

Use and Impact of Pupil Equity Funding in Session 2017/18

Report by Maria Lloyd, Acting Head of Education, Education, Communities & Economy

1. Purpose of the Report

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is additional funding from the Scottish Government's £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund, allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap. This funding is to be spent at the discretion of Head Teachers working in partnership with each other and their local authority. In 2017/18, Scotland's schools received a share of over £120 million, and in 2018/19 this has increased to over £122 million.

Every council area is benefitting from Pupil Equity Funding and over 96% of schools in Scotland have been allocated funding. Allocations are based on the number of pupils from P1 to S3 who are eligible and registered for free school meals, using the latest available data. In some instances this means schools may have faced significant reductions in their funding allocation in 2018/19. However, Ministers have decided to cap the reduction that any school will face, so that the 2018/19 funding allocation is no more than 10% less than 2017/18. In these cases, a top up has been added to the schools' allocations. 11 Midlothian schools have been subject to this top up.

National Operational Guidance has been published to help schools plan how they will most effectively invest their Pupil Equity Funding allocation to improve the educational outcomes of children affected by poverty.

The purpose of this report is to present findings from a survey of Head Teachers and PEF leads in schools as to how they spent their funding, difficulties faced in spending funding, the range of interventions adopted and the impact on attainment.

2. Background

In Session 2017/18, Midlothian schools received £2,272,800 Pupil Equity Funding. We welcome the commitment to a relentless focus on closing the attainment gap. The Single Midlothian Plan is committed to reducing inequalities. In the Education service, we continue to build on our ambition to create a world-class education system through equity and excellence, and we are relentless in our focus to interrupt the cycle of poverty at the same time as improving attainment overall.

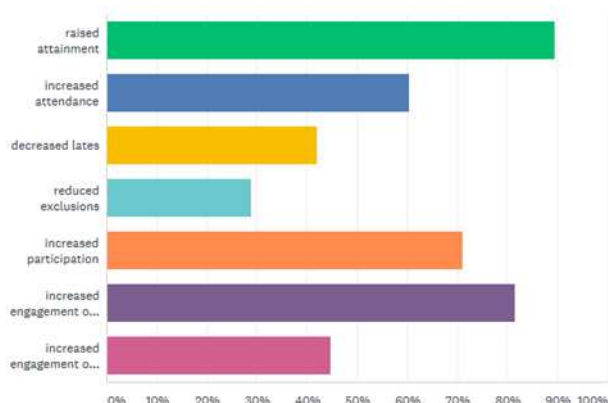
The Education Service has issued the detailed national guidance to schools in order to support schools to use their Pupil Equity Funding to best effect, identifying their 'gap' effectively and planning appropriate

targeted interventions. This guidance continues to promote the following core principles:

- Head Teachers must have access to the full amount of the allocated Pupil Equity Funding.
- The Pupil Equity Funding must enable schools to deliver activities, interventions or resources which are clearly additional to those which were already planned.
- Head Teachers should work in partnership with each other, and their local authority, to agree the use of the funding. Schools must take account of the statutory responsibilities of the authority to deliver educational improvement, secure best value, and the authority's role as employer. Additional guidance from Finance and Procurement will follow, and will be detailed to Head Teachers through Leadership Learning Community Meetings.
- The operation of the Pupil Equity Funding should articulate as closely to existing planning and reporting procedures as possible – e.g. through School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality Reports
- Parents and carers, children and young people and other key stakeholders should be involved in the planning process.
- Funding must provide targeted support for children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. Although the Pupil Equity Funding is allocated on the basis of free school meal eligibility, Head Teachers can use their professional judgement to bring additional children in to the targeted interventions.
- Head Teachers must base their use of the funding on a clear contextual analysis which identifies the poverty related attainment gap in their schools and plans must be grounded in evidence of what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty.
- Schools must have plans in place at the outset to evaluate the impact of the funding.

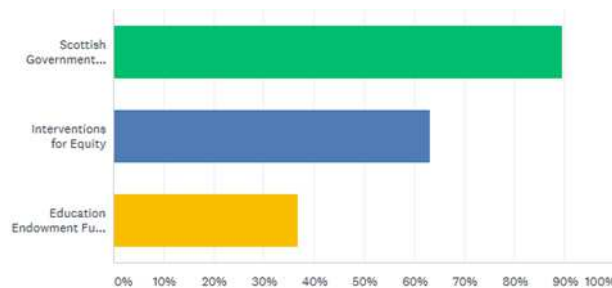
2.1 Midlothian Schools' Use of Pupil Equity Funding

Use of this funding has supported schools to enhance teaching, support and specialist staffing and apply a range of interventions to support learners to attain and achieve, with most schools using it specifically to raise attainment and increase participation, leading to wider achievement.



2.2 Range of Supports in Planning Use of PEF

Schools have been encouraged to be creative in selecting their interventions, ensuring that sustainability is a key factor in planning for the future. A range of supports was used by schools:



Other supports mentioned by schools include professional discussions with Schools Group Managers, collaboration with other schools and other professionals, following up ideas from social media e.g. Twitter and ideas from consultation with stakeholders.

2.3 Range of Interventions

Following consultation, a wide range of interventions was planned, examples of which are outlined below:

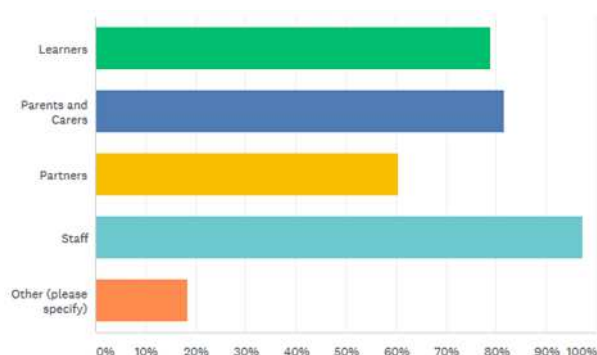
- Raising attainment in reading for targeted learners
- Splitting two large P2 classes into three small P3 classes during session 2017/18
- Support funding of LAAC pupils and pupils with challenging behaviour to access Play Therapy
- Support Health and Wellbeing
- Home School Practitioner 18 hours per week - attendance and family support
- Introduction of Read Write Inc. to all Primary 1 and Fresh Start to targeted learners in P7 and P6
- Learning Assistant for 1-1 literacy support for SIMD 1-3 in P1 and P2 and Fresh Start in P7 and also 1-1 numeracy in P6 and P7
- Mentoring for vulnerable groups
- Improving attendance and lates
- Help with the cost of the school day to enable children to engage with learning more readily
- Healthy snack provided as required to support children's readiness to learn
- Subsidising horse riding for the disabled to develop children's motor skills and ability to co-operate and work together.
- Improving mental wellbeing of pupils
- Extending opportunities for wider achievements
- Improving attainment through staff training & development - teaching core skills and giving effective feedback
- Partnership working - Empowering Families Project and Partnership Coordinator
- Provide Play Therapeutic Support – both a drop-in service, individual/filial therapy, group work and parent/carer/staff consultation
- Differentiated support – creating a Learning Centre within the school, staffed by SfL Teacher and both a full-time and part-time learning assistant, providing

differentiated support to individuals and identified groups

- Funded trips, camps etc. for FME pupils ensuring equity
- Engagement beyond school - raising attainment in targeted group SIMD 2 & 3 'Readiness to Learn'
- STEP Programme to improve physical literacy
- Attainment Champions and Pastoral Mentors
- Increased Learning assistant hours to support most vulnerable P1 and P2 pupils

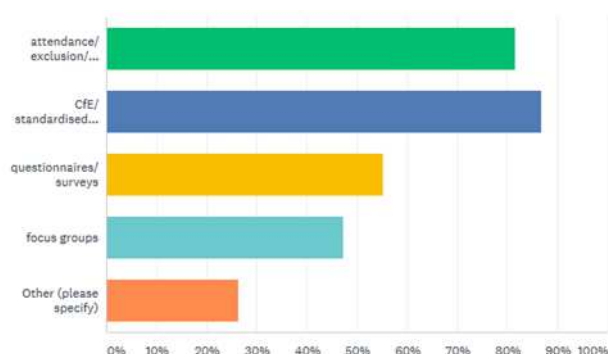
2.4 Consultation

A range of stakeholders was consulted about use of PEF in schools. Our expectation is that 100% of schools will consult parents and carers next session. This formed part of our guidance to schools, and was discussed at our locality SQIP Workshops and Leadership Learning Community Meetings.



2.5 Measurement of Impact

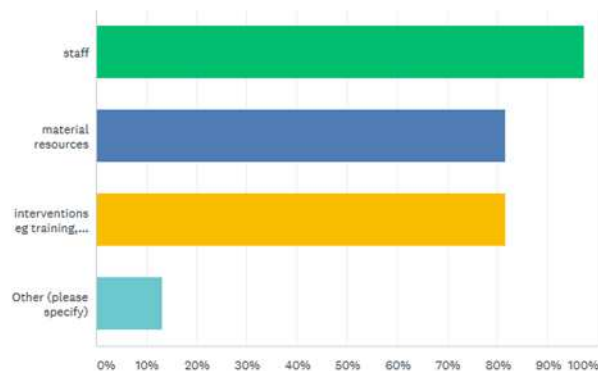
Success of the wide range of interventions applied was measured in a range of ways:



'Other' measurements included use of Boxall Profiles, the Leuven Scale, post-intervention assessments and focused dialogue with learners and partners.

2.6 Range of Resources Procured Through PEF

The largest percentage of funding was spent on staffing, with a range of professionals engaged including; class teachers, Principal Teachers, Depute Head Teachers, Learning Assistants, Partnership Manager, Support for Learning Teachers, Therapeutic Services, Duke of Edinburgh Instructor, other outside agencies e.g. Empowering Families staff.

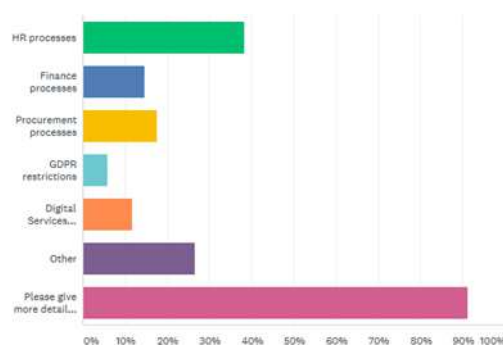


2.7 Barriers to Spending PEF

School staff were asked what barriers they encountered in trying to spend their Pupil Equity Funding. Not surprisingly, as the largest percentage of PEF was spent on staffing, HR processes proved to be the biggest barrier. This was due to several issues. As new posts had been created, such as Home School Practitioner, job descriptions were required which had to go through the job-sizing process. Recruitment procedures followed, with some delays meaning that some staff were not in place until the end of Session 2017/18.

Schools also found that because all PEF funded posts had to be fixed term due to the short-term nature of the funding, they often lost staff to other permanent posts when they were advertised.

This exercise also threw up some misconceptions within other directorates of the council. Due to budget cuts, an embargo on non-essential spend was issued to all staff. This could not apply to PEF, however there was concern expressed when orders were placed through PEF that the embargo had been ignored.



2.8 Closing the Poverty-Related Attainment Gap

The table below compares the progress made by learners in SIMD 1-2, 3-8 and 9-10 in Sessions 2016/17 and 2017/18.

	SIMD 1-2		SIMD 3-8		SIMD 9-10	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
P1 L&T	81.34%	87.88%	82.86%	92.67%	93.38%	96.45%
P1 Reading	68.66%	76.52%	75.09%	88.32%	84.11%	91.12%
P1 Writing	68.66%	75.00%	69.67%	84.22%	74.17%	88.17%
P1 Numeracy	73.88%	79.55%	75.34%	87.33%	82.78%	91.12%
P4 L&T	66.67%	77.14%	77.30%	84.91%	90.32%	91.28%
P4 Reading	62.16%	72.14%	74.83%	79.04%	90.32%	85.91%
P4 Writing	51.35%	67.14%	63.27%	76.64%	83.87%	81.21%
P4 Numeracy	65.77%	72.86%	71.80%	79.17%	81.94%	80.54%
P7 L&T	72.28%	68.27%	71.89%	82.90%	86.30%	96.15%
P7 Reading	59.41%	60.58%	72.34%	79.21%	89.04%	89.74%
P7 Writing	42.57%	65.38%	56.36%	75.10%	76.71%	84.62%
P7 Numeracy	45.54%	56.73%	61.54%	74.97%	80.82%	83.97%
S3 L&T	74.39%	77.38%	82.51%	83.89%	93.89%	94.44%
S3 Reading	69.51%	79.76%	81.11%	83.89%	93.89%	92.86%
S3 Writing	68.29%	78.57%	76.47%	80.06%	93.13%	92.86%
S3 Numeracy	78.05%	80.49%	88.53%	87.38%	96.95%	97.60%

In primary schools, for those learners living in SIMD 1 and 2, all measures have increased from last session with the exception of P7 Listening and Talking which has decreased by 4%. For those learners living in SIMD 3-8, all measures have increased from last session. It is clear that more attention is required for those learners in P4 living in SIMD 9 and 10, where attainment has decreased in Reading, Writing and Numeracy, and for S3 learners in SIMD 9 and 10 in Reading and Writing. These will be a particular area of focus and challenge for next session. All other measures have increased.

2.9 Planning for Session 2018/19

In Session 2018/19, the Pupil Equity Fund allocation for Midlothian schools totals £2,273,160.

To further support schools to plan for the use of their new allocations, a Leadership Learning Community Meeting had a key leadership focus of 'Measuring with Meaning', which allowed all Head Teachers to report back to colleagues and partners on the targeted interventions which have had the greatest impact within their contexts and sectors.

Schools have used this knowledge, all appropriate data and related guidance to incorporate their PEF plans into their school improvement plans. As per the national guidance, these will be published on school websites by the end of September 2018.

The Pupil Equity Fund will be reported on quarterly as part of the Education Service quarterly reporting. In addition, the impact of the Pupil Equity Fund will also be reported in the attainment reports which are presented to Council in December and May each year.

We continue to welcome the relentless focus on closing the attainment gap in Education but we recognise that this requires a total Midlothian approach. Therefore we continue to recognise the critical role that other services, including the Community Planning Partnerships and the third sector, play in supporting education to interrupt the cycle of poverty. Schools will continue to plan *in school* and *out of school* interventions across the three themes of learning and teaching; communities and families and leadership. In addition schools must have plans in place at the outset to evaluate the impact of the funding. The following 5 key indicators will be used in order to evaluate impact: attendance, exclusions, literacy, numeracy, health and well-being, attainment measures across the broad general education, engagement and participation.

3. Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The Pupil Equity Fund allocation for Midlothian schools totals £2,273,160. A copy of the school level allocations is included in appendix 1.

3.2 Risk

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3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

The ambition of the Pupil Equity Fund is already clearly embedded in the Single Midlothian Plan – reducing inequalities. Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

GIRFEC 5: Our people will be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

To close the gap by improving 'attainment versus deprivation' and 'attainment for all' outcomes for children and young people.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

This report aims to take preventative action in order to interrupt the cycle of poverty by closing the attainment versus deprivation gap and implementing key programmes and interventions which are designed to target support to children and young people from disadvantaged communities.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Schools, as part of their planning cycle, will involve communities and stakeholders.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

The recommendations in this report should continue to promote equity of attainment for disadvantaged children and support the steps being taken towards narrowing the attainment gap by imposing duties on education authorities and the Scottish Ministers in relation to reducing pupils' inequalities of educational outcome together with a duty to report on progress.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

There are no impacts arising directly from this report.

3.10 IT Issues

The national guidance contains further advice on IT stating that: the Pupil Equity Funding can be used to procure digital technologies, including hardware and software, when its allocation and use is particularly focused on supporting children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. The Scottish Government provides access to a range of national procurement frameworks for the purchase of digital technology products and devices, including a range of desktops, laptops and tablets. The frameworks offer a direct route to market and significant savings against RRP.

To prevent issues arising with compatibility and connectivity, schools seeking to purchase digital technology should do so in close consultation with the IT Department at their local authority.

4 Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to:

- Acknowledge and congratulate school staff and managers for the improvements in attainment of Curriculum for Excellence levels for those pupils in SIMD 1&2
- Note the wide range of interventions adopted and progress made by schools with their use of the Pupil Equity Fund
- Acknowledge the barriers faced by schools in spending their Pupil Equity Funding

- Note that schools will incorporate future PEF plans into their School Improvement Plans and publish them on their school websites as required by the Scottish Government
- Request a further update on progress at via Quarterly reporting cycle.

20th September 2018

Report Contact

Nicola McDowell Tel No 0131 271 3726

nicola.mcdowell@midlothian.gov.uk

Supporting Papers for Pupil Equity Funding:

The school level allocations for the Pupil Equity fund were announced by the Scottish Government on 29 January 2018:

www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/Raisingeducationalattainment/pupilequityfund.

Operational Guidance from Scottish Government:

www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/Raisingeducationalattainment/pupilequityfund.

Education (Scotland) Act 2016:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/pdfs/asp_20160008_en.pdf