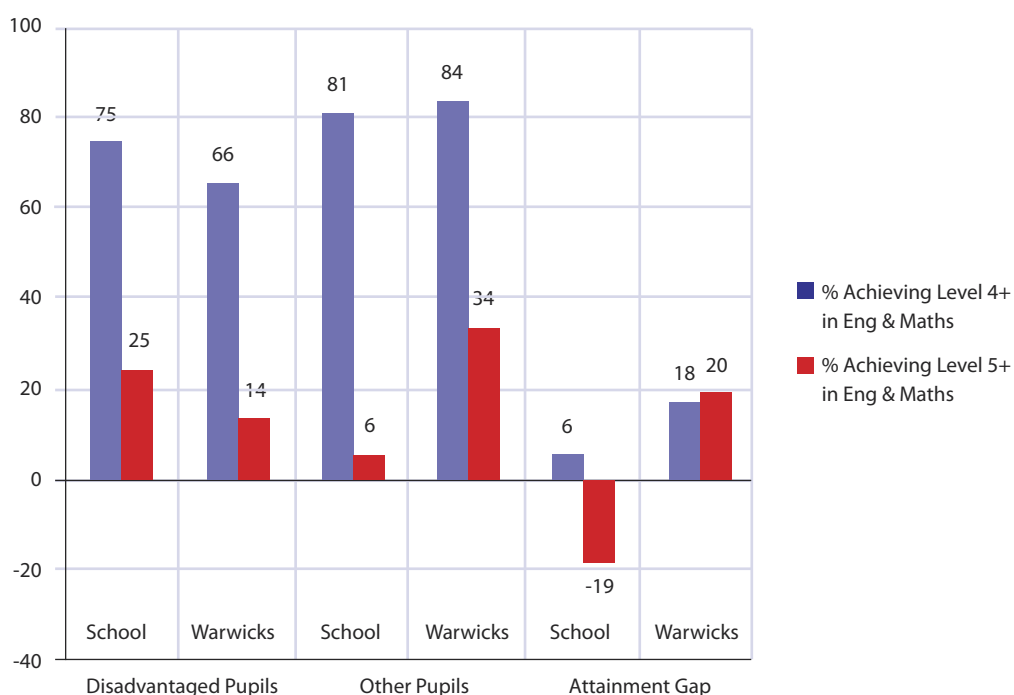
All pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, make at least expected levels of progress in Mathematics, with 88% of disadvantaged pupils and 87% of other pupils making at least expected levels of progress in English.

The school takes a long term, holistic approach to its pupil premium spending, which encompasses evidence-based interventions, nurture / emotional wellbeing interventions, 'readiness to learn' and enrichment activities. All pupil premium funded activities are delivered by high quality, trained staff who have a clear understanding of the objectives of the intervention they are carrying out.

The school does not ring-fence the funding for philosophical and economic reasons; it avoids stigmatising the pupils and ensures that intervention is allocated on a basis of need, and it enable economies of scale.

In each case, pupils access the intervention based on an identified need, rather than because they are eligible for the Pupil Premium, so the funding makes a contribution to the costs of running the intervention, topped up from other sources. This means that funding is available for other 'gaps' in providing a holistic education for pupils and does not assume free school meals equates with low ability.

◆ Sydenham Primary School: Attainment data 2011/12



- Funding is spent on evidence-based interventions including 'Every Child a Reader' and 1st Class @ Number, which are led by trained teachers and TAs who help pupils that need extra support in English and Maths. Some pupils are on a part time timetable to allow them to access the interventions. Children are closely tracked and make excellent, sustained progress in most cases and the school operates a carefully thought through re-introduction programme.
- Pupils, based on need, are able to access a highly skilled and experienced school counsellor who works with children and parents – as part of a programme of being prepared for learning and to help families in challenging circumstances to support their children. Qualitative evaluation provided overwhelmingly positive results for children's home learning, behaviour and attendance.
- Nurture groups operate within the school, with differing approaches depending on the needs and vulnerability of children. Again, individuals are supported by a carefully thought through integration programme.
- The funding also partially supports enrichment activities such as school trips and experiences that the school offers to every pupil at the school.

Pupil Premium pupils are tracked very closely as individuals (as are all pupils in the school). Evaluation is carried out in a way that is relevant to the intervention, rather than time being spent trying to evaluate the impact of non-academic interventions on academic attainment.

Alongside Pupil Premium funded activities, the school is focussing on the following to raise attainment for all learners:

- Tracking of pupils and expecting consistently high levels of progress across all year groups
- Teacher training and development
- Careful use of teaching assistants
- Raising aspirations and improving attitudes to learning
- Family engagement.

The school has worked to ensure that the whole staff buy into the vision for building better outcomes in the long term for all learners.

■ CASE STUDY 2: The Ridgeway Special School, Warwick

Headteacher: Karen Gannon

NOR: 113

% of Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding: 24.1%
Pupil Premium Funding 2011/12: £12,000

The Ridgeway Special School is a community special school for children aged 2 to 11 years with complex learning difficulties. The school serves a broad catchment area across South Warwickshire. The school is judged outstanding by Ofsted.

Special schools such as the Ridgeway School offer a different perspective when considering the spending of Pupil Premium funding and its planned impact.

The school evaluates each pupils' complex learning difficulties alongside the impact of socio-economic disadvantage when considering how funding should be used and what its expected impact will be.*

With respect to these issues, the school takes a long term view on how to improve outcomes for all pupils – from academic attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 to creating learners that can play positive, active roles in their community.

The successful approaches to better outcomes for pupils at the Ridgeway School mirror practice seen across all successful schools visited in this review – a focus on individual pupils and families, and researched intervention delivered by very high quality, trained staff. This is all underpinned by consistently good or better teaching.

Some of the activity funded by the Pupil Premium includes the following:

- IPADs – which have improved speech and language, literacy, behaviour and attendance.
- Sports Coaching – impacting on pupil social skills, team building and an enhanced curriculum
- Rhythm Time (music therapy) – improving pupil interaction, speech and language and an enhanced curriculum
- Specialist occupational therapy – providing structured home / school support
- Residential activities for year 6 pupils – improving independence, resilience, self-esteem and preparation for secondary school
- Mobility equipment that has improved access to the curriculum.

Pupil premium funding is used to part fund activities to create economies of scale – with funding used to pay for the proportion of the intervention / resource that is accessed by ‘eligible’ children.

Expertise is brought in where appropriate, but the school takes a long term approach by ensuring that knowledge and experience derived from these interventions is cascaded through the school and delivered by permanent staff beyond the timeframe of the initial commission.

There has been a strategic, determined and constant focus on ensuring all staff recruited – teachers and teaching assistants - are of the highest quality (new teaching assistants are expected to be educated to degree level). Benefits for pupils are then sustained over time, with effective staff taking on board training and new skills, so the Pupil Premium does not have to fund repeat activities and intervention becomes self-sustaining. Constant up-skilling of teachers and teaching assistants is seen as a necessity rather than an optional extra.

The Headteacher spoke powerfully about the importance of ‘the language of high expectation across the school’ – both in respect of staff, pupils and the school community.

The school has targeted even better community engagement and out of school learning opportunities as next steps to ensuring pupil from all backgrounds, including those eligible for pupil premium funding can progress and achieve as well as they can.

**This is an issue in all schools that have high levels of complex special needs – Pupil Premium can still be effective, but the complexities may mean the impact may take longer to be embedded.*

■ CASE STUDY 3: Lillington Primary and Nursery School, Leamington Spa

Headteacher: Derek Fance

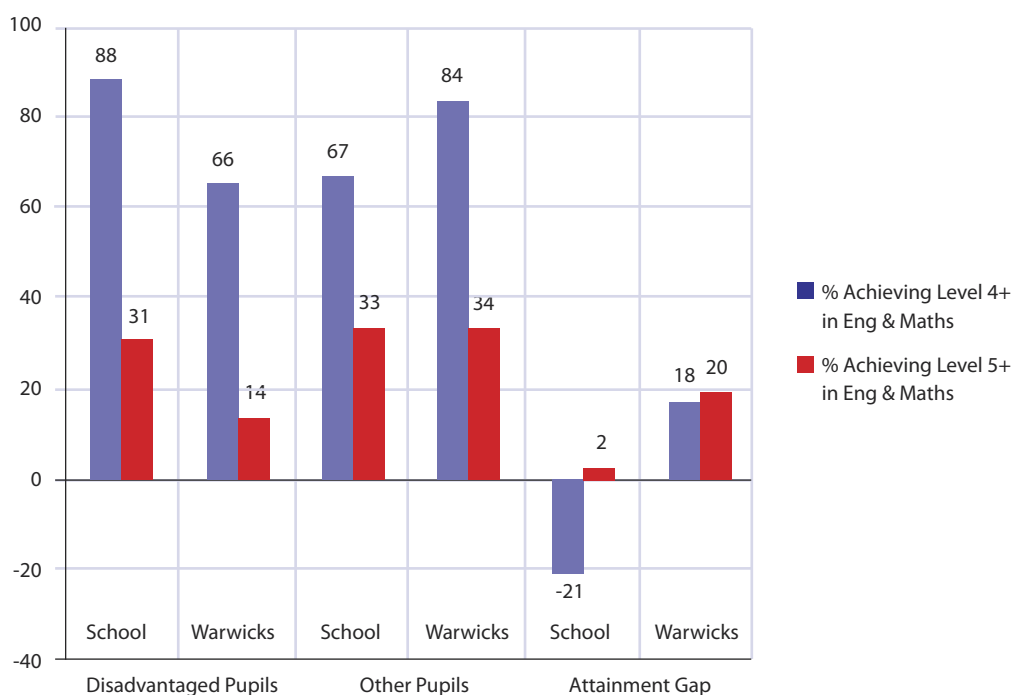
NOR: 179

% of Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding: 54.9%

Pupil Premium Funding 2011/12: £39,990

Lillington Nursery and Primary school is a small primary school at in the heart of the Lillington area of Leamington Spa. Lillington is a community that faces some challenging circumstances, with certain parts of the area facing very high unemployment levels and low incomes in comparison to other communities locally and nationally.

◆ Lillington Primary and Nursery School: Attainment data 2011/12



The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or school action plus is average at 12.8%, so for a significant number of pupils deprivation is a leading cause of low attainment on entry to the school.

Attainment levels for all pupils at the end of key stage 2 have risen significantly (from 54% of pupils achieving at least level 4 in English and maths in 2010/11 to 84% in 2011/12). The rise in attainment levels for disadvantaged pupils is a key factor in this change. All pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds make at least expected levels of progress in mathematics, with 100% of disadvantaged pupils and 83% of other pupils making at least expected levels of progress in English.

The percentage of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving at least level 5 in English and maths is significantly greater at 31% than disadvantaged pupils across all Warwickshire primary schools (14%), indicating that pupil premium activity is not just targeted at pupils at the level 3 / 4 boundary.

The school uses its pupil premium funding as part of the strategic aims of the school. This includes professional development for staff, evidence-based interventions, mentoring for learning and social / emotional wellbeing and equality of opportunity for wider experiences beyond many of the pupils' day to day lives, such as music, drama and day trips to sites of interest.

A settled, committed staff that is clear about the schools' strategic vision to:

1. raise attainment
2. improve attitudes to learning
3. raise aspiration in the community as key to success.

The staff, in turn have been invested in, in part through the Pupil Premium to further embed that commitment and provide continuity and quality for pupils. This has many benefits, for example, the school only spent £55 per pupil on supply staff per pupil in 2011/12 compared with a figure of £194 per pupil in the school in 2009/10, when attainment was low. This ensures more funding (and indirectly the pupil premium grant) is allocated to long term quality teaching that provides sustained impact on pupils.

Current pupil premium funded activities include:

- Five teachers have attended a term-long course 'Outstanding Teacher Training Intervention'.

Teachers who took part spoke enthusiastically and reflectively about the improvements in their practice and the sense of partnership and camaraderie it has brought. Four of five teachers that undertook the program have been judged in recent lesson observations to be Outstanding. The fifth was Good with elements of Outstanding.

- There has been a wider impact across school with 100% teaching being judged to be Good and 60% Outstanding.
- Teachers video their practice and spend time discussing strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. Crucially lessons are not 'graded' or judged against any inspection framework.
- Intervention is evidence based and delivered through teaching of *exceptional* quality. Pupils get the full benefits of programmes 'Every Child a Reader' and 'Every Child Counts' as a result.
- Enrichment programmes, focusing on drama and music are available to all pupils, funded were appropriate through the pupil premium.
- All pupils have access to a learning mentor – in some cases to ensure readiness to learn, and in others to stretch those pupils that are more gifted to achieve as well as they can.

All pupils, including those eligible for the Pupil Premium, are tracked very closely as individuals. The impact of academic interventions are carefully monitor against agreed frameworks.

Teacher training and development is carefully evaluated – with the understanding that consistently excellent teaching will lead to raising attainment for all pupils, and faster progress for those starting at low baseline, a consistent feature of FSM Pupils.

At the heart of the schools' stand out success for disadvantaged learners has been the steadfast and relentless belief, led by the Headteacher, that the key 'piece of the jigsaw' is understanding the lives of the pupils and their families, recognising that disadvantage due to socio-economic circumstances is not just restricted to those pupils eligible for free school meals.

Building on these successes, the school is working hard to broaden its appeal to become the school of choice for the community, recognising that further improving attitudes to learning will sustain the high quality outcomes for pupils at the school and into secondary education.

■ CASE STUDY 4: Ashlawn School, Rugby

Headteacher: Lois Reed

NOR: 1660

% of Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding:
12.2%

Pupil Premium Funding 2011/12: £44,116

Ashlawn School is a large secondary school in Rugby. The school has 30 places a year (out of a total of around 260) reserved for students who are successful in the Warwickshire 11+ examination, making its intake comprehensive. A number of the pupils in this stream come from disadvantaged backgrounds and are eligible for free school meals. The 11+ group is streamed with high attainers who did not take (or in some cases, did not pass) the 11+ exam, and there are opportunities for other pupils to join the high attaining stream in year 9.

The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or school action plus is low at 5%, although the figure for the 2012 GCSE cohort was higher at 11%. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving C+ in GCSE English and Maths at Ashlawn exceeds figures for Warwickshire and all but two LAs nationally.

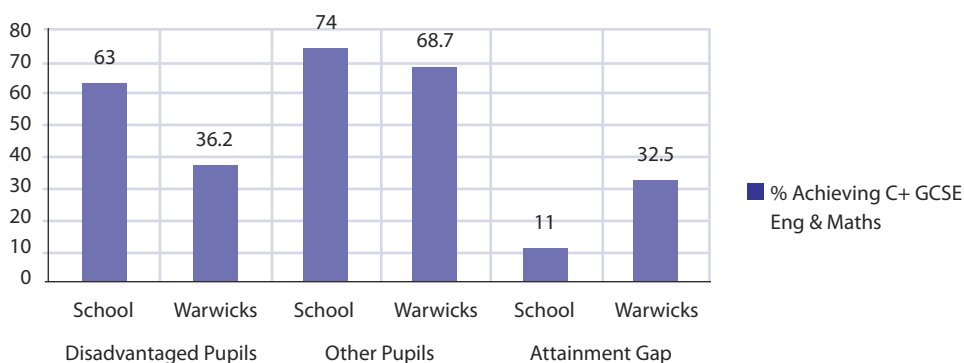
The Headteacher and senior leadership value inclusivity and have high expectations of all their students, and these values are evidently and consistently shared by the staff at all levels. The school takes a personalised approach to its pupil premium students, which is demonstrated by their commitment to supporting the 'whole' student. In and outside of lessons there is a level of care that is often explicit in primary schools, but less often seen in secondary schools.

At the same time, this is coupled with high academic expectations – including an expectation for pupils to take personal responsibility for their own learning. The result is a genuine sense of an Ashlawn education community, where former pupils even return to work in the school as 'graduate teachers'.

Pupil Premium funded activity is part of a wider strategy for narrowing attainment gaps and improving outcomes for all. The strategy is broken down in to five areas:

- **A culture of aspiration** developed through personalising, challenging and transformational learning; better-than-expected progress tracking; personalised curriculum drawing on learning pathways and supported by high quality enrichment including a range of student leadership curriculum experiences
- **Innovative learning and teaching** developed through fostering of self-belief and a commitment to lifelong learning and structured through acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes, behaviours and self-identity
- **Enriched learning** support developed through small group tutoring; literacy, numeracy and skills interventions; peer and specialist coaching; mentoring and one-to-one guided learning
- An ethos of **personal and individual development** structured through integrated learning which is motivational, authentic, skills-based and diverse; curriculum experiences which challenges and promotes innovation and creativity; individual support planning; pastoral support, guidance and parental engagement.

◆ Ashlawn School: % achieving C+ GCSE English and Maths



The strategy impacts on all students that need it, with Pupil Premium funding contributing to overall costs. Two approaches in particular that contribute to the success of students eligible for pupil premium are the innovative use of graduate teachers and extensive tracking of Pupil Premium pupils.

Unqualified graduates teach intervention classes

The school employs graduates (often ex pupils) as unqualified teachers to work on their small group intervention programme. These English and Maths specialists receive training in the school, and understand not only their role in the classroom but also the role they are playing in the overall school strategy. They work to a timetable where they teach the same students consistently, allowing them to build up a relationship and help the students gain the confidence and skills to return to the main class full time. These graduates are well known to the school, and a number of them then go on to do teacher training.

Thorough tracking of pupil premium pupils

Tracking of Pupil Premium pupils and their funding allocation is done with very close scrutiny. This includes:

- a high level monitoring of activity – broken down by year group and divided between curriculum, personalised support, pastoral support and financial support,
- scrutiny of KS4 performance outcomes for pupil premium pupils and other pupils by progress in English and Maths, 5 A*-C at GCSE, 5 A*-C at GCSE including Eng & Ma, 3A*-A and Ebacc.
- individual tracking of pupil interventions using the categories described in above, and the associated costs.

This ensures that detailed information about each pupil eligible for funding across the school is accessible to all staff, along with the impact of the intervention(s) and the cost on that pupil. Pupil premium students are also tracked into key stage five, with school support provided as appropriate.

The school has identified and successfully implemented an approach of 'marginal gains' – a multi layered approach of high expectations (including targeted parental engagement), high quality teaching and intervention to bring about large-scale changes in outcomes.

■ CASE STUDY 5: Temple Herdewyke Primary School, Southam

Headteacher: Maggie Godfrey

NOR: 100

% of Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium (including Service Children's Premium) Funding: 51%. The majority of these receive the service children's premium.

Pupil Premium Funding 2011/12: £2,928

Service Children's Premium 2011/12: £7,200

Temple Herdewyke Primary school is a small rural primary school in South Warwickshire. The school and village is adjacent to the MoD site Defence Munitions (DM) Kineton.

The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or school action plus is slightly below average at 8.9%.

The proportion of pupils joining the school other than at normal times of year is very high. The majority of these are service children. Very few children in years five and six joined the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Attainment levels for all pupils at the end of key stage 2 are above Local Authority and National averages. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and service children perform as well as their peers. In 2011-12, 75% of Service Children (four children) achieved level 4+ in English and Maths at the end of key stage 2, with 50% of those achieving level 5+. For other pupils (seven children), 88% achieved level 4+, 29% level 5+.

The school ring fences its pupil premium funding – and intervenes on a child by child basis. There are currently six children eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Whilst this is a small group, there is significant ability range between pupils within the group, ranging from one pupil that is working well above national levels to two that need significant additional support. There are also pupils that are working at or slightly above national expectations, but are 'fragile'. Different approaches are applied in each case.

The high attaining pupil is being targeted for level six in both English and Maths, with some additional support for Maths as the slightly weaker subject. Additionally, music lessons are provided to develop new experiences. Pupil premium spending for middle attainers includes booster classes to secure learning, backed up by enrichment activities such as football

club, which improve have attitudes to learning and school. Support is similar for low attainers, but differentiated appropriately and supported by enrichment.

These opportunities are available for all pupils, but pupil premium funding is used specifically for those who are eligible.

Pupils are carefully tracked, in relation to academic attainment and beyond – for example, attendance and punctuality.

Service children’s funding is spent on family support, community engagement, and emotional wellbeing and enrichment activities. These include:

- After school clubs (giving children access to a range of activities in a rurally isolated environment – developing friendships in a structured and supportive way).
- Nurture group training for TAs (new pupils integrate more easily – and current pupils accept new arrivals more readily).
- Subsidised trips and discounted transport costs (meaning pupils are able to enjoy and understand their local area – or for opportunities further afield – to build relationships with their peers).

Crucially, Pupil and Service children’s premium activity mirrors the wider strategy of the school to integrate children with support and personalisation – such as sending prospective pupils a book about their new classmates in advance of joining the school - to negate the effects of repetitive changes and new starts for children (or in some cases, socio economic disadvantage).

The school employs teaching assistants of service family background – ensuring that staff can support children and families new to the school. Staff crucially know and understand their school community.

These qualities are supported by a striking level of care for individual children, all underpinned by consistently high quality teaching and a celebration of diversity and internationalism – children proudly explain how many schools they have attended and where! The school offers some model strategies for ensuring children with change and challenge in their lives are able to thrive.

■ CASE STUDY 6: Champion School, Leamington Spa

Headteacher: Mark Feldman

NOR: 582

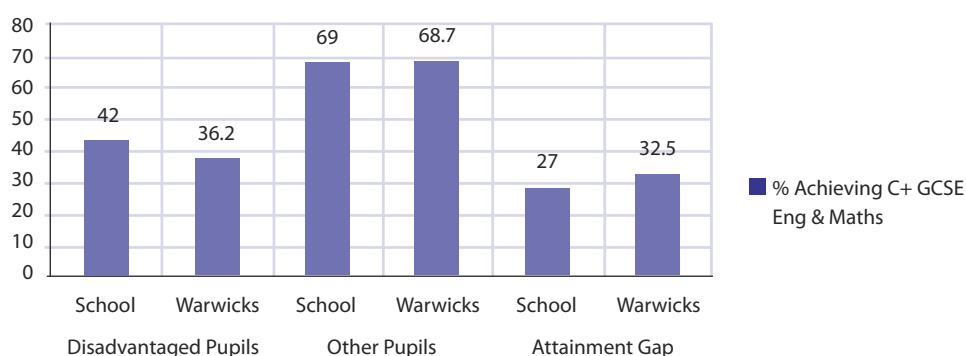
% of Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding: 42%

Pupil Premium Funding 2011/12: £93,000

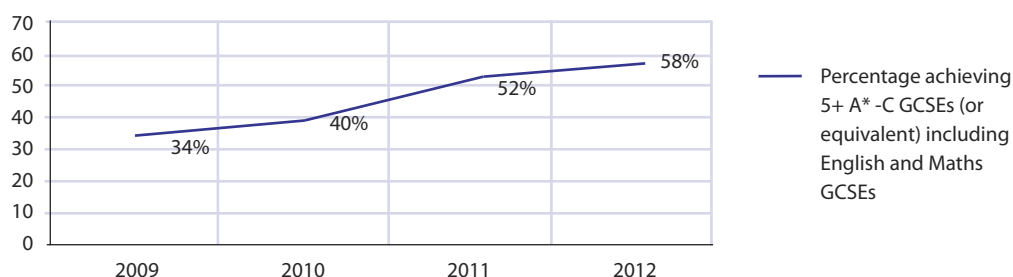
Campion School is a smaller than average secondary School in the Sydenham area of Leamington Spa. The majority of pupils come from the local community. The school has the highest proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium in Warwickshire. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or school action plus is low at 5.7%.

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving C+ in GCSE English and Maths at Campion exceeds figures for Warwickshire. Whilst the attainment gap remains, it is smaller than the average gap across the local authority and attainment for all pupils has risen significantly over the past three years and the school, and is now in line with the national average:

◆ Champion School: % achieving C+ GCSE English and Maths



◆ **Campion School: % achieving 5+ A* -C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and Maths GCSEs**



Campion School is a school where the Headteacher, the senior leadership and the staff know and understand their community. They have used a significant amount of pupil premium funding to focus relentlessly on ensuring as many pupils achieve grade C at English and Maths as possible. The rationale for this is to improve the life choices of as many pupils as possible.

Because high numbers of pupils come from disadvantaged and other challenging socio-economic backgrounds and previously lower levels of attainment, there has been a concerted drive to improve results overall. This has meant that initiatives are, in most cases, large scale and accessed by a significant proportion of students. There is a mantra of 'belief, high expectations and enthusiasm' that teachers, support staff and pupils are expected to adhere to.

Pupil Premium spending is allocated as follows:

- Intensive tutoring and intervention for targeting year 11 pupils at risk of not achieving grade C+ in English & Maths by graduates employed by the school
- Tutoring and intervention for year 11 pupils at risk of not making three levels of progress through a specialist tutor
- Learning Support Unit established to work with targeted group of pupils at risk of exclusion
- Intervention to tackle persistent absence
- Literacy support for KS3 pupils to ensure they can access the secondary curriculum, including those that have English as an Additional language
- A counsellor to work with pupils and their families.

The school provides a detailed breakdown of pupil premium activity, resources and impact here:

http://www.campion.warwickshire.sch.uk/page_viewer.asp?page=Pupil+Premium+Report+2011%2F12+%2F+Annual+report+and+Financial+statements&pid=103

The one to one tuition is highly personalised and delivered by committed and supportive graduates. These graduates have the freedom to build strong professional relationships with pupils and support them through a range of resources and initiatives: 'It's just not about telling them what to do' said one graduate.

Graduate work is underpinned by the shared values of the school; trust, a flexible, target driven approach and high expectations from the school about their own intellect as well as their impact.

Whilst not directly pupil premium funded, the school has also created additional capacity in its English and Maths departments so there is no compromise on quality or consistency of teaching and the knowledge / understanding of the pupils and their communities. It also creates capacity within the school for action research, professional development and partnership working.

In 2012/13 there is a greater focus on ensuring that higher attainers (including those eligible for premium) do as well as they can – and get the very highest grades possible through personalised intervention and improved / consistently better teaching across the school.

Further, the school expects that the proportion of Pupil Premium students that will gain at least 5 A*-C including English and Maths will rise to over 50% in 2013 and 2014 with a concomitant reduction in the attainment gap, significantly bucking local and national trends.

■ CASE STUDY 7: Kingsway Community Primary School, Leamington Spa

Headteacher: Martin Ledgard

NOR: 146

% of Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding: 32.5%

Pupil Premium Funding 2011/12: £12,845

Kingsway Community Primary is a small school in Leamington Spa. The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is high, and the proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is well above average.

Inspected by Ofsted in Spring 2013, the school was deemed to 'Require Improvement'. In Summer 2012 key stage two attainment levels were well below national expectations.

The head and deputy were appointed in September 2012 and January 2013, have been praised by Ofsted as having good capacity to improve the school, and have been seen to make rapid progress in improving the school over the past six months. Particularly noticeable was the 'outward facing' approach of the HT, looking to learn from colleagues and building relations with successful local schools. The senior leadership team are supported by proactive and well informed governors.

Understandably, raising attainment for all pupils has been the key focus for the new leadership team at the school, and the benefits of this will be demonstrated in 2013 KS2 results, resulting from better team cohesion and improved teaching quality. At the same time, there has been a clear, strategic focus on readiness and attitudes to learning, with parental and community engagement at the heart of the strategy.

The appointment member of staff (a TA) to lead school – community engagement has been key to emerging successes. As in other successful pupil premium funded initiatives, quality and appropriateness for the position is crucial. In this case, the appointee is dedicated, experienced and skilled, and understands both the school history and community it serves.

The role involves proactively working with families that are not always engaged with their child's learning, as well as supporting intervention in and out of the classroom. Additionally, the staff member acts as an intermediary between the nearby children's centre and other agencies so knowledge and information is shared and understood. The position comes with no fixed timetable so parents, carers and children - many of who are eligible for pupil premium funding - get support when they need it wherever possible.

Pupil premium funding is also used to:

- Offer nurture, enrichment classes and trips to build experiences – with a view to boosting reading and writing
- Training for staff in supporting vulnerable adults and children – so staff are unskilled and learn to understand the school community better
- One to one interventions and small group tuition in reading, writing and maths.

Stability is key. The consistency of approach is having a positive impact on children and their families, making them more receptive to learning and improving their attitudes to education.

Acknowledgements

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School Leaders who took part in focus group sessions

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Mark Feldman

Martin Ledgard

Maxine Clewlow

Nicola Harwood

Nigel Mills

Richard Parker

Ruth Waterman

Sheila Dentith

Shona Walton

Vicky Bicknell

July 2013

REFERENCES

1 "Quality of Life in Warwickshire 2012/2013" Warwickshire Observatory.

2 This and the following data came directly from the Department for Education.

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