

## Pupil Premium Review

<b>School name:</b>	Pittville School
<b>Commissioned by:</b>	School / Gloucestershire Local Authority Education Outcomes and Intervention Team
<b>LA Performance Adviser:</b>	Sara Vestey
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Justine Hocking
<b>Review date(s):</b>	Thursday 22 June 2018
<b>Confidential circulation to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headteacher</li><li>• Chair of Governors</li><li>• LA Performance Adviser</li><li>• Pupil Premium Partner (if applicable)</li></ul>

## **I Context of the school**

Pittville School is a growing mixed comprehensive in a town that has selective schools. The number of disadvantaged students is above national averages at about 40% in each year group.

## **II Purpose of the review**

The school requested a pupil premium review to

- develop the school's pupil premium strategy so that funding is spent on approaches shown to be effective in improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- recognise effective practice and to make recommendations to further improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- support self-evaluation and to inform development planning.

## **III Evidence collection activities**

- Discussions about context, vision and outcomes with Headteacher
- Discussions about strategy and outcomes with Deputy Headteacher who is also the pupil premium lead
- Attendance data discussions with Assistant Headteacher
- Curriculum and assessment discussions with Assistant Headteacher
- Learning walk with Headteacher
- Discussions with Governor
- Pupil conference with Year 7 and 8 students
- Pupil conference with Year 9 students
- Discussions with teacher panel re provision, CPD and barriers to learning
- Feedback to SLT and Governor

## **IV Review findings**

### **• Leadership and Management**

The fact that the school has commissioned this review is testimony of leaders' commitment to raising outcomes for disadvantaged students at Pittville School. There is a dedication to improving the education as well as the outcomes for disadvantaged students and therefore increasing their life choices and chances. This commitment is seen across all levels of the school.

The school has an identified pupil premium governor. The Chair of Governors designate attended the review and feedback. He is planning on ensuring that the pupil premium governor communicates with him about pupil premium monitoring work. Pupil premium is a standing item on all governor meeting agendas. The school recognises that the next phase of development is to ensure that reports are submitted to governors in a timely fashion before meetings and that meaningful discussions ensue about the impact of actions. Governors' minutes do not show that governors are currently holding school leaders to account on this item. There is little evidence of probing questions or challenge. Governors understand that this needs to change.

The school website is compliant with a pupil premium plan and historic reviews of previous years spending. The strategy for 2019/2019 is currently being developed and will be completed after this review process. The school uses an adapted version of the TSC template and this approach is appropriate. There needs to be a sharper focus on how actions are directly linked to removing the identified barriers and how the effectiveness of actions will be monitored. The plan should include actions that have been successfully undertaken in the past and does not have to be all new initiatives. Funding needs to be more explicitly linked to these actions.

The school's historic context of budget constraints compounded by the increasing roll with lagged funding has put pressure on the allocation of pupil premium funds. As these circumstances ease it is critical that the pupil premium grant is sharply targeted on the pupil premium strategy. The school fully acknowledges this.

There is a pupil premium policy in place that is up-to-date and annually reviewed by leaders and governors. The Deputy Headteacher, who leads on this agenda, is passionate and knowledgeable about the issues. She uses her whole school overview to ensure that the CPD programme in conjunction with the teaching and learning approach supports the pupil premium agenda. The monitoring of pupil premium provision and its impact occurs through a variety of specific monitoring activities. However, it is not part of routine monitoring and evaluation such as learning walks, lesson observations and book scrutiny. It would be useful and efficient to ensure that all monitoring and evaluation activities include consideration of pupil premium progress and provision.

- **Curriculum**

The curriculum is evolving and is responsive to the needs of the cohort. A new options approach has been put in place this year for Year 8 as they chose their courses for the 3 year Key Stage 4. Thought has been put into pathways and how students are guided into appropriate courses. One pathway is called the Ebacc pathway although this is slightly misleading, as it does not necessarily mean that students select an entire suite of Ebacc compliant subjects. The uptake of courses is not yet analysed to determine whether pupil premium students are proportionately and appropriately represented although when Year10 subject composition was sampled it would suggest that this is indeed the case with this year group. On a wider note it would be useful if the school could document in a curriculum statement the rationale behind the curriculum, its implementation and its impact for each year group.

- **Attendance**

Whole school attendance is below national averages and persistent absence is above national averages. This is particularly pertinent for pupil premium students. The school acknowledges that this year has not been a good year for either attendance or persistent absence. The analysis and evaluation of underlying patterns with a view to diagnosing causes and possible solutions needs

developing and it needs to focus on persistent absence. Leadership of this agenda needs strengthening. All roles and responsibilities need clarifying with sharper systems to hold staff to account. There needs to be a focus on 'prevention' not just 'cure'. There are rewards in place for good attendance. The school may consider particularly incentivising the 'hot spots' identified in their analysis. For example, some schools operate a '12 days of Christmas' programme whereby students are rewarded if they have 100% attendance leading up to Christmas and similar schemes for the Easter and summer when they have identified these periods of traditionally being times of lower attendance. The school has identified that broken weeks at the start or end of term are not helpful and will be working towards removing broken weeks where possible in the future. Pupil premium girls' attendance is of particular concern and this needs to be a focus of monitoring and reporting to governors as well as the subject of deeper analysis. The findings need to be communicated with staff so that they fully understand attendance patterns and issues and their role in solving these problems.

- **Extra-curricular and Enrichment**

Students speak positively about the wide range of after school clubs and other enrichment opportunities. Some students do not get involved and with some targeted encouragement they may do so thus gaining many benefits. Students say that during enrichment week there is a wide selection of free or low cost activities that they believe to be worthwhile. They particularly cited street art and the northern soul DJ session as attractive options. They did not think that the school would subsidise more expensive options for families that were 'hard up'. The school's website indicates that families with financial difficulties can contact the school for help although this is neither widely known nor used. If the school identifies deficits in cultural capital as a barrier to learning then it would be useful to strengthen the subsidy approach to ensure that disadvantaged students have wide-ranging cultural and social experiences to broaden horizons and increase motivation. Subjects offer a range of additional activities and experiences and frequently target disadvantaged students. There is no strategic overview as yet to track the available opportunities across a year and across a cohort to ensure fair coverage and to be able to spot and fill gaps. The school is running a trip to New York City in the future and it would be a good goal to ensure that pupil premium students are supported in applying to join the trip.

- **Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Classrooms visited were calm and orderly. There are clearly positive relationships between staff and students as well as amongst students. In some classes the group sizes are very small and often with additional adult support. The benefits of this resource intensive approach need to be maximised. At the moment, small classes are being taught in a broadly similar way to that of larger classes. Leaders need to support staff in planning more targeted activities to really push on individuals. Development of strategies to further encourage talk for learning will also benefit all pupil premium students. In one lesson observed, students had written fables to demonstrate a moral message. No students were prepared to read their fables aloud which resulted in the teacher reading some aloud. If the activity had been structured differently with a pair or group approach

with students having been aware of the end expectations then this could have resulted in deeper and wider learning and development.

Due to the positive relationships in the classroom it is timely to take expectations and holding students to account to the next level. It would be useful to raise understanding of what high expectations look like across the entire staff body. Further demand and rigour will benefit all students in the school including disadvantaged students. Use of technology, such as visualisers or webcams would not only help with the modelling processes but can also be used tactically to hold students' to account. Activities that promote pair and group talk with a clear objective will stretch and challenge learners as well as build confidence to contribute to whole class activities. This approach will support disadvantaged students who are frequently risk averse and therefore can be reticent to read their work aloud or to give extended answers to teachers' questioning. Deeper planning of tasks, groupings and questions will further support learning.

Nationally much research has been undertaken about vocabulary and language acquisition. The general pattern is that children from disadvantaged backgrounds hear far fewer words than their peers from advantaged backgrounds. Developing vocabulary is key and it would be useful to see more language enhancement in both classroom displays and in lessons. Some students observe in a maths lesson could not get on in a maths test because they did not understand a key word (congruent) and they did not know what to do when they encountered this issue. Therefore some work on strategies and de-coding would be useful for all students.

Work on developing a new assessment system to align with new GCSE requirements is well under way as is the use of 4matrix to track and monitor progress. Target setting at the moment produces two target grades – a minimum target and a challenge target. There is not clarity for staff or students as to which target is being world towards or measured. Students would benefit from aspirational target that can be reviewed if achieved. The Headteacher rightly believes in 'audacious' targets for Pittville students and this vision needs to be translated into a single system that all students and staff understand. Teachers are encouraging of students to push themselves but a new whole school approach and language around reaching for the highest standards would be useful. Breaking away from targets of a 4 would be beneficial to set higher expectations and to link planning to these higher end points. Higher prior attaining students are now ready to be steered towards aiming for the highest grades. The hard work that the school has put in place to establish positive relationships and positive behaviour means that the foundations for this next step have been put in place.

- **Homework**

Students identify issues around completing homework either connected to obligations at home or because they do not have computer, Internet or printer access at home. It would appear that not all staff are taking these constraints into account when setting homework and this can be de-motivating for pupil premium

students. It would be useful for the school to explore the extent of these issues and to find ways to resolve them.

- **Aspirations and Destinations**

The school has started to track post 16 destinations particularly of the disadvantaged student group. This has helped to support individual conversations and to help more students to see that a sixth form route could be an option for them. Further work on raising aspirations and realising possible careers and pathways will develop this work even further.

## **V Conclusion**

The school is rightly mindful of and ambitious for its disadvantaged students. All staff engaged well in the process and received feedback positively and were keen to take the school's work to the next level. Thank you to all staff and students for welcoming me and the review and for working with me so positively.

## **VI Recommendations**

- Refine monitoring and evaluation systems to always include a pupil premium dimension.
- Develop the skills of the governing body to ensure that governors hold leaders of all levels to account for the progress of disadvantaged students.
- Develop a medium term plan to ensure that all pupil premium funds are specifically targeted on effective strategies to enhance disadvantaged students' outcomes.
- Analyse the curriculum uptake in all subjects and particularly in Triple science, languages and Food and Nutrition for years 9, 10 and 11. Evaluate whether expectations and opportunities are sufficiently challenging for pupil premium students.
- Develop a RAP specifically for attendance. Ensure that the attendance policy articulates roles and responsibilities starting with tutors. Set a PA target and a PP PA target.
- Refine the target setting system to ensure that all students have a single challenging target.
- Explore and resolve challenges for disadvantaged students around homework.
- Establish a staff-working group to capitalise on staff interest and positivity around these issues. Consider: tasking this group to research teaching and learning strategies that can become Pittville strategies; the use of visualisers as well as 'I/We/You' approach; school wide strategies that builds on talk for learning.