**PUPIL PREMIUM REPORT**

**March 2015**

The content of this report will cover questions, specific to St Oswalds, which were raised as the result of my attendance at the Pupil Premium for Governors training, held on 12th February 2015. I subsequently met with the head teacher to discuss these queries.

**Service Premium vs Pupil Premium**

Pupil Premium funding is allocated to “disadvantaged” children (i.e. those receiving, or who have received, Free School Meals any time in the last 6 years) at a much higher rate than that of the Service Premium and, according to Government documents, for different reasons.

The Pupil Premium is allocated for “raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and closing the gap with their peers” whereas the Service Premium is “to support children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces” by providing “mainly non-educational support (known as pastoral care)”.

It was clear at the course that when Pupil Premium is being discussed the commonly held perception is that Pupil Premium only relates to the disadvantaged child. At not one point was Service Premium mentioned (except for one slide that showed the disparity in funding).

Service children are an important and significant percentage of the St Oswald’s school community, and as such their progress and attainment is separately identified. The Service Premium funding was originally mainly for pastoral care, however discussions with the head teacher showed that there is a move towards using the funding to raise the attainment of these children. Although it could be argued that improved attainment will naturally result from providing for any behavioural, social, emotional or wellbeing issues that a child may have.

In order to address the misconception that Pupil Premium only relates to Free School Meals children, where-ever possible the distinction between the Pupil Premium categories will be made explicit.

**Information on the website**

After the course I was unable to access the link to the current Pupil Premium information on St Oswald’s website – this has now been rectified.

Also, it was felt that St Oswalds provided more than adequate information on the website.

However, after reading the information, a number of points were raised with the head teacher and which will be followed up in due course:

1. Funding for 2013/2014 would have been based on the Spring 2013 census not the 2012 census.
2. Use of “etc”
3. Three letter abbreviations that were not explained.
4. Calculation error in the summation of the 2014-2015 budget figures.
5. The fact that the budget for 2014-2015 did not reconcile to the final budget figure of £57,700.

**Census Data**

The Pupil and Service premium budgets are based on the number of children in each category on the Spring (January) census as compiled by the school’s Admin Officer. Also, the pupil premium teaching assistant keeps her own master list of all Pupil Premium children.

One of the questions asked at the course was “How can we be sure that all the relevant children have been identified?” The answer to the question was “You can’t! Although Schools can take a proactive approach and encourage all entitled parents to apply for Free School Meals.”

Two courses of action were then discussed with the head teacher:

1. To send out a letter to all parents outlining the entitlement to free school meals and the implications for the school in doing so.
2. To liaise with the pupil premium teaching assistant and admin officer to produce a definitive and reconciled list of all pupil premium and service premium children at the time of the January census, thus providing an agreed starting point for the year. At the time of writing this has already been carried out, with some anomalies currently being followed up.

**Audit Trail**

Currently there is only a written (in words) list of how the Pupil and Service Premium money is spent - no numerical quantification of how the money is spent is available. After checking a number of other school’s websites it is clear that many schools do have this information to hand.

One of the key Pupil and Service premium self-audit questions is “Do you have a clear audit trail for where the funding is spent?” At the current time St Oswalds would have to answer “no” to this question.

Therefore it was agreed with the head teacher that, although this information need not necessarily be published on the website, some work would need to be carried out to quantify the spending.

**Education Endowment Strategies**

The Education Endowment Foundation website provides a toolkit that lists evidence based strategies that have been used in schools to improve progress.

After consulting the toolkit it is clear that at St Oswalds effective strategies such as Early Years Interventions, Feedback, Reading Comprehension Strategies and Small Group Tuition, are being used to, theoretically, maximise progress.

**Pupil Premium Self Audit**

The following Self Audit questions were discussed with the head teacher:

*Do you compare your school performance to national data?*

Yes - using RAISEonline data

*Do you focus on pupils attaining the nationally expected level at the end of the key stage?*

Yes - this information is summarised in a colour coded Data Snapshot produced at regular intervals by the head teacher. The document provides a useful starting point for investigating any under attainment.

*Are you clear about the intended impact of your spending?*

The website states that Pupil and Service Premium spending will “support the raising of attainment and help overcome barriers to learning” therefore it could be assumed that this is the intended impact of the spending.

However, a wider understanding throughout the school and more clarity of the impact may be required.

*Is your planning for Pupil Premium spending part of the school development plan?*

Yes – the School Strategic Plan is currently in process of being updated, in collaboration with staff and Governors, and the Pupil Premium will be incorporated into this new plan.

*Do you have a clear audit trail for where funding has been spent?*

No - see previous Audit Trail heading

*Do you monitor the quality and impact of interventions as robustly as you monitor other aspects of teaching and learning?* AND *If you spend funding on teaching assistants do you evaluate the impact?*

The work that the deputy head teacher is undertaking (as detailed in the December 2014 Pupil Premium Report) provides a useful starting point for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of any work that a teaching assistant may carry out in regard to Pupil and Service premium spending. Systems are in place for easily identifying interventions, the children receiving them and the staff delivering them. This information should then be cross checked at the Pupil Progress meetings with the progress that the child is making.

*Do you have a good performance management system for teaching assistants and other support staff?*

Currently, performance management for teaching assistants is an annual occurrence and at least one target areas is linked to the overall school strategy. Follow-up is on an annual basis.

**Conclusion**

Attendance at the “Pupil Premium for Governors” course was a useful catalyst for questions pertaining to the provision and funding of the Pupil and Service Premium at St Oswalds. The subsequent meeting and discussion with the head teacher also enabled areas that are working well and areas that require further work to be identified.

All necessary areas, particularly those on the self-audit that cannot yet be answered “yes”, will be followed up with head teacher at a later date.