



**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON 30 OCTOBER 2019**

**SUBJECT: THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING IN MORAY
SCHOOLS – PROGRESS UPDATE**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISTIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about progress made with the implementation of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) in schools and the evidence of impact to date.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee scrutinises and notes the content of this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government established PEF in 2017/18 as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) and to support the achievement of the four priorities of the National Improvement Framework (NIF):
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
 - Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
 - Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
 - Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

Education Scotland information on the SAC may be viewed at;
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/Scottish%20Attainment%20Challenge>

- 3.2 As part the Attainment Scotland Fund the SAC is a targeted initiative focused on closing the attainment gap between the most and least deprived children.

There are nine Challenge Authorities at present, namely; Glasgow, Dundee, Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire, North Ayrshire, Clackmannanshire, North Lanarkshire, East Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. The fund was initially focused on primary schools and targeted improvements in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and wellbeing.

- 3.3 The Schools Programme initially supported primary schools out-with the Challenge Authorities. These schools were been identified on the basis of supporting a significant proportion of pupils and families from communities which are facing some of the greatest challenges across Scotland. The scope of these programmes was extended in 2016 to support a number of secondary schools across Scotland.
- 3.4 The Innovation Fund was introduced in 2016/17 only to identify and fund projects to improve Literacy, Numeracy and Health and wellbeing for children adversely impacted by deprivation. It was open to primary, special and secondary schools that were not already benefitting from Attainment Scotland Funding, opening up opportunities for all authorities to receive support. This has now been subsumed into the Schools Programme as PEF was introduced.
- 3.5 Scottish Government announced in February 2017 that it was establishing the Pupil Equity Fund as a part of the £750m Attainment Scotland Fund. PEF is additional funding to be allocated directly to schools. Publicly funded primary, secondary and special schools receive PEF. National Operational Guidance has been published on the Scottish Government website and can be viewed at:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-equity-funding-national-operational-guidance-2019/>
- 3.6 The funding is intended to be available on an annual basis for the duration of the current parliament (2016-2021) and the first release of funds was made in the 2017-18 school session to the value of £120m nationally. PEF is expected to be available for the duration of the current parliament and a recent announcement has extended the funding to March 2022. School session 2018/19 represented the second year of delivery. It should be noted that the funding is allocated by financial year rather than academic year although Scottish Government has allowed schools to carry over monies as posts are appointed across the academic year.
- 3.7 The aim of PEF is to provide equity in Scottish education through the funding of targeted interventions to close the poverty-related attainment gap: the difference in attainment outcomes between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people, a defining priority of the NIF.
- 3.8 The amount of PEF a school receives is determined by a government formula based on known free school meal (FSM) eligibility in P1-S3 and allocates £1,200 per notionally eligible child in the school. The funding is provided directly to head teachers to spend at their discretion with the requirement that they work in partnership with each other and their local authority. Concerns have been raised with Scottish Government about the equity of allocations

across Scotland and the adverse impact of rurality in terms of social deprivation due to isolation and the distances required to be travelled to attend school and other activities which can enhance a child's life chances. The Northern Alliance is looking into the issue of rural poverty and its impact on children and young people in rural communities across the north of Scotland.

- 3.9 It is a requirement of the funding that it provides additionality in schools and does not replace any existing services or provision. Headteachers must have access to the full amount of the allocated PEF and should work in partnership with each other, and their local authority, to agree the use of the funding. They must take account of the statutory responsibilities of the authority to deliver educational improvement, secure Best Value, and the authority's role as employer. Schools are to plan for its use in School Improvement Plans and report on their spend via their annual Standards & Quality Reports. These documents are sampled nationally by the Scottish Government by accessing them through school websites and the current programme of school inspections will include an evaluation of PEF delivery and impact. Of the 250 annual Education Scotland inspections there is an agreed sample to look at how schools are addressing the NIF priorities. During a school inspection, whether short or full model, when rating the Quality Indicator (QI) 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement, the school must demonstrate knowledge of their attainment gap and provide details of how they are 'closing the gap' by means of which PEF interventions.
- 3.10 The allocation of Pupil Equity Funding to Moray schools in 2017-18 was £1,270,800, in 2018-19 it was £1,341,960 and in 2019-20 it is £1,416,960. Headteachers have worked collaboratively at ASG level or within their schools to deliver the desired outcomes, dependent on the local context. In terms of funding this means that in Moray last year one primary school received no funding and the other primary schools received funding ranging from the lowest at £1,200 to the highest at £109,200. In our secondary schools the range of funding was from the lowest at £15,120 to the highest at £66,000.
- 3.11 Headteachers, working collaboratively with their school communities, have been identifying poverty-related gaps in attainment by focusing on children who have free school meal entitlement. The flexibility in the Scottish Government guidelines allows Headteachers to use their professional judgment to bring additional children into the targeted interventions and approaches to ensure excellence and equity for all. An analysis of the attainment of children eligible for PEF against those who are not from the Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA) data for 2018/19 should enable schools to better plan interventions for eligible children to positive effect. Headteachers will monitor the progress of identified children and young people alongside normal tracking and monitoring of pupil progress. In addition they will all look at the value added in using certain interventions and see where particular interventions have improved outcomes in terms of attainment in literacy and numeracy and also the wellbeing of pupils.
- 3.12 Moray schools have used PEF to deliver a range of interventions to support disadvantaged learners and work to close the poverty-related attainment gap.

As well as reporting on progress through their annual Standards & Quality Reports, schools are using some or all of the five key measures to track children's progress, namely: attainment, attendance, inclusion, participation and engagement. Obviously attainment, attendance and inclusion are easier to measure and so assessing intervention impact is easier. These interventions have been implemented in the light of the six strategic areas from the Moray Schools and Curriculum Development Department Strategic Action Plan 2018-21 which informs all school improvement planning. Work is ongoing to ensure that School PEF Plans take account of the current Moray (Child) Poverty Action Plan and good practice from other local authorities. These six strategic areas inform the Moray Schools and Curriculum Development Strategic Plan 2018-21.

3.13 Schools and ASGs have undertaken a range of activities, including:

- Targeted Literacy and Numeracy intervention group work led by teachers, classroom assistants or pupil support assistants to raise levels of Literacy and Numeracy with eligible pupils and also to enhance the chances of secondary pupils as they progress through to the senior phase.
- Subscription to Accelerated Reader including teacher training sessions to raise levels of Literacy among targeted groups of eligible pupils
- Breakfast clubs that provide breakfast and a morning snack, and in some cases food for children's lunches so that children are better prepared for learning; and to work with families to understand the importance of their children having a healthy breakfast and a healthy diet whilst engaging positively with the school. In addition to this, schools are working with families who are entitled to claim for Free School Meals to take advantage of this.
- Soft-start and transition time and activities ease pupils into the beginning of the school day to aid transition from home to school and classroom and learning as some eligible pupils are coming from unsettled home-lives
- Whole school restorative training to augment the school Positive Relationships Policy so that staff are better trained to engage relationally with pupils in general and eligible pupils in particular
- SkillForce activities to engage with eligible pupils to build their levels of self-confidence and self-efficacy
- Family Support Workers (FSW) to support a more stable family home life so that eligible pupils have support at home which enhances their educational experience
- Home School Link Workers (HSLW) to be a conduit for liaison between school and home when challenges arise with low engaging families
- Northern Alliance Emerging Literacy and TalkBoost activities specifically to improve levels of literacy in eligible children
- Secondary mathematics teacher working in a primary school to improve transition from primary to secondary within the ASG to improve numeracy levels and confidence in mathematics
- Healthy activity and cookery club during the summer holidays to encourage parental engagement with the parents of eligible children
- Woodwork and outdoor learning to boost enjoyment and confidence in learning so leading to greater confidence overall

- Musical instrument class teaching and choir activities to develop a 'growth mindset' attitude in an environment where it is acceptable to 'have a go' with other learners
- Break-time and lunch drop-in sessions and homework support sessions to help raise aspiration and attainment for eligible pupils
- Working with Third Sector partners to provide support to vulnerable families to help foster a positive attitude and culture towards learning, and school where often parents have had a negative school experience
- Bounceback resources to teach pupils about resilience so that they will develop a 'growth mindset' and persist in the midst of learning and social challenges
- Interventions in secondary schools to ensure that pupils are better placed through work across S1-3 to prepare them to leave school with at least National 3 in Literacy and Numeracy to enhance the life chances of eligible pupils and their families

3.14 PEF is part of a strategy to improve the outcomes for our most disadvantaged children. In Moray, Headteachers work with partners and the local authority to plan their PEF spends and are endeavouring to make a long term difference to our poverty related attainment gap. There have been some quick fixes whilst other solutions will take longer with schools adapting interventions to 'close the gap' in the medium to longer term as a lack of positive engagement with education is deeply entrenched in the families of some eligible children. Schools are expected to show the impact of their interventions and this requires central team officers working with schools to do this effectively. Schools are using an 'Adopt/Adapt/Abandon' approach to those interventions recommended by our Education Attainment Advisor. The Council has a new attainment Advisor appointed on a 0.8 full time equivalent capacity which will bring more capacity to close the attainment gap as part of the Education Scotland Northern Team offer.

3.15 Key messages for the 2018/19 session are attached at **Appendix 1**. Next steps are to gather evidence of impact although early indications are that the following interventions are adding value ie nurture and relational approaches adopted by schools ensuring that children and young people are better prepared for learning. Numeracy interventions and the emerging literacy approach is also showing some impact.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The report was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan and in particular to Ambitious and Confident Children and Young People and A Growing and Diverse Economy.

(b) Policy and Legal

This report relates to Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which concerns the inspection of educational establishments.

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality/Socio Economic Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on performance.

(h) Consultations

Chief Executive, Education and Social Care SMT, Senior Officers in Education and Social Care, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Human Resources Manager and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.

Author of Report: Willem Smit, Quality Improvement Officer

Background papers:

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/Scottish%20Attainment%20Challenge>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-equity-funding-national-operational-guidance-2019/>

Ref: