



National College for  
Teaching & Leadership



# Effective pupil premium reviews

A guide developed by the Teaching  
Schools Council

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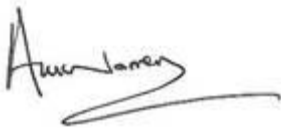
## Foreword

In schools across the country, there has been a growing momentum to overturn generations of stereotyping. The mission is clear and, simply put, aims to ensure that what a pupil's family does or where they are born should not determine their life chances. This is what good education systems aspire to, but it is what **great** education systems consistently achieve. And it must be a top goal for all of us who work with children and young people.

Pupil premium funding has played an important role in changing perceptions and creating a focus on preventing disadvantaged pupils falling behind their better-off peers. As thinking and ideas about how to use this fund effectively have developed, so the Teaching Schools Council has worked closely with the Department for Education to develop and extend the operation of pupil premium reviewers. We now have a much better idea of some of the innovative and effective ways in which hardworking teachers and school leaders are using the fund, and we are keen that these great ideas are shared more widely.

The Teaching Schools Council is delighted to have worked with colleagues from the Department for Education (DfE), the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and selected Reviewers to produce this guide. I am particularly indebted to Gill Robinson (Vice Chair of the TSC) and her pupil premium “champions” for their hard work and passionate advocacy of all young people's entitlement to an outstanding education.

We hope that the new edition of the Guide to Effective Pupil Premium Reviews will support teachers and school leaders to make even more effective use of the pupil premium to raise standards for all disadvantaged pupils, so that they can achieve their full potential.



Andrew Warren

Chair of the Teaching Schools Council

## About this guide

This guide updates the document originally published by the Teaching Schools Council in November 2014 and updated in May 2016. It offers a framework to help schools and reviewers make the most of a pupil premium review, and so find the best ways to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

The guide refresh is based on feedback from experienced pupil premium reviewers and schools. The framework, which can also help schools to develop their strategic thinking, draws on the experience of Sir John Dunford and the Education Endowment Foundation.

The guide again includes a number of case studies that can help reviewers as they visit schools. The templates for the self-assessment, visit and action plan have been updated and can help schools to create an integrated pupil premium strategy that supports all disadvantaged pupils to reach their potential.

### **Greater impact with pupil premium funding**

Since their introduction in 2013 pupil premium reviews have helped hundreds of schools to refine their work with disadvantaged pupils and spend the pupil premium more effectively. Good pupil premium reviews are normally associated with improved pupil outcomes. Evidence is at the heart of this drive for effectiveness so this guide uses an evidence-based approach to assess the effectiveness of a school's pupil premium strategy, and identify how it might be refined to make greater impact. This will normally involve adjusting the way the funding is used.

We all know time is short for disadvantaged pupils in our schools to realise their potential, so it is more vital than ever that the decisions about using the funding are part of an effective strategy. While accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils can be complex, schools in every region - including Pupil Premium Award-winners, Teaching Schools and high achieving schools - are delivering high standards for disadvantaged pupils every year.

### **Developing a pupil premium strategy**

All the materials in this guide are optional. Local Authority (LA) maintained schools and many academies are required to publish their pupil premium strategy online, setting out how they intend to spend their pupil premium allocation to address barriers to learning and, crucially, the rationale behind these decisions. This Guide has been designed to support this; it includes a suggested template on page 12 which you could use to carry out a self-review of your disadvantage provision before the start of an external review. Schools have found this template to be a useful basis for publishing their on-line pupil premium strategy. You can find some completed examples on the [Teaching Schools Council website](#).

## Taking an evidence-based approach

Whilst it is true that each school is unique, it is equally true that outstanding teaching and leadership and a relentless focus on improvement will make a real difference - whatever the context, or degree of challenge facing a school.

We know this because there is compelling evidence that demonstrates high quality teaching and leadership are vital in raising attainment. We also know that schools that are most effective in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils always use evidence about what makes a real difference to change their practice.

## What does the research tell us?

There is more and more evidence that schools can and do achieve greater impact from refining their use of the pupil premium. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Teaching and Learning Toolkit provides an accessible summary of this emerging evidence and its helpful 'Families of Schools' tool enables schools with similar intakes to learn about success from each other. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) has published research into the practice of schools that are successful in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, as well as those which aren't so successful.<sup>1</sup> This research identified seven 'building blocks of success' common to the most effective schools. The approaches employed by these schools include a whole-school approach to quality first teaching, which sets high aspirations for all pupils.

Effective schools also recognise that disadvantaged pupils are not a homogenous group and employ targeted approaches for groups or individuals facing particular barriers. For example, whilst the pupil premium has focused many schools' attention on raising the attainment of low performing pupils, more able disadvantaged pupils are at risk of underachievement too. Analysis by the Sutton Trust<sup>2</sup> shows that many disadvantaged pupils who are high performing at key stage 2 fall badly behind their peers by key stage 4. This underachievement is also reflected in the low proportions of disadvantaged pupils progressing to higher ranked universities after key stage 5. Ofsted<sup>3</sup> has highlighted a lack of support for more able disadvantaged pupils, particularly during key stage 3, as an area that many schools need to address. Other groups of pupils that schools may not have focused on within their overall strategy include looked after children, children adopted from care or service children.

All these groups may have similar challenges, yet research shows that identifying each individual's barriers to learning is the key to success with the pupil premium.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-the-attainment-of-disadvantaged-pupils>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.suttontrust.com/researcharchive/missing-talent/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-3-the-wasted-years>

## Who is this guide for?

Schools should commission their pupil premium review from an experienced, independent system leader with a track record in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Accordingly, this guide may be useful to:

- **Leaders of schools that have been recommended to commission a review** by Ofsted, a regional schools commissioner (RSC), the Department for Education (DfE), a local authority, sponsor trust, diocese or other relevant body.
- **Leaders of schools looking to commission a review as part of their self-improvement strategy**
- **The governing boards of academy trusts and maintained schools, local authorities, academy sponsors and RSCs** as part of their roles in challenging and supporting school performance for disadvantaged pupils.
- **Pupil premium reviewers**; including Teaching School heads, National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs).

## When should schools commission a review?

All schools will usually find that a review will offer new approaches or improve the implementation of existing strategies. You should consider how a pupil premium review best fits with your on-going cycle of improvement to identify when you would most benefit from a fresh perspective. A review will be a priority for any school where disadvantaged pupils are not meeting expected levels, or slow progress means they are failing to realise their potential.

Ofsted will recommend that a school commissions a review if, during a section 5 inspection, it identifies specific issues regarding the provision for disadvantaged pupils.

In some cases Ministers, an RSC team, local authority, or the organisation involved in running the school, academy or free school may recommend that a review is commissioned if there are concerns about the attainment or progress of the school's disadvantaged pupils.

Where a school receives a review recommendation it is important that action is taken promptly – you should start the process of commissioning a review within two weeks and should aim to have the initial visit within eight weeks.

Where appropriate, you may also consider including early years provision when you commission a review. You don't have to publish information about how you spend the early years pupil premium (EYPP), however it is helpful if schools with nurseries consider how they use the EYPP when developing their pupil premium strategy.

## Who leads a pupil premium review?

The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) offers designation as a pupil premium reviewer to system leaders whose schools have a good track record with disadvantaged pupil outcomes. While the system leader will usually hold an initial discussion with the commissioning head teacher they will often deploy other members of their leadership team with relevant expertise, including middle leaders and SLEs, to carry out much of the review. A post-coded directory of designated reviewers is maintained by NCTL that all schools are welcome to consult. To help schools find reviewers easily the Teaching Schools Council with the DfE has established a review brokerage service for all regions in England. Two 'Coordinator' schools in each region are available to help any school looking for a review to engage an appropriate reviewer. You can find your local Coordinator school on the [Teaching Schools Council website](#).

## What happens during a review?

The review is designed to be a collaborative process. Once you have agreed with your reviewer on any specific priorities you will arrange for them to spend a day or so on-site, talking to the school's leaders and staff. You will be asked to send them a completed self-evaluation before the visit to provide context and a starting point. They will discuss your own view of what is working well and what could work better, and will come to some conclusions about possible ways to boost pupil progress. They will work with you on a plan of action to refine the way you support disadvantaged pupils and use the pupil premium.

## How long does a pupil premium review take?

A pupil premium review will usually take three or four days for a reviewer, and two or three days in total for the school. Both parties spend up to a day preparing, and the visit usually takes a day. The analysis, discussion and action plan may be dealt with through a second visit day, or by email and phone. Schools have told us that the most successful reviews normally include a visit several months later to see how elements of the action plan are performing.

## Who pays for the external review and how much will it cost?

Commissioning schools or trusts pay for their pupil premium review. The cost is agreed between the reviewer and the commissioning school/trust, and should reflect the amount of time involved in the review. There is no set cost and the DfE and NCTL have no set day rates for system leaders, but as a guide day rates should reflect pay and expenses for a senior leader, including any costs incurred by their school to release them. A typical day rate for a system leader is currently between £400 and £500. There may be a cost for the brokerage service finding the reviewer.

At the end of the review the school will have an improved strategy and plans to implement it. Support beyond the initial review follow up is paid for separately; as a partnership between commissioning school and reviewing school can develop it may be possible to agree quid pro quos or other ways of sharing resources.

## **What about small schools with limited budgets?**

Reviews of groups of schools can lead to the possibility of ongoing peer support networks. Heads of small schools who are looking to commission a review might speak to other local heads to see if a joint review could work for them.

## **Reviewing pupil premium across a multi-academy trust or federation**

A review of pupil premium across all the schools in a multi academy trust or federation would be managed differently from a review of a single school. The starting point would be to use this guidance to carry out self-reviews across the MAT/federation; this could be followed by input from an experienced external reviewer.

## **What role do local governing boards play in pupil premium reviews?**

School governing boards and the board of trustees of multi-academy trusts have a crucial role to play in providing constructive challenge to a school's pupil premium strategy, as set out in their three core functions<sup>4</sup>.

Sometimes a school is asked to commission an external [review of governance](#) alongside a pupil premium review; this is often carried out by a National Leader of Governance.

These reviews should be commissioned from separate specialist reviewers, though you will wish to ensure collaborative working between the reviewers. System leaders undertaking these different reviews should discuss with each other and the school how they will provide consistent advice and support.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>



# CHAPTER ONE: FOR SCHOOLS

## Pupil premium review framework for schools

Complete 1-4 as part of your self-evaluation prior to the reviewer visit.

### **1. What is the current position at your school?**

Where is the current performance compared with national non-disadvantaged pupil performance? Complete sections 1 and 2 of the pupil premium strategy statement.

### **2. What are the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils in your school?**

Identify barriers that need to be addressed in-school, as well as external factors such as poor home learning environment and low attendance. Complete section 3 of the strategy statement.

### **3. What would success look like?**

Ultimately, the impact of the school's work should lead to improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils. However, monitoring impact is much more meaningful if specific outcomes which will lead to this are identified, alongside precise success criteria. These could include increasing rates of progress; improving attendance; reducing exclusions; improving family engagement. For each desired outcome, schools should decide how success will be measured and set specific targets. Complete section 4 of the strategy statement.

### **4. What are you currently doing?**

How are you currently spending the pupil premium? How does your spending link to the barriers and desired outcomes? Complete section 5 of the strategy statement.

*Complete steps 5-7 in partnership with your reviewer.*

### **5. Reviewer visit and feedback: co-created action plan**

### **6. Improving your approach**

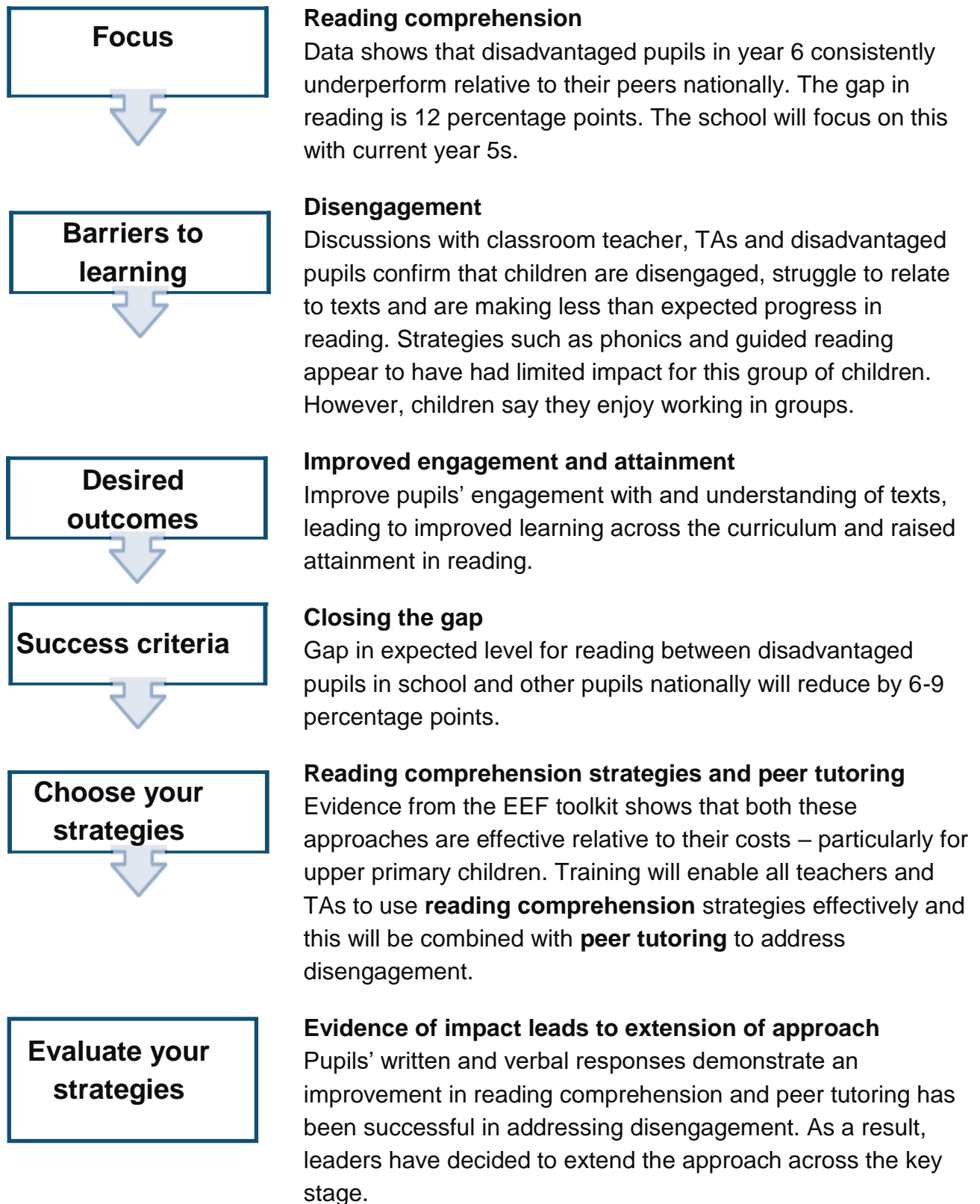
Based on your self-evaluation and feedback from the reviewer plan your pupil premium strategy for the next academic year. Complete section 6 of the strategy statement. At this point, schools may also wish to make amendments to Sections 3 and 4.

### **7. Review your approach (2-6 months later)**

In partnership with the reviewer assess the success of the approach so far, making any improvements or changes. This may include identifying any approaches that are likely to be ineffective and could be changed. Review section 6 of the strategy statement.

## Illustration of self-evaluation

In this fictional example a school identifies a combination of approaches to improve reading for disadvantaged pupils in upper key stage 2.



## Pupil premium strategy / self-evaluation (primary, middle)

As part of your full strategy you will also wish to consider **results for specific groups of pupils** (such as particular year groups or minority groups) as well as the headline figures presented here. If you have very small pupil numbers you may wish to present 3 year averages here.

1. Summary information				
School				
Academic Year		Total PP budget		Date of most recent PP Review
Total number of pupils		Number of pupils eligible for PP		Date for next internal review of this strategy

2. Current attainment			
	Use the established alternative to levels	Pupils eligible for PP (your school)	Pupils not eligible for PP (national average)
% achieving expected standard or above in reading, writing & maths			
% making expected progress in reading (as measured in the school)			
% making expected progress in writing (as measured in the school)			
% making expected progress in mathematics (as measured in the school)			

3. Barriers to future attainment (for pupils eligible for PP)	
Academic barriers ( <i>issues to be addressed in school, such as poor oral language skills</i> )	
A.	
B.	
C.	
Additional barriers ( <i>including issues which also require action outside school, such as low attendance</i> )	
D.	

Data sources that can help you identify barriers to attainment in your school include: RAISEonline; the EEF Families of School database; FFT Aspire; staff and pupil consultation; attendance records; recent school Ofsted reports and guidance.

Identify barriers that need to be addressed in-school, as well as external factors such as home learning environment and low attendance.

4. Intended outcomes ( <i>specific outcomes and how they will be measured</i> )		Success criteria
A.		
B.		
C.		
D.		

It is not essential to identify four desired outcomes; focusing on fewer aims in more depth may be better.

<b>5. Review of expenditure</b>				
<b>Previous Academic Year</b>		Show whether the success criteria were met. Additional evidence of impact can also be referred to, including attainment data, progress data, and case studies.		Lessons learned may be about impact or implementation.
<b>i. Quality of teaching for all</b>				
Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost
			For approaches that did not meet their success criteria it is important to assess whether you will continue allocating funding and if, so, why.	
<b>ii. Targeted support</b>				
Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost
<b>iii. Other approaches</b>				
Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost

6. Planned expenditure					
Academic year		You may have more than one action/approach for each desired			
The three headings enable you to demonstrate how you are using the Pupil Premium to improve classroom pedagogy, provide targeted support and support whole school strategies					
i. Quality of teaching for all					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence and rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
		Effective practice is to combine professional knowledge with robust evidence about approaches that are known to be effective. You can consult external evidence sources such as the <a href="#">Teaching and Learning Toolkit</a> , the <a href="#">NfER report on supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils</a> , <a href="#">Ofsted's 2013 report on the pupil premium</a> and <a href="#">Ofsted's 2014 report on pupil premium progress</a> .			
				<b>Total budgeted cost</b>	
ii. Targeted support					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence and rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
				<b>Total budgeted cost</b>	
iii. Other approaches					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence and rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
				<b>Total budgeted cost</b>	

## 7. Additional detail

In this section you can annex or refer to **additional** information which you have used to support the sections above.

## Pupil premium strategy / self- evaluation (secondary)

As part of your full strategy you will also wish to consider **results for specific groups of pupils** (such as particular year groups or minority groups) as well as the headline figures presented here. If you have very small pupil numbers you may wish to present 3 year averages here.

1. Summary information				
School				
Academic Year		Total PP budget		Date of most recent PP Review
Total number of pupils		Number of pupils eligible for PP		Date for next internal review of this strategy
2. Current attainment				
		Pupils eligible for PP (your school)	Pupils not eligible for PP (national average)	
Progress 8 score average				
Attainment 8 score average				
3. Barriers to future attainment (for pupils eligible for PP)				
<b>Academic barriers</b> ( <i>issues to be addressed in school, such as poor literacy skills</i> )				
A.				
B.				
C.				
Additional barriers ( <i>including issues which also require action outside school, such as low attendance rates</i> )				
D.				
4. Intended outcomes ( <i>specific outcomes and how they will be measured</i> )				Success criteria
A.				
B.				
C.				
D.				

Data sources that can help you identify barriers to attainment in your school include: RAISEonline; the EEF Families of Schools database; FFT Aspire; staff and pupil consultation; attendance records; recent school Ofsted reports; and Ofsted guidance.

Identify barriers that need to be addressed in-school, as well as external factors such as poor home learning environment and low attendance.

It is not essential to identify four desired outcomes; focusing on fewer aims in more depth may be better.

5. Planned expenditure					
Academic year		You may have more than one action/approach for each desired			
The three headings enable you to demonstrate how you are using the Pupil Premium to improve classroom pedagogy, provide targeted support and support whole school strategies.					
i. Quality of teaching for all					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence and rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
				<b>Total budgeted cost</b>	
ii. Targeted support					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence and rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
				<b>Total budgeted cost</b>	
iii. Other approaches					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence and rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?

Effective practice is to combine professional knowledge with robust evidence about approaches which are known to be effective. You can consult external evidence sources such as the [Teaching and Learning Toolkit](#), the [NfER report](#) on supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, [Ofsted's 2013 report](#) on the pupil premium and [Ofsted's 2014 report](#) on pupil premium progress.



	<b>Total budgeted cost</b>
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**6. Review of expenditure**

Show whether the success criteria were met. Additional evidence of impact can also be referred to, including attainment data, progress data, and case studies.

Lessons learned may be about impact or implementation.

**Previous Academic Year****iv. Quality of teaching for all**

Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost

For approaches which did not meet their success criteria, it is important to assess whether you will continue allocating funding and if so, why.

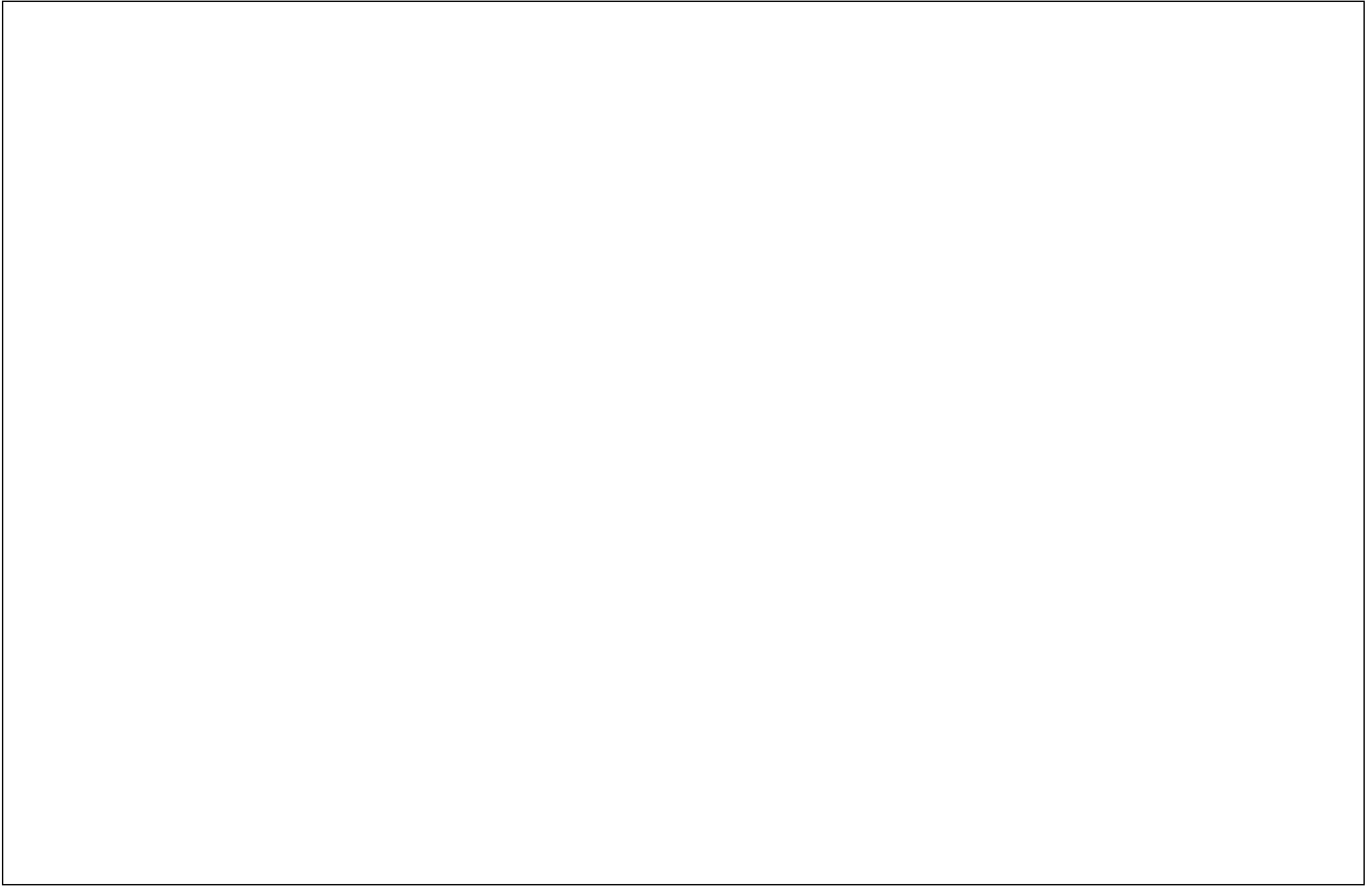
**v. Targeted support**

Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost

**vi. Other approaches**

Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost

## 7. Additional detail



## Pupil premium strategy / self-evaluation (SEN schools)

1. Summary information				
School			Type of SEN (eg.PMLD/SLD/MLD etc.)	
Academic Year		Total PP budget	Date of most recent PP Review	
Total number of pupils		Number of pupils eligible for PP	Date for next internal review of this strategy	
2. Current attainment				
		Pupils eligible for PP (your school)	Pupils not eligible for PP (national average)	
% achieving UQ targets in communication				
% achieving UQ targets in maths				
% progress specific to school setting←				
3. Barriers to future attainment (for pupils eligible for PP )			You may also want to upload specific data that is personal to your school eg IEP progress, QUEST progress, MAPP	
In-school barriers				
A.				
B.				
C.				
External barriers				
D.				
4. Intended outcomes ( <i>specific outcomes and how they will be measured</i> )				Success criteria
A.				
B.				
C.				
D.				

5. Planned expenditure					
<b>Academic year</b>					
The headings enable you to show how you are using pupil premium to improve classroom pedagogy, provide targeted support and support whole school strategies.					
iv. Quality of teaching for all					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence & rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
<b>Total budgeted cost</b>					
v. Targeted support					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence & rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
<b>Total budgeted cost</b>					
vi. Other approaches (including links to personal, social and emotional wellbeing)					
Action	Intended outcome	What is the evidence & rationale for this choice?	How will you ensure it is implemented well?	Staff lead	When will you review implementation?
<b>Total budgeted cost</b>					

6. Review of expenditure				
Previous Academic Year				
<b>vii. Quality of teaching for all</b>				
Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost
<b>viii. Targeted support</b>				
Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost
<b>ix. Other approaches (including links to personal, social and emotional wellbeing)</b>				
Action	Intended outcome	Estimated impact: Did you meet the success criteria? (Include impact on pupils not eligible for PP, if appropriate).	Lessons learned (and whether you will continue with this approach)	Cost
<b>7. Additional detail</b>				

In this section you can annex or refer to **additional** information which you have used to inform the statement above.

## Useful links and resources

When reviewing how pupil premium funding is currently spent school leaders and governors will find the following documents and sources of evidence invaluable:

- NFER's research [Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils](#) focuses on schools that are successful in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, as well as those who aren't so successful (see figure 1 below).
- The [EEF toolkit](#) provides details on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a range of interventions, and the evidence base that underpins them. The [EEF evaluation toolkit](#) helps schools to understand which approaches might work best for their pupils. The [Families of Schools database](#) is a tool to help facilitate collaboration between schools facing similar challenges to help them learn from one another.
- Ofsted's Jan 2013 report, [The pupil premium: how schools are spending funding successfully](#) summarises successful and unsuccessful approaches to pupil premium use. The accompanying analysis and challenge toolkit helps schools to identify where there are gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others. An [update on the progress schools have made using their pupil premium funding to raise achievement for eligible pupils](#) was published in July 2014.
- The [Pupil Premium Awards website](#) provides an inspirational insight into what successful schools are doing with their pupil premium.
- [Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants](#), published by the EEF, and [Teaching Assistants \(TAs\): a guide to good practice](#) by Oxford Primary are essential reads that will help to ensure the effective deployment of support staff.

Sir John Dunford's 2014 article, [Using the pupil premium effectively: an evidence-based approach to closing the gap](#) from the Teaching Leaders Quarterly (Spring 2014 edition) is helpful reading for middle leaders, who have an important contribution to make to the effective use of the pupil premium as well as his [Ten-point plan for spending the pupil premium successfully](#).



## What are the most effective ways to support disadvantaged pupils' achievement?



Department  
for Education

### What are the most effective ways to support disadvantaged pupils' achievement?



Evidence for  
Excellence in  
Education

Research undertaken by NFER has identified seven building blocks that are common in schools which are more successful in raising disadvantaged pupils' attainment.

**1. Whole-school ethos of attainment for all:** Schools have an ethos of high attainment for all pupils and avoid stereotyping disadvantaged pupils as all facing similar barriers or having less potential to succeed.



**2. Addressing behaviour and attendance:** Schools ensure effective behaviour strategies are in place, respond quickly to poor attendance and provide strong social and emotional support, including through working with families.



**3. High quality teaching for all:** Schools emphasise 'quality teaching first' and provide consistently high standards by setting expectations, monitoring performance and sharing best practice.



**4. Meeting individual learning needs:** Staff identify each pupil's challenges and interests. They seek the best strategies to help each pupil make the next step in his or her learning. Schools provide individual support for specific learning needs and group support for pupils with similar needs.



**5. Deploying staff effectively:** Schools devolve responsibility to frontline staff, use their best teachers to work with pupils who need the most support and train teaching assistants to support pupils' learning.



**6. Data driven and responding to evidence:** Teachers use data to identify pupils' learning needs, review progress every few weeks and address underperformance quickly. They have manageable Assessment for Learning systems, which provide clear feedback for pupils. Schools use evidence to make decisions about their support strategies.



**7. Clear, responsive leadership:** Senior leaders set ever higher aspirations and lead by example. They hold all staff accountable for raising attainment, rather than accepting low aspirations and variable performance. They share their thinking and invest in staff training.



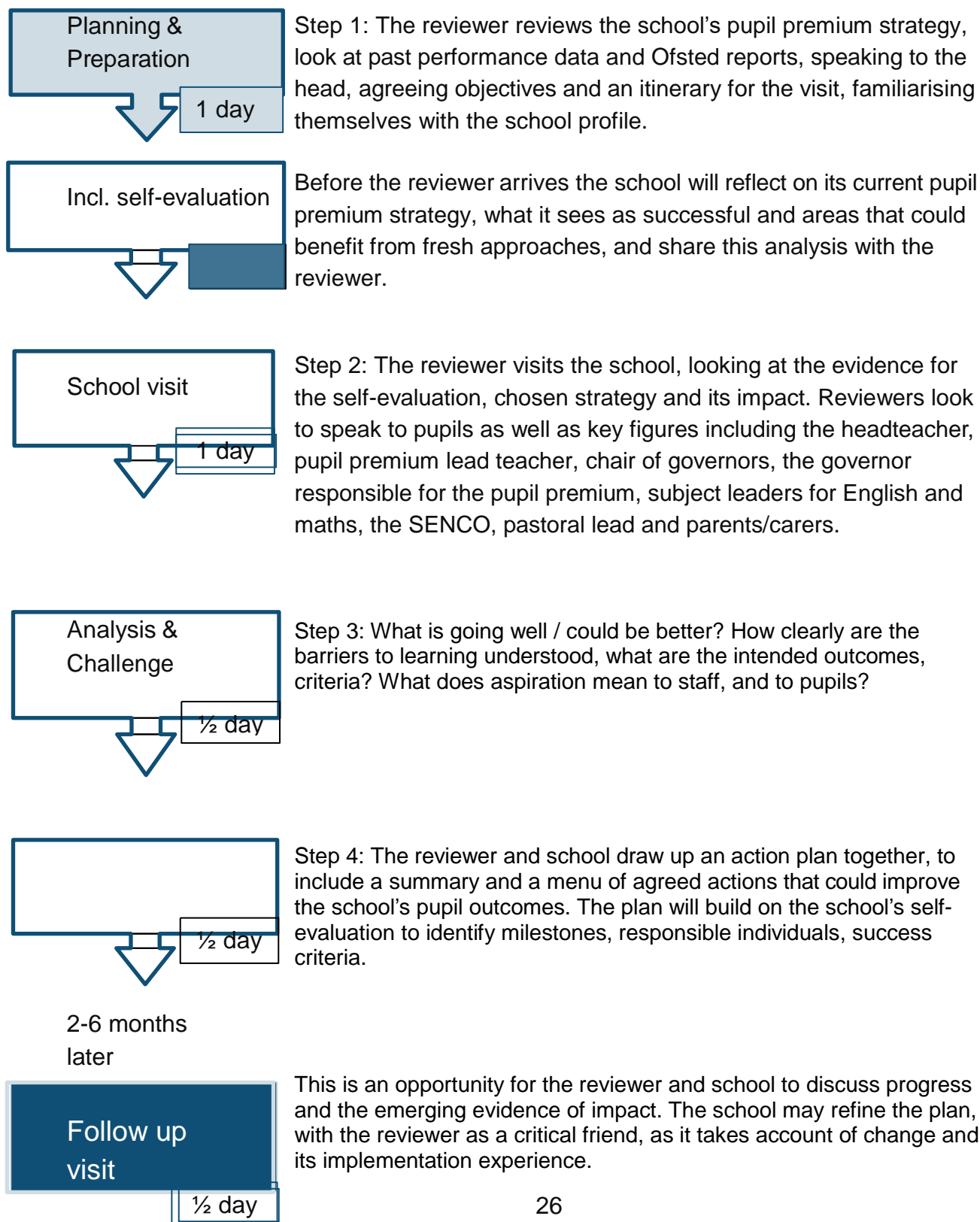
This briefing, by Caroline Sharp, Shona MacLeod, Amy Skipp and Steve Higgins, is based on national research with primary, secondary and special schools across England. A full research report and a summary for school leaders are also available from the Department for Education and NFER websites:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/research> and [www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/PUPP01](http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/PUPP01)

# CHAPTER TWO: FOR REVIEWERS

## The pupil premium review framework

Each step is explained in more detail in the next section; both reviewers and school leaders may find the templates helpful.



## Notes

## **Step one: planning and preparation (1 day)**

Experienced reviewers have found that their reviews have been most effective when they have spent some time planning and preparing before visiting the school. Typically, effective reviews include around half a day's planning and preparation time, during which the reviewer develops a better understanding of the context of the school they are reviewing, its pupil premium profile and the specific challenges it faces in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Much of this understanding can be drawn from a review of evidence sources to establish the current position of the school. These sources include the pupil premium strategy that in most cases will be published on the school's website, the school's performance data, Ofsted reports, and the school's own self-evaluation. Scrutiny of these sources usually helps reviewers to identify areas of strength and challenge at the school, and informs what to focus on during the visit.

Once this initial picture is formed a discussion with the headteacher of the commissioning school is helpful to enable both parties to check their understanding, fill any gaps in knowledge and ask questions.

This discussion will also enable the reviewer and headteacher to agree an itinerary for the school visit and ensure that the right people will be at school on the day of the visit. For example, when reviewing a school where mathematics outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are significantly better than English, reviewers will want to understand more about the effective practice that is leading to this stronger performance, and which aspects might be shared more widely across the school. It will therefore be important to ensure that the right individuals are available on the day of the school visit.

Reviewers may find the planning and preparation template (annex 1) a useful aid during this step.

## **Step two: school visit (1 day)**

During the school visit reviewers will build on their own preparation and the school's self-evaluation to focus on reviewing the current pupil premium strategy. Experienced reviewers have done this effectively by supporting the school to look more closely at the evidence that has led to the selection of each approach, how effectively these have been implemented and evidence of positive impact. The report and action plan will suggest where improvements might be made to combine these approaches into a more effective strategy.

Reviewers have found the visit can be an important opportunity to gain buy-in throughout the school for a renewed drive to make more effective use of the school's pupil premium funding.

As well as observing teaching and learning, reviewers have found it important to speak to those leaders and individuals who are in a position to make the greatest impact on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. These people will include, amongst others, the school's senior leaders and governors, who will need to ensure that the school remains on course to deliver the agreed outcomes identified in the plan.

During the visit the reviewer may work with the school on all or some of the areas within the school visit template.

### **Step three and four: analysis and challenge, action plan (1 day)**

Before discussing an action plan reviewers might find it useful to further analyse the self-evaluation and current strategy rationale using evidence and observations gathered during the school visit, to ask:

- What are the barriers to learning, desired outcomes and success criteria?
- To what extent has there been a focus on specific groups of pupils e.g. high ability, service premium, adopted children?
- How differentiated is the approach to different levels of need? E.g. long-term FSM pupils receiving individualised support appropriate to their more acute barriers to achievement?
- What evaluation has there been of which current approaches are working well and whether better approaches could be used?
- How do the school's range of approaches build up to an effective, coherent strategy?
- Which approaches are not yet having the desired impact but could deliver impact if things were done differently or staff receive support to develop?
- Which approaches appear not to be delivering impact and should be withdrawn?

Reviewers might recommend that the school replaces or refines some of its existing approaches, especially if there are alternatives which evidence suggests might deliver improved outcomes.

At the end of the process the reviewer and school leaders will together draw up a plan of action, including summary and a list of the key activities that have been agreed, seeking to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

The plan will identify individuals responsible for implementing each element as well as key steps and future dates when the impact will be evaluated. This will keep the strategy focused on accelerating progress for disadvantaged pupils. The plan should ideally include a date for a follow-up visit.

The action plan template (p.35) has been developed with contributions from reviewers who have experience of delivering effective reviews.

## **Follow-up visit (1/2 day)**

The final step of the review process is a follow-up visit, which should ideally take place between two and six months after the school visit. Reviewers and schools receiving reviews have both found that this is an important step that helps them to maintain focus on delivering the plan effectively to ensure that the school is on track to raise attainment for their disadvantaged pupils. Reviewed schools have attested to the value of further follow-up visits later in the year, once changes have had time to bed in.

During the follow-up visit, the reviewer and headteacher, working alongside individuals responsible for delivering each approach, may wish to scrutinise the effectiveness of implementation alongside emerging evidence of impact, as they evaluate each approach in meeting the success criteria and leading to defined outcomes.

Depending on the outcome of the follow-up visit, the reviewer may recommend alternative approaches or changes to improve the effectiveness of existing approaches and may suggest adapting the action plan.

## Reviewer preparation template

<i>[Insert school name]</i> School's Pupil Premium Profile <i>[Insert school year]</i>	
Total number of pupils in the school	
Number of PP- eligible pupils	
Proportion of PP- eligible pupils	
Total pupil premium budget	

School performance evidence	
Key statements from Ofsted report(s) relating to the performance of disadvantaged pupils:	
Summary of school's performance data:	<p><i>Does the school's performance data indicate that <b>attainment</b> and <b>progress</b> for disadvantaged pupils are improving, and that <b>gaps</b> are closing, both within the school and compared to the national average?</i></p> <p><i>Data from School Data Dashboard, RAISE Online / OPS, School's own performance data</i></p>
School's pupil premium statement (pupil premium strategy statement from 2017-18):	<p><i>Does the school's published pupil premium statement clearly describe how the school is planning to allocate funding to raise <b>attainment and progress for disadvantaged pupils and close gaps</b>?</i></p>

## School visit template

<b>[Insert school name] School visit [insert date]</b>	
<p><b>Summary of the school's existing areas of focus and approaches</b></p>	<p><b>Area one:</b></p> <p><i>Focus: e.g. Improving reading levels</i></p> <p><i>Strategies: Reading comprehension and peer tutoring</i></p> <p><i>Success criteria: Gap in expected level in reading, between disadvantaged pupils and others reduced by 6-9 percentage points</i></p> <p><b>Area two: Focus:</b></p> <p><i>Strategies: Success criteria:</i></p>
<p><b>Summary of how the school uses evidence to identify effective approaches</b></p>	<p><b>Area one:</b></p> <p><i>E.g. Evidence from the EEF toolkit shows that both these strategies are effective relative to their costs – particularly for upper primary children.</i></p>
<p><b>Names of key people and outline itinerary</b></p>	

The reviewer may work with the school on all or some of the following topics:



Topic (including sources of evidence)	Suggested questions and areas to explore	Strengths	Areas for development
<p><b>Pupil characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with pupil premium co-ordinator or member of staff with PP responsibility</li> </ul>	<p>How are pupil premium pupils spread throughout the school? Does the number / proportion vary significantly from year to year? Is this likely to have an effect on pupil progress data?</p> <p>Are there any patterns within pupil premium cohort data? E.g. Are girls eligible for pupil premium making better progress than boys? Why? Do any of your pupil premium pupils have additional barriers to learning which may make it even harder for them to attain expected levels? E.g. SEN, EAL, Safeguarding factors.</p>		
<p><b>Achievement<sup>5</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published data</li> <li>• Current progress data</li> <li>• Lesson observation and work scrutiny</li> <li>• Interview with PP Coordinator</li> </ul>	<p>How much has the school considered evidence, such as the EEF toolkit?</p> <p>Do senior leaders liaise with colleagues from feeder schools to find out what has proved successful for pupils in the past?</p> <p>Do senior leaders liaise with colleagues from within their own development group and / or Teaching School to discuss what has proved un/ successful for them?</p> <p>What assessment system/s does the school use to evaluate the impact of interventions?</p> <p>Does the school evaluate the impact of interventions regularly? E.g. half-termly, termly. Are the gaps closing in all subjects / aspects? How quickly?</p>		

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<sup>5</sup>When reviewing special schools reviews may also wish to consider 'enrichment', and the following question: How will pupil premium eligible pupils benefit from the funding and how is its impact monitored as far as enriching their opportunities is concerned?

<p><b>Leadership &amp; Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Head Teacher (HT) and Chair of Governors (CoG)</li> <li>• Interview with PP Coordinator</li> <li>• Scrutiny of pupil premium policy documents</li> <li>• Scrutiny of SEF</li> <li>• Most recent Ofsted report</li> <li>• Published and current data</li> </ul>	<p>Do senior leaders observe out of classroom interventions to ensure that pupils are receiving the same quality of teaching they would expect within whole class sessions?</p> <p>Do senior leaders focus on the quality of teaching and learning of particular groups of pupils when conducting lesson observations? E.g. pupil premium pupils</p> <p>Do senior leaders monitor target tracking sheets to ensure that pupils are being appropriately challenged?</p> <p>Do senior leaders carry out work sampling regularly? Does this have a focus on specific groups?</p> <p>How much do senior leaders consider evidence, such as the EEF toolkit, when making decisions?</p> <p>Does the school audit participation? How could the school increase the proportion of pupil premium pupils who attend? E.g. provide transport, telephone parents.</p> <p>How well does the range of clubs on offer reflect pupil interest? Does the school provide a mentoring / buddying service for its pupils? Do pupils feel confident about who to ask for help?</p> <p>Does the school provide emotional and social support for its pupil premium pupils to ensure that they feel happy and safe and ready to learn?</p> <p>Do governors understand pupil premium funding? Are governors presented with a summary of pupil premium spending and its impact at full governor and curriculum meetings? Is there a named governor who takes lead responsibility for championing pupil premium pupils? Do governors have a specific focus during monitoring visits? E.g. Impact and effectiveness of interventions on pupil premium pupils.</p>		
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<p><b>Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson observation/ learning walks, to include work scrutiny and discussion with teachers</li> <li>• Observation of out of class interventions</li> <li>• Current progress data</li> </ul>	<p>How often do pupils receive high quality constructive verbal feedback and marking?</p> <p>How does the teacher divide their time within the classroom to enable them to target key groups, such as pupil premium pupils?</p> <p>Do all staff – leaders, teachers and support staffs – know which pupils are eligible for pupil premium and understand their barriers to learning?</p> <p>What do class teachers do to invisibly target pupil premium pupils within the classroom? Are pupil premium pupils and specialist provision identified on lesson plans / seating plans?</p> <p>Are pupils regularly set meaningful homework which extends their learning within the classroom?</p> <p>How much research have teachers done to understand the evidence on pupil premium impact on individuals and groups of pupils?</p> <p>Do the school's strategies for spending specifically match the perceived barriers for learning for its disadvantaged pupils? For example, do interventions designed to raise attainment in English target the right aspect / skills? How does the school target pupil progress in particular subjects / aspects?</p> <p>Are targets for pupil premium pupils truly aspirational? Do all staff 'buy into' the reason behind pupil premium funding?</p> <p>How does the school provide its pupil premium pupils with wider opportunities and how many take them up? Are breakfast clubs and lunch time and / or after school clubs targeted at pupil premium pupils? What proportion of pupil premium pupils access these wider opportunities?</p> <p>How well is the school using Pupil Premium funding to support pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and a thirst for knowledge across all learning contexts?</p> <p>Where support is focused on wider issues in pupils' and their families' lives and / or to widen opportunity, is there evidence that this support is improving engagement and</p>		
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<p><b>Behaviour &amp; safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning walk and discussion with PPCo</li> <li>• Scrutiny of behaviour records</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Evaluation of impact, drafting action plan and next steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion with HT/ CoG/PPCo</li> </ul>	<p>How well is pupil premium funding used to:</p> <p>Ensure quality first teaching and above expected progress?</p> <p>Support effective interventions? Widen opportunity?</p> <p>What support can the reviewer offer for action planning and ongoing monitoring of the plan?</p>		

## Action plan template (1 of 2)

An action plan will help to provide a refreshed focus on the school's pupil premium strategy. The headteacher and governors need to commit to owning the plan; co-creating the plan with the reviewer is a good way to achieve this. Some schools may wish to update the 'planned expenditure' section of the pupil premium strategy statement rather than maintain both a strategy and action plan.

<b>[Insert school name] School's Pupil Premium Action Plan [Insert school year]</b>			
<b>Headteacher name</b>		<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Chair of Governors name</b>		<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Reviewer name</b>		<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Pupil Premium Profile [Insert school year]</b>			
<b>Number of eligible pupils</b>			
<b>Proportion of pupil population</b>			
<b>Total pupil premium budget</b>			
<b>Executive summary</b>			
<p>Reviewers may wish to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brief overview of the school's pupil premium strategy so far, what has worked well and what hasn't</li> <li>• The core approaches that will now be implemented and how these will contribute to closing gaps</li> <li>• The overall aims of the plan, i.e.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduce attainment gap between the school's disadvantaged pupils and others nationally by 10 percentage points</li> <li>○ Raise the in-school attainment of both disadvantaged pupils and their peers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

- Date of review and agreed date for the follow up visit /next review

## Action plan template (2 of 2)

Approach	Outcomes and success criteria	Owner	Milestones	Completed	Review date		Total cost
<i>e.g. Reading comprehension and peer tutoring</i>	<i>- Improved engagement and attainment of y5 disadvantaged pupils</i>  <i>- Reduce gap by 6-9 percentage points</i>	<i>Head of KS2</i>	<i>Design and deliver training to teachers and TAs</i>	<i>01/12/2014</i>	<i>01/02/2015</i>		<i>£1500</i>
			<i>Identify and work with peer tutors</i>	<i>04/01/2015</i>			
<b>Pupil premium expenditure:</b>							

<b>Agreed date for follow-up visit</b>		
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## Pupil premium reviewer training materials and support

During 2015 three teaching schools (The Heath School, Painsley Catholic College and Oakgrove School) were appointed to design and deliver training to 200 pupil premium reviewers across the country to support them to deliver their new designation.

The materials produced for the training sessions are available on the [Teaching Schools Council website](#) and include a number of resources such as:

- Guidance and protocols for reviewers
- Tools and templates
- Frequently asked questions for conducting a review
- Example format for a review day
- Reflection piece from Painsley Catholic College on their experience of delivering training

## Effective practice case studies

The following case studies, whilst anonymised, are shared with the permission of the schools that have commissioned pupil premium reviews and the reviewer who has conducted them.

The schools in the case studies have different contexts and sets of challenges. What each school has in common however is how it has embraced the review as a positive opportunity to take an evidence-based approach, and developed an action plan which was implemented quickly to make the most of their pupil premium funding.



## Case study 1: Pupil premium review following an Ofsted inspection

**“The review clarified simple approaches to tracking the impact of the pupil premium and gave us some key interventions that could be applied to the early years foundation stage to close gaps.”**

### **Context**

Primary school X is an average sized primary school in a county town. The school’s profile shows above average numbers of pupils in receipt of pupil premium (PP) funding. It was graded as Requires Improvement at its last inspection in 2015. The report recommended an external review of the use of pupil premium funds and an external review of governance. The school therefore had multiple support partners involved in their improvement plans, including the local authority and diocese, an NLE, an NLG and a PP reviewer. It was therefore essential for the pupil premium reviewer to develop a supportive peer relationship, to ensure that messages and actions complemented those already in place and being undertaken.

To achieve this, the NLE (a designated and trained PP reviewer) already involved in support to the school devolved the PP review to a senior colleague, who was also a PP reviewer and trainer. This ensured that the NLE involved in the school’s support also had an overview of the review, while it was carried out independently. This meant the PP reviewer had a greater understanding of the complexities of the issues in the school, creating a supportive and coherent approach.

### **Carrying out the review**

The initial meeting with the headteacher and the NLE aimed to complete the common template for deployment from the Teaching Schools Council framework. The framework and process were discussed and agreed with the headteacher, with clear timescales, costs and steps in the process outlined.

Following this, the NLE discussed the school’s context and needs with the reviewer and the review began.

The reviewer made contact with the commissioning headteacher and reiterated the supportive nature of the review. The headteacher provided the evidence that the review needed and a mutually convenient date to visit the school was arranged, including colleagues it would be useful for the reviewer to meet. The reviewer sent the self-evaluation form to the headteacher with an agreed date for return.

Prior to the visit, the reviewer looked at the school's website for the pupil premium statement, looked at the latest RAISEonline data (now ASP) and current data as well as the school's development plan and information from link governor meetings.

The reviewer used these documents and information from the self-assessment to pre-populate the visit form with key questions.

On visit day, the reviewer looked at students' work, met with the PP co-ordinator, link governor and students. Data was explored with the school leaders and classes were visited. Throughout the day, the reviewer kept the headteacher updated and discussed findings so that the ethos of support was maintained. At the end of the day the reviewer shared the school strengths and key areas for development which had been identified.

The reviewer completed a school visit report and made some key recommendations, all of which had been discussed with the headteacher during the visit. The report was copied to the NLE supporting the school and the chair of governors. A date to meet and collaboratively write the action plan was set in order to support the headteacher with the follow-up that needed to be completed, including setting a date in 6 months to review progress against the action plan. This step was felt to be the most powerful by both the headteacher and reviewer.

Using the review framework enabled the reviewer to have a clear approach and plan that was shared with the school at each stage. This supported an open, peer to peer approach vital to the success of the review in a school where staff felt 'bruised' from their 'requires improvement' judgement, and where other people were also involved in school improvement work.

The headteacher commented that the review had "clarified simple approaches to tracking the impact of the pupil premium" and gave some key interventions that could be applied to the early years foundation stage (EYFS) to close gaps. As a consequence of the review, new data tracking systems have already been put into place in the EYFS, using the PP funding to secure an EYFS SLE to support the school. Funding will also be used to develop the writing through the support of an SLE. The action plan was fully reviewed in 6 months, and early strategies were already showing an impact in closing gaps.

## Case study 2: Pupil premium review in a secondary school

**“The academy definitely moved forward with its understanding of how the PP can be used effectively. A culture of change took place in regards to utilising the funding strategically...”**

### **Context**

The academy is larger than an average-sized secondary school and includes a sixth form. Most students are of white British heritage. The majority of students speak English as their first language. The proportion of disabled students or students who have special educational needs is more than three times the national average.

The proportion of disadvantaged students eligible for extra support through pupil premium funding is two-and-a-half times the national average. In 2014/2015 70 per cent of the school population were identified as in receipt of the Pupil Premium.

The Principal took up post in April 2014. The academy does not meet the government’s current floor standards. A few students attend off-site provision. The academy holds a number of awards including: the Inclusion Quality Mark; Sainsbury’s School Sports Mark Gold; Career Connect Quality Award; Healthy Schools Award.

### **Carrying out the review**

The academy commissioned the review in February 2015, recognising that disappointing results, coupled with an increasing progress and attainment gap for students in receipt of the pupil premium (PP) meant that a review of current practice was needed. The academy approached a local teaching school to conduct the review. The PP reviewer was the teaching school SLE (specialist leader of education), designated with the role of PP reviewer and PP champion.

The reviewer approached the review, by first considering the information on the website and the current PP plan and policy, the online impact report of the PP spend and the list of current interventions. In addition, the principal provided the additional evidence the reviewer needed - including RAISEonline data and current internal school data.

These documents enabled the reviewer to pre populate the visit forms with key questions, in regards to the progress gaps in mathematics and English and the persistent absenteeism (PA) gap in attendance.

Two half-days were spent at the academy considering data, assessing impact and strategies currently utilised to approach narrowing the gap between PP and non-PP students with the principal and members of the senior leadership team (SLT).

On the first half day the reviewer met with the principal and key senior leaders. There were detailed discussions of the school context, needs of the pupils, the utilisation of pupil premium and the academy's PP plan. The discussions were open and transparent and at the end of the half day the reviewer shared the identified school strengths as well as areas for development that had arisen during the discussion.

A follow up half day was then arranged as a 'progress check', this was to include the whole SLT and was also to include an evaluation of the revised PP plan, its strategies and targeted cohorts.

A final date was then set for collaborative writing of the action plan as well as including a date in 3 months to review progress against the action plan. The reviewer recognised that the senior leaders were at the early stages of addressing the needs of the PP cohort in the school. The approach of the reviewer was that of coach and mentor, clarifying the impact of some strategies and sharing interventions that could be applied in the academy's context. This facilitated a highly productive working relationship. The principal at this time also requested ongoing SLE support as he had found the whole process "amazingly valuable."

The academy definitely moved forward with its understanding of how the PP can be used effectively. A culture of change took place in regards to utilising the funding strategically, targeting cohorts rather than 'scatter gunning' all students, ensuring that strategies were in place or were 'planned' to be in place, from transition through to year 11. There was also a movement away from the year 11 'sticking plaster' approach, although at the same time, recognising the need to exceed floor standards with year 11 results. A key area that the academy started implementing was in ensuring that all strategies had clear and measurable success criteria.

Data tracking showed that there was a positive impact on the internal results in regards to English and mathematics levels of progress for the key groups, and that pupil voice surveys carried out regarding feedback would show improved levels of confidence and knowledge of how to move on, book scrutinies also indicated an improved level of feedback to students.

## Reflection: Conducting pupil premium reviews in special schools

### Introduction

This case draws on the views of a special school headteacher who is also a pupil premium (PP) reviewer, with a case of a special school and how it has deployed its pupil premium funding. It offers those conducting a PP review in a special school a perspective on potential challenges and how these might be managed and a set of helpful considerations drawn from experience.

### Reflections from Gill Robinson, OBE, Castle Hill School and Vice Chair of the Teaching Schools Council

In carrying out a PP review in a special school setting the challenges and considerations that need to be taken into account may vary in scale according to the setting, for example in reviewing grant expenditure in a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) compared to a school for those with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD).

All pupils in a special school face particular challenges; because attainment is low owing to each pupil's learning disability those who attract the pupil premium do not stand out as low attaining as they often do in mainstream settings. This might be less evident in MLD schools but will usually be the case in severe learning difficulties (SLD) and PMLD schools where such a gap will rarely be evident. In addition, pupils in these latter settings will have a highly personalised curriculum comprised of multiple interventions.

This means that schools will need to consider carefully what they are going to provide additionally to aid a pupil's achievement and/or development as existing provision is already specifically focused on needs and barriers. While mainstream schools might be able to refer to, for example, the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit for intervention evidence and guidance, this would be of little value to, for example SLD and PMLD schools, due to its mainstream-focused evidence base.

With individualised curricula in many instances there might not be such an evident focus on interventions that directly relate to raising attainment, as these are already included in a pupil's curriculum. Rather, it might be that schools are using the grant to fund participation in activities outside of the school that, for example, aid pupils' engagement and extended concentration- the expectation being that these, in turn, will support their skills and capacity to achieve academically. A case example of how the PP has been used in one school follows and illustrates considerations around deployment within one context.

Example:

In one SLD school one of the challenges was evaluating the degree to which the social background of the pupils affects achievement. It considered the extent to which social background was either a greater limiting factor than, or provided different challenges to, the learning disability. This informed how the PP could be utilised in such a way as to have a meaningful effect on individual achievement as barriers to learning are primarily developmental rather than social and affect all pupils, not just those from particular social backgrounds. To make best use of the PP it looked beyond the school, and the notion of achievement being focused on the acquisition of skills and knowledge, to the application of that which has already been learned, in particular within functional contexts. This was where it could see that the pupils' social background may begin to influence their ability to maximise their potential, particularly around the further development of socially-appropriate behaviours and socially-based communication.

Access to effectively staffed, developmentally and age-appropriate social opportunities can be limited, expensive, and potentially logistically challenging for families without private transport. Yet without access to these types of social experiences, there is a risk that children may not be enabled to functionally apply the social and communicative skills being developed in school. In this case, the decision was taken to use some of the PP to further develop the role of the Out of School Liaison Officer, with an emphasis on securing grant funding to reduce the cost of access, and to act as a broker between the providers of social opportunities and the families who may want to take them up but who have practical barriers to overcome.

This has been directly focused on the recipients of the PP, but not exclusively so. These type of opportunities are of value to all, so whilst the school prioritised those pupils who qualify for the PP, others have also benefited. The school has seen an increase in pupils accessing after school social opportunities, residential visits, (including those abroad), and the opportunity to participate in work experience placements.

The challenge for the reviewer, as illustrated in this case example, is to both understand the nature of pupils' specific needs and barriers to their learning and the decisions a school has made in deploying funding to meet and address these. It is then to understand how effective these decisions have been in terms of implementing provision that has impacted on pupils' achievement and/or development. This consideration of effectiveness will require the reviewer to understand how the school is measuring impact and whether such measures are valid.

One challenge is to understand the range of measures that might be used. This could include attainment and achievement measures recorded through use of ASP in some settings, commercial software packages, a school's own systems or the DfE's progression guidance, however in SLD and PMLD settings this would likely focus more on individual case studies, especially as pupil numbers tend to be small. Evidence of impact measured may well be presented through the use of soft data focused on, for example, increased engagement or social skills development.

Reviewers need to keep in mind that the nature of progress is in itself also potentially complex in special schools, for example with respect to pupils that have degenerative conditions, or those that have medical needs which impact significantly on attendance.

In assessing data presented by the school the reviewer will need to appreciate the nature of the data and how these meaningfully assess impact of expenditure. The school's report to parents on its website will be a starting point and serves as a helpful prompt for questions the reviewer might ask. For the school visit the reviewer will want to arrange meetings with the headteacher and with staff who play a critical role in implementing provision identified. These would likely include a sample of teachers and learning support assistants, as well as those who hold management roles associated with provision and impact evaluation. Policies on the school's website might assist with identifying such roles.

Gathering information from different sources in this way enables the reviewer to gain a triangulated perspective on how well expenditure has been targeted on a pupils' specific needs, how well provision has been implemented and the quality of data that have been collected to evidence this. While there might be written case studies or statements of intervention impact documented, the ability of individuals to articulate needs, provision and impact of expenditure helps to explain and validate what has taken place and the difference it has made. Questions that a reviewer might ask include:

- What are you providing that is different for PP pupils from non-PP pupils and why?
- Which group of people has made the decision on expenditure?
- Why have you chosen these particular interventions and for these periods of time?
- What data did you collect to provide evidence of impact?
- What is the evidence of improvement from when the intervention started to its conclusion?
- How do you know when to stop or change an intervention?

In assessing impact, reviewers may also need to be mindful that data gathered might or might not justifiably represent an associated or causal link. For example in one school a group taking riding lessons coincided with good progress in maths, but the link was, the school considered, coincidental. Impact data therefore need to be carefully analysed and interpreted. As well as gaining staff perspectives, the reviewer will also want to establish how well governors have been informed about PP expenditure and are able to articulate their understanding of its deployment and impact. This might be gained through dialogue with the Chair of Governors or the governor with responsibility for the PP.

In summary, while there are complexities for the reviewer in carrying out the role in a special school, this case sets out considerations that will aid the formation of robust judgments. If the reviewer is from a mainstream context they may well wish to seek advice from a colleague in a special school to improve their knowledge and understanding of aspects of provision and measures of impact.



# Reflection: Conducting an early years pupil premium review in an early years setting

## Introduction

Reviewers carrying out a review in a school that has nursery provision will need to keep in mind that there are significant differences between the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and the pupil premium, both in terms of the funding amount and when this is allocated. In this case study example, the local authority allocates the EYPP retrospectively on a termly basis upon successful receipt of parental applications

This case study explores how a nursery school and family centre has deployed its EYPP. It aims to aid reviewers in considering strategies that might be used in nurseries (both nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools) and how the impact of these might be evaluated.

## Reflections from Lesley Curtis, Everton Nursery School and Family Centre and Teaching Schools Council representative for the North West

The setting is based in an area of substantial disadvantage based on the government's English Indices of Deprivation, being in the top one per cent of the top ten per cent most deprived areas in the country.

The setting's leader identified the focus for EYPP expenditure to be improving the speech, language and communication skills of eligible children. This was a priority for the setting improvement plan based on baseline data analysis. It was also a city-wide improvement focus. Many children attending the setting have developmental issues in this prime area of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) - communication and language – due, for example, to extended dummy and bottle use affecting articulation of sounds. This can result in significant deficit in terms of age-related developmental expectations.

Although there could have been other areas the EYPP might have been used for, this was the single most important priority for these children - so that their language acquisition could be accelerated and their opportunity to be school-ready improved. Children's speaking, listening, taking turns in conversation and using vocabulary in the correct contexts were all targeted as key skills.

As the EYPP is received retrospectively on a termly basis this strategic approach was funded using the setting's main budget, subsequently reimbursed as the EYPP was received. This meant the setting could fund the desired intervention to meet children's immediate needs, rather than wait a term before purchasing it.

This was a calculated risk as EYPP allocations are reliant upon accurate completion of forms by parents that are submitted to the local authority each term. Incomplete or inaccurate applications can impact on EYPP received from the local authority, as can subsequent changes to parents' circumstances.

The setting engaged the services of a speech and language therapist to augment its own work. This provided additional support that was specifically focused on closing the gap for EYPP children. The gap was measured in terms of age-related development as some children were 20 months behind expectations (for example at age three: 16 months instead of 36 months). The children were assessed using a red, amber or green rating based on their levels of need that then informed the level of intervention and specific strategies to meet specific needs. For example, those rated red received the highest level of 1:1 intervention. All children in the setting were rated either red or amber.

This provision included:

- Carrying out a detailed baseline analysis of children's language capabilities: assessing the extent of their existing vocabulary and reporting this to parents
- Using this baseline tool to inform specific intervention work required
- 1:1 speech and language work
- Training for staff so that they could support language development in the classroom
- Advising parents so that they could support language development at home using activities from the programme packs

Where 1: 1 support was needed less the EYPP was used to purchase classroom resources that would support language development, such as objects to stimulate positional and comparative language use. It was also used to purchase the commercial packs used by the therapist and staff.

Monitoring of impact was tracked at certain points based on the children's birth dates. This made measurement more appropriate as EYFS age-related expectations could be used. Quantitative data have shown increased vocabulary, for example, while qualitative data have shown children's ability to verbally construct sentences of greater length, improved listening skills and improved turn-taking in conversations. The influence of the programme on other areas of development has also been assessed through the use of case studies.

While causality between the intervention programme and children's development in other areas might not be definite, as there are other aspects of provision that act as variables, the setting considers potential influence could be ascribed.

While it selected to deploy the EYPP in this way, each nursery will make its own decisions on how it might best be deployed in the specific context to support eligible children's needs. It might be that it funds supplementary access to existing provision, or additional provision to which this group of children might not otherwise have access. Nurseries may, for example, deploy the EYPP to fund interventions like an artist in residence or specialist music and singing sessions to develop creativity, or an outdoor learning programme to widen children's experiences. In cases where access to such provision might be for all children, such as an artist in residence, supplementary provision would need to be evident for those eligible for the EYPP. For reviewers, whichever approach a nursery adopts, the questions to be asked and principles underpinning these are the same:

- What are you using the EYPP for and how has it been specifically used for eligible children?
- Why did you make that choice to best meet eligible children's needs - which data/sources of evidence were used to inform this decision?
- What difference has it made to the children's learning and development within the seven areas in the EYFS and how do you know? What were the baseline data used, and which measures – quantitative and/or qualitative - were used to assess impact?

Reviewers should look for how the last point has been documented by the nursery, for example through using individual case studies and/or tracking of children's development across the EYFS seven areas of development. Evidence is likely to be most rigorous when it can quantitatively demonstrate a closing of the gap between a child's developmental age and their chronological age.

While mapping this and making causal links might be challenging for nurseries in some cases, reviewers will want to engage in discussion with those responsible for EYPP deployment at two levels to evaluate impact of expenditure on children's learning and development:

- the strategic level: headteachers and governors
- the operational level: teachers and support staff

In this case study example, a support assistant is working alongside the speech and language therapist and so would provide an informed view of impact on individuals. For reviewers who do not have expertise in the early years, the [EEF Early Years Toolkit](#) provides helpful guidance on how nurseries might deploy the EYPP.

## Effective practice: Pupil premium for adopted children

Luke is eleven years old and is currently in year seven. He lives in a two-parent adoptive family with his two younger brothers from his birth family. His adoptive mother is a teacher who currently works with adopted and looked after children. She has a deep knowledge and understanding of the needs of adopted children in school. Luke endured chronic neglect and witnessed domestic violence during his first two-and-a-half years of life. When he was two-and-a-half years old, a younger sibling died in an accident which was attributed in part to his parents' alcohol abuse and drug taking. After being removed from his birth family, he experienced multiple foster placements before being placed for adoption at the age of five.

Luke, along with his siblings, experience difficulties in the school environment. During his early experiences of school, Luke was unable to access education properly because he was in a constant state of heightened anxiety. He started his year two at age six with nursery school levels of attainment. Subsequently Luke has 'been playing catch up' but succeeded in finishing his year six at the national average in everything, except his writing.

At age nine, and prior to the introduction of the Pupil Premium, Luke was assessed by an Educational Psychologist as having traits of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity. His school, however, supports his adoptive mother's view that Luke's main issues relate to his executive functioning. He has particular difficulties with his working memory, planning and organising, with moving from one activity to another, and initiating new tasks on his own. He also has difficulties transferring learning from one area of the curriculum to another, compartmentalising new knowledge and skills. For example, he finds it difficult to apply his literacy skills to science. Luke is also immature in his behaviour and expressing his emotions. He finds transitions within school extremely difficult and needs to be well prepared for, and supported through, any changes. Luke also exhibits difficulties with his peer relationships.

Shortly after the Pupil Premium for adopted children was announced, Luke's adoptive parents were invited to meet with school staff to explore ways in which this additional funding could be spent. Together they agreed the following interventions:

- One-to-one mentoring for Luke, recognising his need for continuity and consistency in his relationships with adults and 'one relationship with somebody on his side...somebody who will support him no matter what.' The mentor has a comprehensive knowledge of Luke's particular circumstances and sensitivity to his specific needs. The mentor is a named Learning Support Assistant who spends time with him at least once a week for 20 to 25 minutes. The mentor typically 'bookends' Luke's week, meeting with him at the start and end of each week, so as to prepare him for the week ahead, and to reflect on the week gone by.

- Additional staff to support Luke's participation in a literacy group.
- Luke's attendance at a Friendship Group to support the development of his peer relationships.
- Funding for an additional adult to accompany the school's children on a trip to France, enabling Luke's involvement and ensuring a positive experience.
- The creation of a 'Pupil Profile' for Luke. The profiling involves Luke, his teachers and adoptive parents in various assessments to inform the planning of his teaching and learning. This will lead to a personalised 'Provision Plan' that summarises the specific help that Luke will need, as well as outlining how his progress will be measured. The Provision Plan may include investment in resources that will be of benefit to other vulnerable children in the school, as well as to Luke. This may include, for example, investment in the *Friends for Life* program – an Australian cognitive-behavioural therapeutic program designed to be used in the classroom that aims to increase the resilience and happiness of children.
- Supporting the school's Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) to attend Adoption UK's 'Learning Connect: Life in the Classroom: Helping Adopted Children in School' training event, with the SENCO subsequently sharing her learning about the needs of adopted children with wider school staff.

Luke seems to experience his support at school positively. His time with his mentor is viewed as particularly good time and he does not seem to feel singled out in any way. Luke's parents also report a positive change in Luke. In particular, they report a more relaxed, less anxious child, able to enjoy his weekends with the family and worry less about the week ahead.

**Adapted from:** British Association for Adoption and Fostering's (BAAF) (2015), *Pupil Premium for Adopted Children: Case Studies* (available at: <http://www.first4adoption.org.uk/adoption-support/pupil-premium/case-studies/>)

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