
UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP



Springwater Community Special School

Pupil Premium Strategy Review

Context

- **Springwater Community Special School** is a 2-19 Special School with 70 pupils on roll.
- 35% are from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 10% of pupils speak English as an Additional Language.
- All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education and Health Care Plan.
- The school was judged by Ofsted to be outstanding in July 2015.

Review

The review involved a documentation review, a series of classroom observations and meetings with senior leaders (including a governor), teachers, support staff and pupils.

Priorities

1. Historically, the Pupil Premium has been ring-fenced so it has largely been spent on eligible pupils only. The next phase of the strategic plan should focus more on giving teachers greater professional development, capacity and expertise to meet the needs of their disadvantaged pupils in the classroom. This can build on the highly impressive knowledge adults have of their pupils (including their strengths), and the inspirational adult-pupil relationships at the school.
2. Pupils who joined review discussions were positive, articulate and considerate about their time at school. They spoke about the range of academic and enrichment opportunities they received – all of which facilitate independence and good relationships. These include a Valentine's disco and a supported internship. Pupils spoke about feeling very safe at school.
3. Some highly effective interventions have been put in place, such as music therapy and evidence of impact on pupils is visible. Such interventions are helpful in enabling vulnerable learners to better access the curriculum offered at the school.

4. Greater clarity is needed in understanding any outcome gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers – for example, in relation to independence, communication and language or academic attainment. This should be the focus for the strategic plan. Effective support for disadvantaged pupils is not just ‘knowing who the Pupil Premium children are’, but understanding what impact their socio-economic background might have on educational outcomes.
5. It was discussed and agreed that, in line with best practice, research evidence and the conditions of grant for Pupil Premium, it is appropriate for Pupil Premium funding to positively impact on all pupils. This is irrespective of eligibility, provided the use of the funding is targeted at disadvantaged pupils’ learning needs. Similarly, in line with professional judgement of senior leaders, support can continue to be provided into Key Stage 5.
6. A key priority for senior leaders is to secure a collective understanding of the School’s Pupil Premium strategy and the roles of individuals within that. Importantly, the collective understanding that disadvantaged pupils with multiple barriers to learning should be supported in the classroom, as well as through intervention. Margaret Mulholland’s work at Swiss Cottage School offers a very useful model:
<http://swisscottage.camden.sch.uk/our-school/pupil-premium/margaret.mulholland@swisscottage.camden.sch.uk>
7. In all cases, it is important to put in place a robust evaluation framework for individual strands of activity - including professional development – to check/ensure there is a positive change to pupil outcomes. Professor Thomas Guskey provides a model evaluation framework for professional development:
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar02/vol59/num06/Does-It-Make-a-Difference-Evaluating-Professional-Development.aspx>.
8. Considering the school context, a three-year planning cycle, using the logic model to set out goals, as well as the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes that inform leaders (including governors) that they are on track to meet that goal. This supports effective implementation.

Further notes

9. It is recommended that the school literacy lead attends Megan Dixon’s forthcoming session on literacy and disadvantaged learners in March 2019.
10. Frank Wise Special School in Banbury has an effective Pupil Premium strategy that focusses on improved teaching and developing pupil independence in a similar context: <https://frankwise.oxon.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pupil-Premium-FWS-201819.pdf>

11. It was agreed that there would be a follow up review by Katharine Bruce from the Local Authority later in the calendar year, once the implementation of the updated strategy is underway.

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March 2019