

Pupil Equity Funding- Implementation Framework

East Lothian Council 2018/2019

Introduction – What is it?

The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched in February 2015 to bring a greater sense of urgency and priority for everyone involved in Scottish education to relentlessly focus their efforts on narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap at all levels and in all sectors. The Challenge has been introduced to focus and accelerate targeted improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. It also supports and complements a broader range of initiatives and programmes to ensure that all of Scotland's children and young people reach their full potential.

As part of this programme, Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) has been provided by the Scottish Government to raise attainment amongst those children and young people who face barrier to their learning due to the impact of poverty. PEF has been allocated based on the numbers of children and young people from P1 to S3 in each primary, secondary and special school in Scotland on the basis of free school meal eligibility (FSM). A total of £1.5 million of funding has been made available to 41 East Lothian schools for financial year 2017/18; it is expected that this will be available each year for duration of the current administration.

Please see 'Education Scotland; Pupil Equity Funding – National Operational Guidance 2018' <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/pupil-equity-fund-operational-guidance-2018/> for further information.

Key Principles

- Headteachers will have access to the full amount of funding allocated to them.
- The funding will be used to deliver activities, interventions or resources that are clearly additional to those which were already planned.
- Headteachers will work in partnership with each other, and their Local Authority to agree the use of the funding.
- Headteachers will be accountable to their Local Authority for the use of funding in their schools.
- Schools will take account of the statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority to deliver educational improvement, secure best value and respect the Authority's role as an employer.
- The operation of the funds will articulate as closely as possible to existing planning and reporting procedures e.g. School Improvement Plans and Standards & Quality reports.

- Funding will be used to provide targeted support for children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential whilst keeping a clear focus on equity. Although the funding is allocated on the basis of free school meal eligibility, Headteachers can use their professional judgement to bring additional children into the targeted interventions.
- Parents and carers, children and young people and other key stakeholders will be involved in the planning process, particularly in the 2018 Year of Young People.
- Headteachers must develop a clear rationale for the use of the funding, based on a clear contextual analysis which identifies the poverty related attainment gap in their school and, plans must be evidenced in what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty.
- Schools will have plans in place at the onset to evaluate the impact of the funding. Schools must have plans in place at the onset to evaluate the impact of the funding. These plans should outline clear outcomes to be achieved and how to progress towards these, and the impact on closing the poverty related attainment gap will be measured. If, as a result of this ongoing monitoring, the plans are not achieving the results intended, these plans should be amended.
- Schools can carry forward underspent funds into a new financial year but must liaise closely with the Local Authority to agree arrangements for doing this. It is expected that the carry forward into a new academic year will only happen in exceptional circumstances.

Planning for Improvement: Use of Pupil Equity Funding

Funding should be focussed on activities and interventions that will lead to improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Leadership, learning & teaching and families and communities are useful organisers to consider when determining interventions.

The guidance provided in the recent Driving Excellence and Equity: Advice on School Improvement Planning 2017/18, together with HGIOS?4 and HGIOELC? gives essential advice to schools about creating a meaningful improvement plan in line with the key priorities of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) which are:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing; and
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

Planning for the use of PEF should be integrated within this framework. Planning will be integrated into ongoing self-evaluation and school improvement planning processes which will include robust measures of impact and progress.

A framework, 'Interventions for Equity' has been developed to support the planning and implementation of evidence based interventions. The examples cited are there to act as a stimulus to develop reflection on what could work in local contexts and are not the only interventions that should be considered.

Step 1 – Identify Gaps

In selecting the most impactful Interventions and approaches that will contribute towards addressing the poverty related attainment gap in any given context it is essential to identify the targeted group of children or young people. How do we do this? Schools need to identify the barriers to learning for pupils as a result of poverty and analyse the impact on pupil attainment. Barriers may include factors such as poor attendance, narrow experience of life outside school, poor parenting, being a young carer, and being care experienced. Analysing these barriers against school performance data and other evidence will help to identify more precisely where progress needs to improve for pupils who are underachieving as a result of poverty, factors that may be hindering that progress and where and what kind of additional support is required.

Some pupils who may be living in poverty may not be falling behind their peers academically. In these cases schools should ensure that the relevant pupils are clearly identified on the school's tracking system so that evidence of their performance is clear; document how whole school initiatives to raise attainment will impact on these pupils; use PEF to raise aspirations and access to opportunities if appropriate.

- Complete an in-depth analysis of the barriers to learning in your local context
- Scrutinise existing data to ensure decision making is based on data and evidence of where the gaps are in your local context
- Seek the views of parents/carers and stakeholders

Step 2 - Identify Outcomes and Success Criteria

Once barriers have been identified and schools know the group of pupils they wish to target attention must then be given to the equity focussed outcomes they are hoping to achieve. Consideration needs to be given to the long term outcomes outlined in the NIF however more specific, equity focussed outcomes should be identified. These may include: raising attainment of the bottom 20% of learners in literacy and/or maths; improving attendance/reducing exclusion of pupils in the bottom SIMD bands; increase positive destinations for pupils who have been care experienced; increase parental engagement for pupils living in bottom SIMD bands.

It may be useful to evaluate current interventions and strategies. Consider for example, how much funding is currently being used on whole school interventions versus targeted interventions; how much is being deployed across classes/stages? what early interventions are currently in place? what partnerships are already in place? what impact are they having? There are no right or wrong answers but a full analysis of current spend and interventions may help inform decisions about how to use PEF.

Against each of the desired equity focussed outcomes schools should set one or more success criteria which should be measurable, achievable, realistic and timed.

- Consider and clearly articulate the outcomes that are expected to be achieved taking into account your local context (e.g. size of school, amount of PEF, stakeholders views)
- Have a clear understanding of how success will be measured giving specific details of the changes in the data expected and the ways in which this will be measured

Step 3 - Identify What Works and Decide What to Take Forward

Schools need to look outwards for evidence of what works whilst being mindful that ...in education, “what works?” is not the right question because everything works somewhere and nothing works everywhere. So what’s interesting, what’s important in education is: “under what conditions does this work?” Dylan William, 2017.

It is important to identify interventions that can be targeted at the children and young people who are most disadvantaged (see Appendix D). Schools need to use the evidence gathered and make decisions on what would be the best approach to use in their context. These interventions should not be seen in isolation to other efforts to raise attainment and achievement.

Pupil Equity Funding should be used in conjunction with a range of interventions and approaches to encourage and enhance professional dialogue taking fully into account the local context.

Consideration should be given to working in partnership with other schools, sharing practice and building capacity. Other partnerships should also be considered, such as with local third sector partners, for example, to support family learning or health and wellbeing. Some examples of local partners and providers have been documented in Appendix E.

When developing proposals, schools should consider the feasibility of their plans taking into factors such as procurement and recruitment timescales. See Appendix B (recruitment) and Appendix C (procurement) for further information.

- Consider a wide range of evidence and interventions – consult with a range of stakeholders and colleagues
- Seek out excellence practice in other schools – whilst always being mindful of your context
- Access reliable and up-to-date sources on what works in raising the attainment of disadvantaged children (see Appendix D)
- Consider the scale and sustainability of possible interventions and approaches - be mindful of recruitment and procurements processes

Step 4 – Create Action Plan

In their plan, schools, with the support of their Local Authority, should identify the issue to be addressed, and the target group or groups of pupils most in need of additional support based on an analysis of local evidence and data. Schools should ensure that they focus on a small number of specific aspects of literacy, numeracy or health and wellbeing. They should choose which aspects will best meet their pupils’ needs, based on an analysis of their context, their school improvement plan and the current evidence base. Whilst a particular focus may overlap with other areas, there should be a clear rationale for why they have chosen this approach, with clear methodology to measure impact in this area.

Impact should be considered in terms of the desired outcomes for pupils and how progress towards these will be measured over time. Improvement plans should include consideration of how data will be collected and reported. Establishing baseline measures and clearly articulated outcomes and measures of impact is necessary in defining progress and next steps for targeted individuals and group.

The Education Endowment Foundation has produced a DIY Evaluation Guide to support teachers and schools in designing and carrying out small-scale evaluations in schools - [https://v1.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/EEF_DIY_Evaluation_Guide_\(2013\).pdf](https://v1.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/EEF_DIY_Evaluation_Guide_(2013).pdf) (see Appendix D). Advice on evaluation can also be sought from the Educational Psychology Service.

A template is provided in Appendix A which should be used to set out details of the proposed Action Plan. This is the paperwork that needs to be submitted to the Local Authority Planning and Support team before funding will be released to schools.

- The funding seeks to deliver improvements to educational attainment and specifically targeting to reduce the impact of poverty on attainment outcomes.
- Funding may cover staff costs, logistics, resources or services. The funding cannot be used for capital expenditure.
- Funding must provide additionality to core service delivery in new or enhanced way.
- Targeted deliverables in outputs such as hours of activity, numbers of pupils, parental involvement etc. are required.
- Targeted outcomes should be specified: for example, attainment levels, attendance, exclusions, positive destinations.
- Parent and Pupil Council's should be consulted on the proposed plan. Ensure your plan and report is accessible all groups and that they have a forum to discuss the information provided.

Step 5 - Reporting on Outcomes and Impact

Schools will clearly define outcomes to enable progress and impact to be measured. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to defining short, medium and long term outcomes to enable progress to be measured over time and to ensure that plans are resulting in improvements. Teacher professional judgement of CfE levels is a key factor in measuring progress.

Schools will incorporate details of the PEF into all existing reporting processes such as SIP and Standards and Quality reporting. It is essential that frequent evaluation of progress towards targeted outcomes is considered. Frequent updates should also be provided to Parent Councils and Quality Improvement Officers.

Where the impact of the interventions put in place may have been negligible, look at the data carefully to establish the reasons for this and then construct a new plan to ensure that this is rectified moving forward.

- The PEF plan should be incorporated into the school SIP
- Regular evaluation of progress towards outcomes must be considered. Encourage all staff to monitor the impact of the intervention via staff discussions, regular feedback slots, parental surveys etc.

- Targeted outcomes should be specified: for example, attainment levels, attendance, exclusions, positive destinations.
- Intervene quickly where any strategy or intervention fails to show impact

East Lothian PEF Planning Central Support

All PEF proposals will be reviewed by key central staff - QIM, QIO, EP and HR/Finance/Procurement colleagues. The purpose of this will be to make links to activities across the Local Authority and to ensure the plan being proposed meets national and local terms and conditions of staffing and expenditure is compliant with procurement regulations.

Timeline

- Proformas seeking review of 2017/18 spend, impact and planning for 2018/19 submitted to Lynnsey Innes by end April 2018.
- Discussion and exploration for collaborative working should take place at a school and cluster level with regards to the proposals that will be submitted.
- QIOs will undertake to review proposals with other key central staff in early July and will feedback thereafter.
- Implementation should be ongoing and build on spend from 2017/18 including any carry forward

Appendices (stored on Education Exchange/Pupil Equity Funding)

Appendix A – PEF Proforma

Appendix B – Recruitment

Appendix C – Procurement

Appendix D – Resources to Support Evidence Based Practice

Appendix E – Examples/Contac

