

# The Pupil Premium

How schools are using the Pupil Premium funding to raise achievement for disadvantaged pupils

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The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011. In 2012–13 schools were allocated a total of £1.25 billion funding for children from low-income families who were eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from families with parents in the Armed Forces. The aim of this survey was to identify how schools were using this money to raise achievement and improve outcomes for these pupils. The survey is based on the views of 262 school leaders gathered through inspections and telephone interview questionnaires conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectors.

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# Contents

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<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Key findings</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Part A: What is the Pupil Premium?</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>How much Pupil Premium funding do schools receive?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Part B: How are schools using the Pupil Premium?</b>	<b>9</b>
Spending on existing and new staff	10
Ensuring that pupils have equal access to the curriculum	12
<b>Part C: The impact of the Pupil Premium</b>	<b>13</b>
Are schools evaluating their use of the Pupil Premium?	13
To what extent has the Pupil Premium changed how schools support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds?	14
The impact of the Pupil Premium on admissions	17
The impact of the Pupil Premium on exclusions	17
The Pupil Premium and non-mainstream schools	18
The Pupil Premium summer school programme	19
<b>Part D: What do schools think about the Pupil Premium?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Further information</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Annex A: Examples of Pupil Premium spending breakdowns provided by schools</b>	<b>27</b>

## Executive summary

In 2011–12 schools were allocated Pupil Premium funding for children from low-income families who were eligible for free school meals or had been looked after continuously for more than six months. From April 2012 the Pupil Premium was extended to include children who had been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years. A premium has also been introduced for children whose parents are currently serving in the Armed Forces. The aim of this survey was to identify how schools were using the Pupil Premium funding and what they were spending it on.

This survey is based on the views of 262 school leaders gathered from additional survey questions during routine inspections and telephone interviews. Between 23 April and 31 May 2012, Her Majesty's Inspectors asked school leaders a small number of additional questions about the Pupil Premium during 143 inspections. This sample included secondary, primary and a small number of non-mainstream schools. Between 14 May and 25 May 2012, Her Majesty's Inspectors also conducted 119 telephone interviews. The schools that were invited to take part in the telephone survey were balanced in terms of type, phase, size and level of deprivation.

Most of the school leaders said that the introduction of the Pupil Premium had had some impact on the way that they did things. However, school leaders in only one in 10 schools said that it had 'significantly' changed the way they worked – all of whom were in more deprived areas. Very few schools said that it had had any impact on their approach to admissions or exclusions. Around half of the schools that responded to the additional inspection questions thought that it was having a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement, but relatively few could as yet provide evidence to substantiate this.

Often schools did not disaggregate the Pupil Premium from their main budget, and said that they were using the funding to maintain or enhance existing provision rather than to put in place new activity. This was especially the case when schools were receiving smaller amounts: for many schools the Pupil Premium represents only a relatively small proportion of their overall budget. While appreciating its flexibility, school leaders often said they felt the Pupil Premium funding was not 'additional' money. Commonly, they felt it had replaced other funding streams that had been withdrawn.

The most common use of the Pupil Premium funding was to pay for teaching assistants. Over two fifths of school leaders said they used the Pupil Premium to fund existing or new teaching assistants. Proportionally this was higher in primary schools.

Just over one quarter had used the Pupil Premium at least in part to fund existing or new teachers. Commonly these teachers were involved in delivering focused support in English and/or mathematics. To a much lesser degree schools had used the Pupil Premium to fund posts that were focused on supporting pupils' personal development and well-being, including parent support workers, behaviour support workers and counsellors. A third of schools had used Pupil Premium funding to subsidise or pay for educational trips and residential visits. Around one in six had

used the funding to subsidise or pay for uniform and equipment. Just over two fifths of the secondary school leaders who responded to the telephone interviews said that they were involved in the Pupil Premium summer school programme, but primary schools had little awareness of it.

School leaders in non-mainstream settings said that there was considerable variation in the extent to which they were consulted over, and informed of, the basis on which the local authority devolved the funding. In some cases, late confirmation of funding by the local authority had meant that schools were not able to plan fully for its best use. Most of the special school leaders who responded to the telephone survey said that they had received Pupil Premium funding from their local authority. However, leaders in five of 11 pupil referral units said that they had received no direct funding. In some cases, their uncertainty was due to a lack of transparency in the way local authorities had allocated money to these schools as part of their overall budget settlements. Commonly, non-mainstream school leaders said that the Pupil Premium did not fully recognise the complexity of their pupils' needs.

## Key findings

- Only one in 10 school leaders said that the Pupil Premium had significantly changed the way that they supported pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- School leaders commonly said that they were using the funding to maintain or enhance existing provision rather than to put in place new initiatives.
- Schools did not routinely disaggregate the Pupil Premium funding from their main budget, especially when receiving smaller amounts.
- Over two fifths of the schools had used the Pupil Premium at least in part to fund new or existing teaching assistants and over one quarter to fund new or existing teachers. To a lesser degree, schools had used the funding to pay for new or existing parent support workers, behaviour support workers or counsellors.
- Around a third of school leaders said that they had used the funding for additional curriculum opportunities for pupils both within and outside of normal school hours. A third of all schools said that they had used the funding to subsidise or pay for educational trips or residential visits. Around one in six said that they had used the funding to subsidise or pay for uniform and equipment.
- In some schools it was clear to inspectors that the spending was not all focused on the needs of the specific groups for whom it was intended.
- The survey revealed a lack of transparency in the way that some special schools and pupil referral units received their allocation of Pupil Premium money from their local authority.
- Inspectors saw little evidence of a strong focus on the Pupil Premium by governors or managing committees.
- Just over two fifths of the mainstream secondary school leaders who responded to the telephone survey said that they were involved in the Pupil Premium

summer school programme. Very few mainstream primary schools said that they were involved in the Pupil Premium summer school programme.

- Very few schools said the Pupil Premium was having any impact on their approach to admissions or exclusions.<sup>1</sup>

## Recommendations

- School leaders, including governing bodies, should ensure that Pupil Premium funding is not simply absorbed into mainstream budgets, but instead is carefully targeted at the designated children. They should be able to identify clearly how the money is being spent.
- School leaders, including governing bodies, should evaluate their Pupil Premium spending, avoid spending it on activities that have little impact on achievement for their disadvantaged pupils, and spend it in ways known to be most effective.
- Schools should continue to seek ways to encourage parents and carers to apply for free school meals where pride, stigma or changing circumstances act as barriers to its take-up.
- Local authorities should ensure that there is greater consistency and transparency in the way in which the Pupil Premium is allocated to non-mainstream schools.
- Ofsted should continue to evaluate the use of Pupil Premium funding by schools to ensure that they are focusing it on disadvantaged pupils and using it effectively.
- If schools do not target Pupil Premium money effectively, then government should consider ring fencing, payment linked to outcomes, or other mechanisms to improve its use.

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<sup>1</sup> The School Admissions Code, published in November 2011 and effective from February 2012, permits academies and free schools to give priority in admissions to pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium. School Admissions Code, Department for Education, 2012, p.10;  
[www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmissions/a00195/current-codes-and-regulations](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmissions/a00195/current-codes-and-regulations) <http://www.education.gov.uk>.

## Part A: What is the Pupil Premium?

1. The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011. It was allocated to children from low-income families who were known to be eligible for free school meals in both mainstream and non-mainstream settings, and children who had been looked after continuously for more than six months.<sup>2</sup> It was paid to local authorities by means of a specific grant based on January 2011 school census figures for pupils registered as eligible for free school meals in reception to Year 11. For looked after children the Pupil Premium was calculated using the Children Looked After data returns.<sup>3</sup>
2. For pupils in maintained primary and secondary schools, funding is passed to schools via the local authorities. Academies receive the funding from the Young People's Learning Agency. For pupils in maintained special schools and pupil referral units, funding is allocated to local authorities. They decide whether to pass on funding to the education setting or to hold back funding to manage it centrally for the benefit of those pupils for whom it is responsible.
3. In 2011–12 total funding through the Pupil Premium was £625m. This was increased to £1.25bn for 2012–13. Up to £50m of the £1.25bn will be used to support a summer school programme to help the most disadvantaged pupils make the transition from primary to secondary school.
4. Schools are free to spend the Pupil Premium as they see fit. However they are responsible for how they use the additional funding to support pupils from low-income families and the other target groups. New measures will be included in the performance tables that will capture the achievement of those deprived pupils covered by the Pupil Premium. From September 2012, the government will also require schools to publish online information about how they have used the Premium.
5. A premium has also been introduced for children whose parents are currently serving in the Armed Forces; this was £200 per pupil in 2011–12 and it will rise to £250 for 2012–13. This service premium is designed to address the emotional and social well-being of these pupils. Because of the distribution of these pupils, this issue was not considered in this survey.

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<sup>2</sup> Pupil Premium – what you need to know, Department for Education, 2012; [www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/b0076063/pp](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/b0076063/pp).

<sup>3</sup> Children looked after general guidance 2011–12: children looked after (SSDA903) 2011–12 return, Department for Education, 2012; [www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/strategy/research/b00200554/children-looked-after-general-guidance-2011-12/children-looked-after-ssda903-2011-12-return---technical-specification](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/strategy/research/b00200554/children-looked-after-general-guidance-2011-12/children-looked-after-ssda903-2011-12-return---technical-specification).

## How much Pupil Premium funding do schools receive?

6. The level of the premium set for 2011–12 was £488 per pupil for pupils eligible for free school meals and for pupils in care who had been continuously looked after for six months. It increased to £600 per pupil for 2012–13. Eligibility for the Pupil Premium for 2012–13 has also been extended to pupils who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years (known as the Ever 6 Free School Meals measure). The government estimates that this will include an extra 555,000 pupils.
7. The average amount of Pupil Premium funding received by all schools nationally in 2011–12 was £30,940 and the median was £19,520.<sup>4</sup> An average-sized secondary school with the average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals would have received around £77,000. An average-sized primary school with the average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals would have received around £23,000. The average amount of Pupil Premium funding received by the schools who answered additional questions on HMI-led inspections was £49,056, and the median was £38,052.<sup>5</sup> This sample was not balanced in terms of phase, size or level of deprivation as it was drawn from schools being inspected. Just under one third of these schools had received less than £20,000 in 2011–12 and around one in 10 had received more than £100,000, as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Variation of funding levels received by the schools surveyed (numbers of schools)**



Based on responses from 142 school leaders responding to additional questions at inspection.

<sup>4</sup> Pupil Premium 2011–12 school tables, Department for Education, 2012; <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/settlement2012pupilpremium/a0075963/pupil-premium-2011-12>.

<sup>5</sup> Of 143 schools, 142 told inspectors how much funding they had received in 2011–12. It should not be assumed that these figures are typical of all schools; they are the schools previously scheduled to be inspected by HMI in the time period chosen.

8. For many schools the Pupil Premium represents only a relatively small proportion of their overall budget. In one case a headteacher stated, 'In a school with a budget of over £2.5 million you can lose a hundred thousand here or there – I would have found the money anyway.' Nevertheless, other school leaders welcomed the increase to funding for 2012–13. In some cases the total amount allocated to schools had doubled between the two years.
9. School leaders often expressed a concern that the funding was not truly 'additional' but replaced other funding streams that had been withdrawn. In such cases, schools said that the Pupil Premium was being used to maintain provision that already existed. Typical comments from schools included the following.
  - 'Pupil Premium has enabled the school at a time of significant cutbacks to continue pre-Pupil Premium provision. For example, class sizes have not had to increase.'
  - 'We have used the Pupil Premium funding to maintain existing provision previously funded elsewhere. This has presented some difficulties related to perception and understanding in the school. Pupil Premium has been sold as specifically additional funding. We have used it to fill the increasing number of funding gaps.'
  - 'It has allowed us not to cut enhanced provision we had in place before the budget as a whole was frozen.'
10. Many schools did not routinely disaggregate their Pupil Premium funds from the general budget, particularly when receiving smaller amounts. Other schools provided detailed breakdowns of how the funds had been spent or used to subsidise areas of the school's work.
11. Schools often stated that the Pupil Premium funding did not cover the costs of all of the initiatives that they undertook to support disadvantaged or vulnerable pupils. For example, one school had added £35,000 to the £14,000 Pupil Premium funding as part of its 'narrowing the gap' initiative. Another school stated that it had spent £137,000 on a range of initiatives whereas its Pupil Premium funding was £49,000. These examples were not untypical. However, the Pupil Premium is not intended to meet all of the costs for supporting disadvantaged pupils. Schools receive deprivation funding within the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Pupil Premium is additional to this.

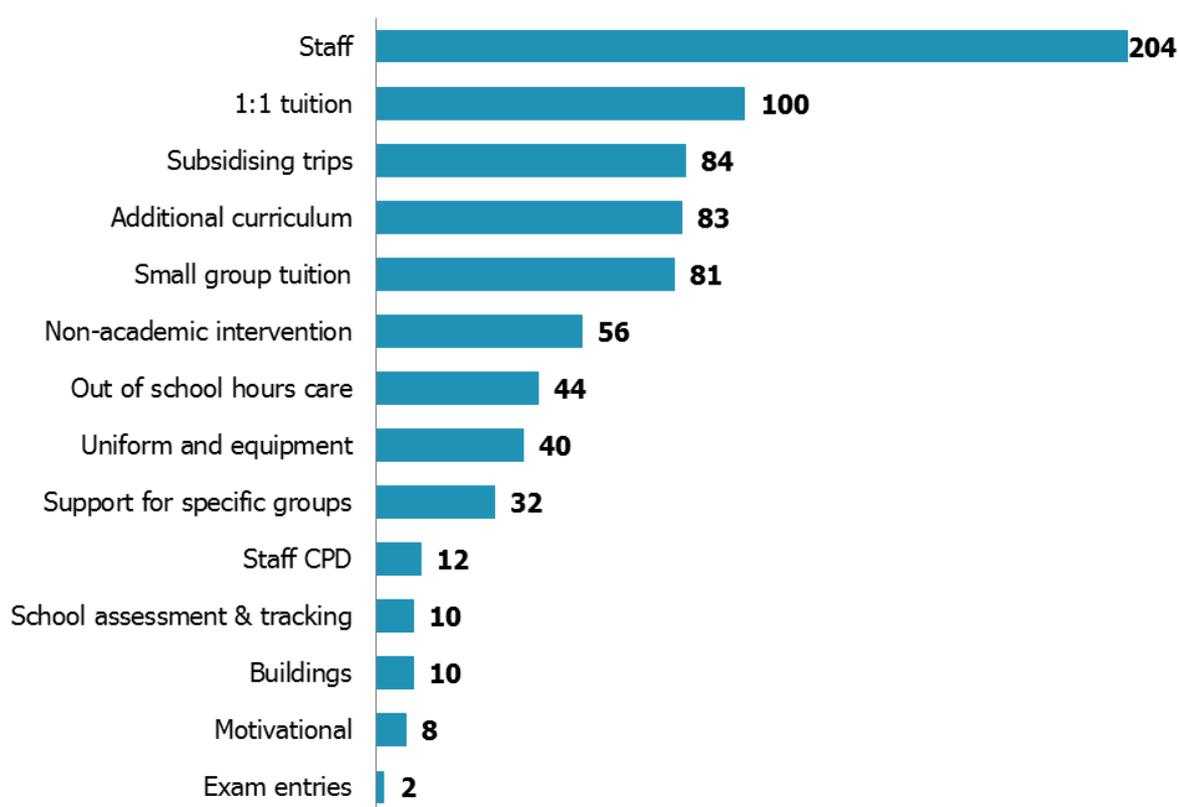
## **Part B: How are schools using the Pupil Premium?**

12. The survey found the range of uses that a school made of its Pupil Premium funding often depended on the total amount it received. In most cases (but not all), the greater the funding the wider the range of uses. In general, most schools tried to use the Pupil Premium in a number of complementary ways, as shown in Figure 2. However, it is not possible in all cases to tell which areas are

being solely funded by the Pupil Premium or in which areas it is being used to maintain or enhance existing provision.

13. The most common use of the Pupil Premium reported by school leaders was to fund existing or new staff, who were often involved in a range of one-to-one or small-group tuition provision. Schools also commonly said that they used the Pupil Premium to provide a wider range of curriculum opportunities and/or to ensure that money did not become a barrier to equality of access to an enhanced curriculum.

**Figure 2: 'What is the Pupil Premium funding being used for in your school?' (all responses)**

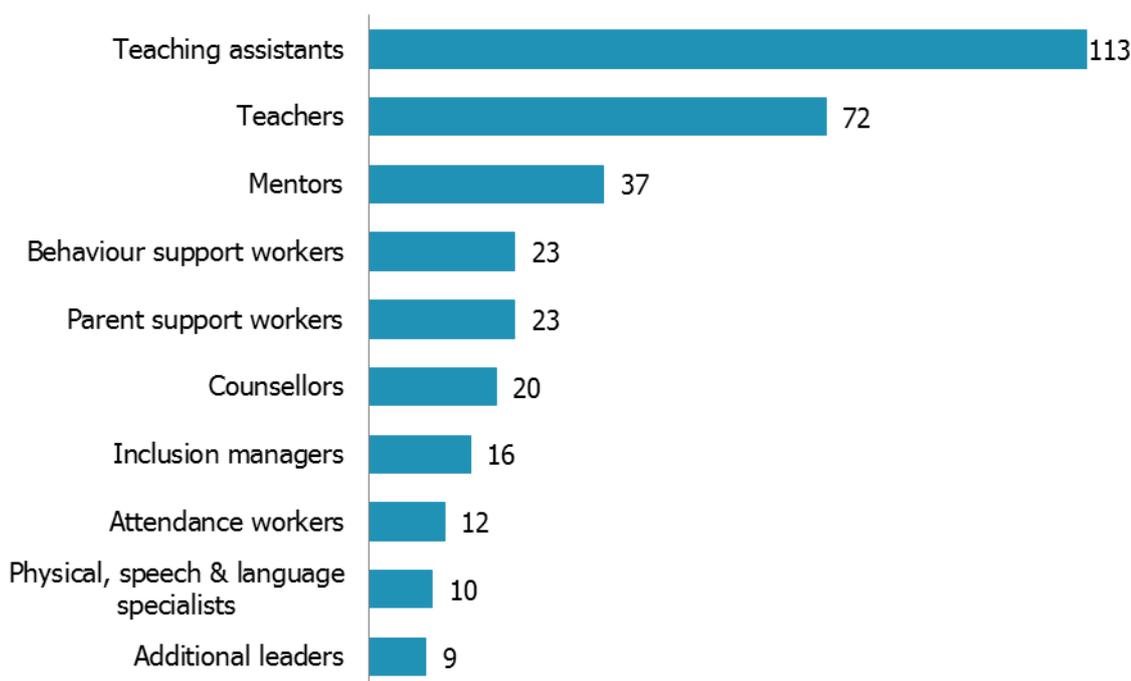


Based on multiple answers provided by 119 school leaders responding to the telephone survey and 142 school leaders responding to additional questions at inspection.

## Spending on existing and new staff

14. Around three quarters of school leaders said that they had used the Pupil Premium to fund staffing in one or more areas, as shown in Figure 3. Often, they said that the funding had allowed them to maintain or enhance current levels of staffing rather than to create entirely new roles.

**Figure 3: 'What is the Pupil Premium funding being used for in your school?' (types of staffing)**



Based on multiple answers provided by 119 school leaders responding to the telephone survey and 142 school leaders responding to additional questions at inspection.

15. The single most commonly given use of Pupil Premium funding was to employ teaching assistants. In just over two fifths of schools the Pupil Premium funding was being used to fund new or existing teaching assistants and/or higher-level teaching assistants. Proportionally this was slightly higher in primary schools. Almost half of the primary schools that responded to the telephone survey said that they had used some or all of the funding in this area. Teaching assistant support was commonly being used to maintain or increase support in lessons or to deliver support through small-group interventions, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Recent research has suggested that teaching assistants have low or very low impact for high cost.<sup>6</sup>
16. More than a quarter of the schools had used some or all of the Pupil Premium to fund new or existing teachers. Commonly, these teachers were focused on delivering additional support in English and mathematics. In secondary schools in particular they were often being used to help reduce class sizes and/or to deliver out of hours learning such as revision sessions and holiday schools.
17. Around one in seven schools had used some or all of the Pupil Premium to fund existing or new learning mentors. Proportionally, this was more common in secondary schools. Typically, these mentors were involved in supporting the

<sup>6</sup> *Toolkit of strategies to improve learning*, The Sutton Trust, 2011; [www.suttontrust.com/research/toolkit-of-strategies-to-improve-learning/](http://www.suttontrust.com/research/toolkit-of-strategies-to-improve-learning/).

school's one-to-one tuition programmes. Some schools employed mentors with responsibilities for supporting pupils to make better progress in both academic and personal outcomes.

18. Nearly two fifths of school leaders said that the Pupil Premium had been used to maintain or enhance one-to-one tuition. Just under one third of schools said that the Pupil Premium had been used to maintain or enhance small group tuition. A quarter of the primary school leaders who responded to the telephone survey said that they had used some or all of the Pupil Premium to fund intervention programmes focused on reading. All of these interventions drew heavily on existing or new teachers, teaching assistants and/or mentors.
19. To a lesser degree school leaders said that they had used some or all of the Pupil Premium to fund staff who were focused on supporting pupils' personal development and well-being. For example, fewer than one in 10 schools had used some or all of the Pupil Premium to fund existing or new parent support workers, behaviour support workers or school counsellors. A small number of schools said that they had used some or all of the Pupil Premium to fund existing or new inclusion managers, attendance support workers, therapists or staff with specific leadership responsibilities. However, very little of the funding seemed to be targeted directly at the home learning environment.

### **Ensuring that pupils have equal access to the curriculum**

20. Many schools had used the Pupil Premium to fund additional curriculum opportunities. Some of these were targeted at disadvantaged pupils, but some were for all pupils. Some schools provided financial assistance in those circumstances where money might be a barrier to equality of access.
21. Around one third of school leaders said that they had used some or all of the Pupil Premium to fund additional curriculum opportunities for pupils. In primary schools the funding was often used to support extra-curricular clubs and/or out of school hours activities, including before- and after-school care, such as breakfast clubs. In secondary schools the funding was commonly used to support out of hours learning and/or alternative, often vocational, curriculum pathways for pupils. Mainstream and non-mainstream schools often said that they used some or all of the Pupil Premium to enrich the wider curriculum by, for example, funding visiting authors, theatre groups and musicians. Such activities tend to benefit all pupils, not simply those linked to Pupil Premium payments.
22. One third of school leaders said that they had used the Pupil Premium to subsidise or fully fund educational trips and/or residential visits for specific pupils. It was not uncommon for schools also to use the Pupil Premium to subsidise or pay for external tuition. Commonly this was for music, dance or drama lessons.

23. Around one in six schools said that they had used the Pupil Premium to pay for uniform and equipment such as books, stationery, musical instruments and ingredients for food technology. Proportionally, this was higher in secondary schools.
24. In one in 10 schools some of the Pupil Premium had been used to purchase information and communication technology hardware such as laptops, iPads and Kindles for use by pupils in and/or outside of school hours. In a small proportion of schools the Pupil Premium was used to fund travel to off-site college provision, or to pay for the upkeep of minibuses that took pupils home from after-school clubs and activities.

## **Part C: The impact of the Pupil Premium**

25. This survey was designed to establish how the Pupil Premium is being used; it has not made a full evaluation of its impact as, at the time of research, data on pupils' outcomes were not available. However, HMI did ask school leaders questions about how they were evaluating the impact of the initiative and the activities on which they spent their funds.
26. School leaders readily accepted the need to be accountable for public funds. Many stated that they have a moral responsibility to ensure that the strategies they adopt are successful and provide good value for money.

### **Are schools evaluating their use of the Pupil Premium?**

27. Commonly, school leaders who responded to the additional questions on the HMI-led inspections said that it was too early to assess fully the impact that the Pupil Premium was having on raising achievement and/or improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Often these schools said that they were planning to evaluate the impact of the Pupil Premium once they had a set of results from external tests and examinations.
28. Some schools said that it was difficult to disaggregate the impact of Pupil Premium work from the other things that they did to support vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. Schools were generally cautious when describing the current impact of the Pupil Premium, and where they did make claims, relatively few were able to substantiate these with information about improved outcomes. In the best instances schools were able to point to measurable evidence that gaps in achievement were closing.
29. Two thirds of these schools said that they were using or planning to use pupil progress and attainment data to evaluate the impact of the Pupil Premium. Around one third of primary schools and a quarter of special schools said that they would evaluate the impact of the Pupil Premium as part of their normal self-evaluation and provision mapping arrangements. Nearly two thirds of pupil referral units said that they intended to use the annual review process and

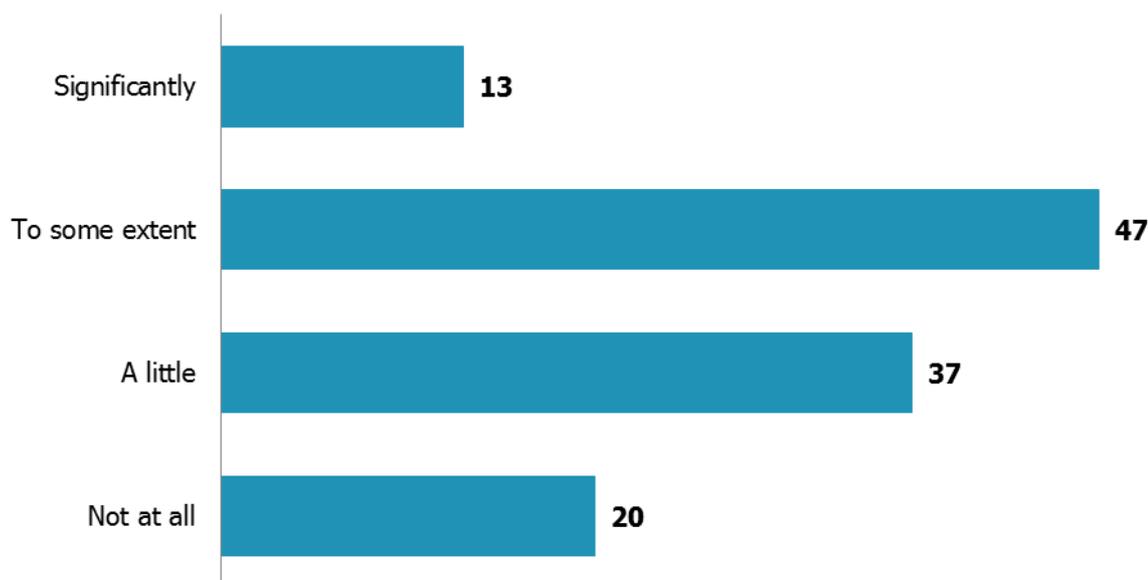
pupils' individual educational plans to evaluate the impact of the Pupil Premium. Generally, this was the sole method that they mentioned.

30. Many school leaders said they thought it was too early to fully evaluate the impact of the Pupil Premium on outcomes and few were able to provide clear evidence to substantiate improvements. School leaders often said that they would evaluate the impact of the Pupil Premium fully once a set of test or examination results had been published. Around one in six of these schools said that the Pupil Premium had had only a limited or no impact as yet.
31. In just over two fifths of schools the governing body was said to monitor the use of Pupil Premium through general discussion at committee level and in response to headteacher and staff reports. However, nearly one third of primary schools and a quarter of non-mainstream schools said that the governing body or managing committee currently had only limited or no specific focus on the Pupil Premium spending.

### **To what extent has the Pupil Premium changed how schools support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds?**

32. Most of the school leaders who responded to the telephone survey said that the introduction of the Pupil Premium has had some impact, however small, on the way that they support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, as detailed in Figure 4. Only one in 10 said that it had significantly changed the way they work, while approximately one in six said that it had had no impact at all.

**Figure 4: 'Overall, how much is the Pupil Premium changing the way you support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds?'**



Based on 117 schools responding to the telephone survey.

33. There appears to be a broad correspondence between levels of Pupil Premium funding and the extent to which it is making a difference to the ways that some schools work. For example, 10 of the 12 mainstream school leaders who said that the Pupil Premium funding was making a significant difference were in the highest free school meals quintiles 4 or 5. They served pupils from backgrounds with higher than average levels of deprivation and received greater funding allocations. Eight of the 11 primary school leaders who said that the Pupil Premium was making no difference were in free school meals quintiles 1 or 2. They received lower levels of funding.
34. School leaders often said that the Pupil Premium funding had enabled them to maintain or enhance their existing provision for those pupils eligible for free school meals. Its introduction had also raised awareness of the needs of that particular group of pupils and their families. Schools also appreciated the control, flexibility and freedom that they had to use the Pupil Premium funds to best effect. While some provision was targeted directly at pupils eligible for free school meals, much of it benefited wider groups of pupils. Typical comments from schools included the following.
- ‘Glad it’s not too centrally controlled and that schools have autonomy to make decisions relevant to specific needs.’
- ‘It makes it quicker and easier for the school to commission additional provision because the money is already available. We are very keen to retain the current flexibility.’
- ‘As part of the whole narrowing the gap agenda, anything that enables schools to focus on helping the most vulnerable can only be a good thing. Pupil Premium enables us to be innovative and flexible in the way that we approach this work.’
- ‘Our focus on narrowing the gap is a clear one and has preceded Pupil Premium, therefore our work to remove inequalities is not something new – Pupil Premium gives us more flexibility in how we do it.’
- ‘It has “raised the bar”. The potential is significant for a large number of children so long as government keeps true to its word on the funding. We use Pupil Premium now as a separate tracking measure within our reporting frameworks. It has the same status as other groups, for example SEN/D and G and T. Tracking also helps identify crossover.’
- ‘It has given us added zeal to narrow the gap and ensure we do everything we can for these students. It has also focused our minds on the KS3 curriculum and our work with primary schools to ensure a joined up approach to the support we give these students.’
35. A small number of school leaders said that the Pupil Premium funding constrained their professional judgement or did not allow them to target fully those who needed it most. In part, this was because they believed that funding

from elsewhere was being cut. Some schools were concerned that the funding might disappear in the future and that this could have an impact on their strategic planning. Non-mainstream schools often reported that the lead-in time had been too short to plan well for its use. Typically schools made the following observations.

'The school is not feeling the full benefit of the changes because the gain in Pupil Premium funding has been offset by the core funding cuts by the LA. This means that Pupil Premium is being used to plug gaps and retain current commitments at the expense of further developing provision.'

'The Pupil Premium has stabilised the budget. Without it, it would have been a financially difficult year.'

'In a school such as ours the Pupil Premium is more of a restriction than a benefit – the integrity and professionalism of school staff should enable them to spend a school budget in such a way that they feel it meets the needs of pupils and their individual needs, rather than ring-fencing part of the budget in a way which is not helpful.'

'The Pupil Premium is very limited as an additional resource in our school's context. The introduction of the transition summer school top-slice should have been more carefully consulted upon.'

'We worry about embarking on projects that involve employing staff, only for the funding to be taken away.'

'The planning and lead-in time were not long enough. The amount of the premium is not significant in terms of meeting the needs of this PRU's pupils.'

36. Commonly, school leaders said one of their biggest challenges was removing the 'cultural stigma' of free school meals and encouraging more parents and carers to claim. While schools commonly said that they wanted parents to apply for free school meals as their 'right', two school leaders expressed concerns about not being able to meet heightened parental expectations. Schools commented:

'Our biggest challenge is to encourage parents and carers to take up what is rightfully theirs.'

'Still some uncertainty about how schools will be expected to report. Not sure what the expectation is in terms of the amount of information required. Obviously there needs to be accountability but it's not helpful to be required to give too much detail. We don't want to give parents unrealistic expectations of what the school will do with the funding – we don't want to send out mixed messages.'

'We are worried about parental perception and have already had a small number of parents offer their views about their "rights for their money for their child".'

## **The impact of the Pupil Premium on admissions**

37. Almost all of the school leaders said that the introduction of the Pupil Premium had had no impact on their approach to admissions, including admissions outside the normal schedule. Only four schools said that it had had any influence on their approach; this was essentially at an administrative level or in respect of the school's raised awareness. School leaders commented:

'Our admissions policy contains no criteria for selection by attainment, family context or disadvantage except for exceptional circumstances, so we are neither encouraged by Pupil Premium to accept, nor discouraged from accepting students on FSM.'

'We are now more aware with in-year admissions of the need to elicit whether students have vulnerabilities and need support, but no change has been made to the admissions policy.'

'Admissions are controlled by the local authority and partners. Admissions are needs led. The degree and complexity of need mean that Pupil Premium funding is only a very small proportion of the amount needed to meet an individual's total needs. The addition of Pupil Premium funding has not impacted on admissions policy at all.'

## **The impact of the Pupil Premium on exclusions**

38. Around eight out of 10 school leaders who responded to the telephone survey said that the introduction of the Pupil Premium had not had any impact on their approach to exclusions. However, schools commonly recognised that the improvements they had made to provision often had a positive impact on levels of engagement and/or behaviour.
39. Around one in three mainstream secondary school leaders said that they had changed their approach to exclusions to a certain extent as a result of the Pupil Premium. In general, these schools said that it had raised awareness about the potential links between free school meals and risk of exclusion. In some cases they had made adaptations to their existing structures for monitoring and supporting pupils who were at risk of exclusion. School leaders typically made the following comments.

'There has been a 47% reduction in fixed-term exclusions this year so far. The Pupil Premium resources which have personalised the curriculum offer have contributed to this reduction.'

'The school now makes a greater 'reasonable adjustment' for all vulnerable pupils. We have started to monitor the proportion of students who qualify for FSM who receive fixed-term exclusions.'

'We have already virtually eliminated permanent exclusions and reduced fixed-term to a handful through a strong 11 to 19 partnership offering a range of alternative provision and a wholly inclusive ethos. Pupil Premium may help us reduce exclusions further in future by enabling us to target funding to make alternative and additional provision for certain FSM students.'

'We've reduced fixed-term exclusions by almost a third. Pupil Premium funding is being used to fund IT infrastructure in a learning centre which caters for those most disaffected.'

## **The Pupil Premium and non-mainstream schools**

40. Most special school leaders who responded to the telephone survey said that the local authority had devolved the Pupil Premium funding to them. However, the leaders of five of 11 pupil referral units said that they had not received any direct funding. In some cases, their uncertainty over the funding was due to a lack of transparency in the way local authorities had allocated money to these schools as part of their overall budget settlements.
41. There is a great deal of variation and uncertainty in the extent to which non-mainstream school leaders recall being consulted by the local authority as to how the Pupil Premium should be allocated. Only four of the 28 non-mainstream schools that responded to this question recall being consulted, although this is proportionally higher for special school settings. Many non-mainstream schools were simply unsure about the discussions that had taken place. In some instances, the schools said that general conversations about budgets had taken place which 'may' have encompassed Pupil Premium 'indirectly'.
42. Most of the pupil referral unit leaders did not recall being consulted by the local authority as to how the Pupil Premium should be allocated. This included those units that said money had been devolved to them.

'The head of the school was involved directly in discussions in the local authority area on different ways of funding schools – this included Pupil Premium.'

'In this local authority area consultation with schools is consistently good: through schools' and headteachers' forums.'

'There is considerable consultation on joint projects. Heads were keen to receive the money directly because the schools know pupils best.'

'There was a consultation but this was dominated by mainstream schools; therefore the views of special schools were not that influential.'

'No direct consultation. Maybe through schools forums?'

'Don't know. The local authority gave the money to the overall group of additional provision units but not a specific amount per child.'

'We have a PRU headteacher's forum but the Pupil Premium has never been discussed.'

43. There is a great deal of variation in the extent to which non-mainstream school leaders understand the basis on which local authorities devolve the Pupil Premium. Ten of 16 special school leaders said that they understood how funds were allocated. By contrast, no leader of a pupil referral unit said that they knew on what basis the funds had been allocated.

'A letter was posted on the local authority intranet explaining Pupil Premium.'

'We were informed through school budget notification.'

'At the moment it is unclear who the funding has come from and to whom it is directed.'

'The money is within our overall budget but the source is not identified. We are not made aware of the criteria or the pupils to whom the premium is attached.'

'Last academic year I went through the process of doing a rough calculation as to what proportionate funding might look like. I offered this to the management committee and partnership headteachers as a reasonable way of calculating entitlement. This was passed to the local authority representative on the committee. I believe it was taken away and some more work was done on it, particularly in relation to the local authority and other PRUs. It then disappeared from that point onwards.'

## **The Pupil Premium summer school programme**

44. Summer school programme funding for disadvantaged pupils is available to all secondary schools.<sup>7</sup> The programme aims to help disadvantaged pupils make a successful transition from primary to secondary school, so they attend in the summer months between the end of Year 6 in their primary school and the beginning of Year 7 in their secondary school. Schools can claim funding for pupils who are registered for free school meals or who have been looked after

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<sup>7</sup> Summer schools programme for disadvantaged pupils, Department for Education, 2012; [www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/summer/b00204241/ssprog](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/summer/b00204241/ssprog).

in public care continuously for six months. The first summer schools took place during the 2012 school summer holidays.

45. Just over two fifths of the mainstream secondary school leaders who responded to the telephone survey said that they were involved in the Pupil Premium summer school programme. Only four of the mainstream primaries said that they were definitely involved. No specific involvement was reported from the non-mainstream sector.
46. At the time of the telephone interviews, several secondary school leaders said that they had either just received notification of their funding or were awaiting it. Nine of 32 secondary schools said that they were planning involvement in the summer school programme in the future.
47. Often, secondary schools already run summer schools or particular transition activities. Some schools noted that the very small numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, low take-up in the past and/or the potential stigma for participants were inhibitors to running Pupil Premium summer schools.

'The school has submitted an application for Pupil Premium summer school funding. Previously we funded our own and widened it out from FSM pupils but struggled with limited take-up. For example, last year there were 64 FSM pupils but only five took up the summer school opportunity.'

'We have not run complete summer schools in the past because the numbers of students eligible have been insufficient for us to make adequate provision.'

'Summer school funding applied for to operate a summer school for two weeks in August 2012. Governors have provided additional funding to open this programme to all transferring students to avoid discrimination and negative name-calling.'

'Planned for this summer; it will focus on students that are potentially vulnerable and/or have lower levels of literacy and numeracy. This will include FSM but will not be exclusive to them.'

'A transition programme is already in place but not specifically funded by Pupil Premium.'

'Normally we run a summer school programme. Pupil Premium means that the school is targeting certain children this summer. Teachers want to be involved in the Pupil Premium summer school because it is funded and they are paid to teach. The "normal" summer school is also running but proving difficult to afford in the same way. The Pupil Premium-funded summer school is better able to afford fully funded specialist teaching. The issue will be accommodating other children (outside the Pupil Premium remit) within the constraints of funding.'

48. Around one quarter of primary school leaders were uncertain about their involvement in the summer school programme. These schools often took part in summer schools organised by partner secondary schools but were unclear as to whether they were part of the Pupil Premium scheme. Some primary schools operate their own schemes and have used or are considering ways of using their Pupil Premium funding to support them. Some were unsure about the criteria by which pupils were selected for participation in secondary-led summer schools and/or felt that they had little input into the planning process. Conversely, others had a more productive relationship with their feeder secondary.

'No contact from secondary schools about it; know of its existence but that's all.'

'Run by feeder secondary school – they decide how they run it. Not much liaison.'

'A local high school has offered the chance for us to be involved but no details as yet. It was free in the past but think there may be a £10 charge this year.'

'It will be happening for the first time this year. Headteacher has had some input into ideas – really helpful – through improvement partnership.'

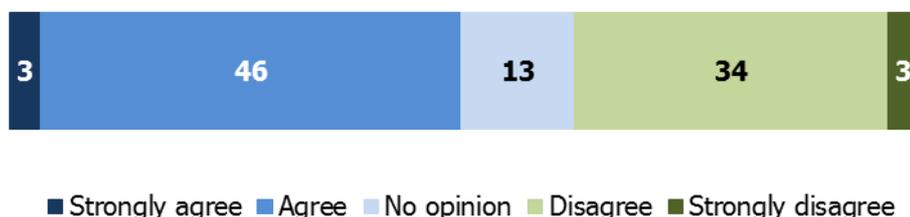
'Secondary school has applied for funding and the school is waiting for confirmation of how it will work.'

'One of local secondary schools running a summer school, but unsure if this is Pupil Premium funded.'

## **Part D: What do schools think about the Pupil Premium?**

49. Half of the school leaders who responded to the telephone survey agreed or strongly agreed that the method for allocating Pupil Premium in 2011-12 was an effective way to target those pupils for whom inequality is a concern (Figure 6). Secondary schools were the most positive about the method. Generally, non-mainstream schools were less positive. Overall, nearly two fifths of the mainstream schools disagreed or strongly disagreed that the method used in 2011–12 was effective.

**Figure 6: 'Is the method of identifying pupils who trigger the Pupil Premium an effective way of targeting those where inequality is a concern?'**



Percentages based on 119 school leaders responding to the telephone survey.

50. There appears to be a broad correspondence between the level of satisfaction expressed by mainstream primary school leaders and their level of deprivation as measured by free school meals. Close to two thirds of the mainstream primary schools that strongly agreed or agreed with the method used in 2011–12 were in the highest free school meals quintiles: 4 or 5. These schools have higher levels of deprivation and would attract higher proportionate funding. Just over two thirds of the mainstream primary schools that disagreed or strongly disagreed with the method were in the lower free school meals quintiles: 1 to 3. These schools had average to low levels of deprivation and received proportionally smaller amounts of funding. The two primary schools that strongly disagreed were both in free school meals quintile 1.
51. In general, school leaders said that the arrangements for 2011–12 were a 'practical' and/or 'pragmatic' method. However, even schools that were positive about the arrangements suggested that it did not necessarily capture all of those pupils who might benefit. Typical comments from schools included the following.
- 'It is a simple, unambiguous methodology which enables schools to know where they stand financially. Other methods are less clear.'
- 'The best measure we have but it is not perfect as it misses those just above [the threshold], who we refer to as "the hidden FSM".'
- 'It is the best method we have got so far but we also should be mindful of other needs in school that Pupil Premium does not trigger. For example, white indigenous, disenfranchised pupils who have minimal exposure to cultural capital.'
- 'The approach has highlighted for the school a group not traditionally part of the tracking – we have looked closer and found some pupils "under the radar". But it could go further and be extended to other vulnerable groups such as young carers.'
52. School leaders who disagreed with the method for allocating Pupil Premium often shared similar concerns to those schools that were more positive.

Typically they saw the arrangements in 2011–12 as ‘crude’ or ‘simplistic’, failing to capture those pupils who would benefit most. These schools said that some families miss out because they are just above the threshold. Some schools argued that other factors, such as family background and home environment were better indicators of need. The following were typical comments from schools.

‘It’s a snapshot: it is not a broad enough measure to fully recognise the needs of borderline low-income families who move in and out of difficulty or are precariously balanced on the edge.’

‘The FSM group are not necessarily the most disadvantaged group; working, low-paid parents often struggle the most, whereas FSM families can trigger a range of benefits.’

‘FSM can be a useful way but inequality is not purely linked to financial reasons. We often find parenting and support at home a key issue. The pre-school environment should be focused on as an area for identification.’

‘There are gap groups who are not eligible for FSM – migrant workers, very low income and those on the cusp of working hours.’

‘FSM is only one indicator of deprivation/inequality. Additional funding for those who have EAL, no English at all, are new arrivals to England and/or move in and out of schools regularly would be extremely useful to help ensure that resources are not over-stretched.’

53. School leaders often said that families do not apply for FSM because of pride, stigma or changing financial circumstances. Several schools, including those that were both positive and negative about the methods used in 2011–12, said that they were actively seeking to encourage more parents and carers to apply. These were typical comments from schools.

‘The criteria for eligibility are no longer straightforward, for example families who in the past would have qualified for FSM, now, due to changes in the tax credits system, are no longer eligible.’

‘This school has children who ought to be eligible for FSM whose parents choose not to claim. Community “pride” is an issue or parents are not clear how to claim despite the school’s efforts to help.’

‘FSM is not claimed by all families despite the support we put in place for this: Year 6 transition to Year 7 welcome meetings where parents are encouraged to return the FSM form; Student Support Officers visit homes to help complete forms; translators are also used to help parents and carers complete forms.’

‘The issue of “rural pride” and the refusal to claim is also a difficulty. The school is part of a group of schools locally that is working with the LA to publicise the benefits of Pupil Premium and break down the barriers so parents and carers will access it more readily.’

54. Three quarters of the school leaders who responded to the telephone survey agreed or strongly agreed that the new arrangements for identifying pupils who trigger Pupil Premium funding in 2012–13 are an improvement (Figure 7). Almost all secondary school leaders were positive about the changes.

**Figure 7: ‘Do the changes for 2012–13 for identifying pupils who trigger the Pupil Premium constitute a more effective way of targeting those where inequality is a concern?’<sup>8</sup>**



Percentages based on 119 school leaders responding to the telephone survey.

55. Generally, school leaders said that the new method for allocating Pupil Premium was a more responsive system that should reduce the problem of low-income families moving in and out of free school meals eligibility. Schools also said that the new method could help to combat some of the stigma surrounding free school meals. Schools were also positive about the fact that the new system will lead to an increase in funding and greater flexibility when planning to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils. The following comments were typical of schools.

‘A much fairer way that is more responsive to changing circumstances.’

‘A good idea; the school is in an area where parents may be eligible but don’t apply because of perceived stigma. Change will be useful in capturing past eligibility.’

‘Yes, definitely. For those who just come out of the claim bracket, they can be targeted for longer. We often have families who come off and go back on again.’

‘Increased funding leads to increased flexibility.’

<sup>8</sup> For 2012–13 pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium if they have been in receipt of free school meals at any point in the previous six years.

'The 'Ever 6 model' is helpful because the number of claimants of FSM in this school is only about 30% of those who qualify as "Ever 6".'

'Eligibility rather than take-up is certainly a preferred and more effective way. Some families just don't take up school meals. Others don't complete the necessary paperwork to opt in and therefore they don't take them up.'

56. Around one in 10 school leaders felt that the new method for allocating the Pupil Premium was not an improvement on the previous arrangements; this includes one in six mainstream primary schools (10 out of 59). Eight of these 10 schools were in free school meals quintiles 1 to 3, suggesting that these schools, which serve pupils with low to average levels of deprivation, think that they are less likely to see a significant increase in funding.
57. Where school leaders disagreed with the new method this was often because they felt strongly that there were other, better methods for identifying disadvantage. In two cases, schools felt that the six-year time period may be too long. Several schools, including those that saw the new method as an improvement, identified issues with constraints and 'rigid' funding systems for looked after children. Some schools expressed concerns over whether the funding would continue in future years. This made them more cautious about spending the Pupil Premium in ways that would create future costs or expectations.

## Notes

This survey considered responses from 262 school leaders in both mainstream and non-mainstream schools. Between 23 April and 31 May 2012, Her Majesty's Inspectors asked school leaders a small number of additional questions about the Pupil Premium during routine inspections. Most inspections were conducted under Section 5. A small number were subject survey inspections. One hundred and forty-three completed responses were analysed for this survey. Between 14 May and 25 May 2012, Her Majesty's Inspectors also conducted 119 telephone surveys using a questionnaire. Most school leaders were interviewed for around 30 minutes by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. A few schools asked to make a written response to the questions. Responses were received from 59 primary schools; 32 secondary schools; 17 special schools; and 11 pupil referral units.

The schools that answered additional questions during an inspection represent a convenience sample of secondary, primary and a small number of non-mainstream schools. The schools that were invited to take part in the telephone survey were balanced in terms of type, phase, size and level of deprivation.

## Further information

The Department for Education website contains a wide range of information on the Pupil Premium; [www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/b0076063/pp](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/b0076063/pp).

*The role of aspirations, attitudes and behaviours in closing the attainment gap*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2012; [www.jrf.org.uk/publications/aspirations-attitudes-educational-attainment-roundup](http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/aspirations-attitudes-educational-attainment-roundup). This paper examines whether the development of children's and parents' attitudes, aspirations and behaviours for education affects attainment and whether focused intervention can reduce gaps in attainment.

*Toolkit of strategies to improve learning: summary for schools spending the Pupil Premium*, The Sutton Trust, 2011; [www.suttontrust.com/research/toolkit-of-strategies-to-improve-learning/](http://www.suttontrust.com/research/toolkit-of-strategies-to-improve-learning/). This document summarises some of the research evidence on improving learning and attainment to help schools make more informed choices about how to support the pupils who are eligible for the additional funding.

*White boys from low-income backgrounds: good practice in schools (070220)*, Ofsted, 2008; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/070220](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/070220). A report on a small-scale survey of good practice in the education of white boys from low-income backgrounds.

*Narrowing the gap: the inspection of children's services (070041)*, Ofsted, 2007; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070041](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070041). The report showed that the biggest challenge in this country is to reduce the gap in opportunities and outcomes between relatively advantaged children and young people and those who have to cope with the highest levels of disadvantage.

## Annex A: Examples of Pupil Premium spending breakdowns provided by schools

### £30,730 (primary)

Use of funding	Cost
Additional staffing in Year 6 (PT to FT)	£12,000
Part-funded extended schools manager	£10,000
Teaching assistant intervention	£5,000
Childcare (after school)	£700
Paid for extra-curricular clubs	£100
Transport	£200
Half-funded residential trips	£1,000
<b>Total expenditure</b> £1,730 carried forward to support FSM pupils to go on the Paris trip.	<b>£29,000</b>

### £37,300 (secondary)

Use of Pupil Premium funding	Cost
Focus room (support for vulnerable students managed by teaching assistants )	£6,000 (25% of total cost)
Literacy tuition – managed by teacher and SENCO	£6,000 (16% of total cost)
Numeracy tuition (1:1 managed by teacher and intervention coordinator)	£2,000
Key Stage 4 intervention (including some home tuition)	£2,000
Pastoral support (for individual pupils led by pastoral support workers)	£2,000 (3% of total cost)
Counselling (two counsellors)	£2,000 (10% of total cost)

Support in curriculum areas (teaching assistants)	£2,000 (5% of total cost)
Learning support (teaching assistants)	£5,000 (5% of total cost)
Late night transport	£8,000 (10% of total cost)
Extra-curricular club provision – (subsidy)	£2,000
Rewards scheme	£1,000
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£38,000</b>

### £46,360 (secondary)

Use of funding	Cost
Additional teaching assistant 1	£14,989
Additional teaching assistant 2	£14,143
Attendance officer	£9,600
Year 7 literacy intervention (1:1 10-week cycle delivered by qualified teachers)	£3,900
Year 7 literacy intervention (1:1 10-week cycle delivered by qualified teachers)	£3,900
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£46, 532</b>

### £46,440 (secondary)

Use of funding	Cost
Identification and tracking (systems)	£378
Teaching assistant support in mathematics lessons	£1,127

Contribute to extra sets in En/Ma and Sci	£32,000
Careers support	£250
Additional mentoring	£320
After-school booster classes	£6,000
Part-funding of attendance officer	£3,000
Reading schemes	£3,555
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£46,630</b>

**£63,440 (primary)**

<b>Use of funding</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Subsidise educational visits	£4,500
Welcome package (EYFS language development)	£550
Malachi Trust	£8,000
Booster teacher	£20,000
Teaching assistant support	£20,000
Guided reading resources	£5,000
EPS	£1,950
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£60,000</b>

**£78,000 (secondary)**

Use of funding	Cost
Additional staff (English and mathematics)	£31,000
Additional inclusion support assistant	£17,000
Home school link worker	£12,000
Easter exam revision programme	£7,000
Visualisers	£6,500
iPads for inclusion groups	£10,000
Equipment (for example basic pencil case for target pupils)	£1,000
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£84,500</b>

**£136,640 (secondary)**

Use of funding	Cost
1:1 tuition	£24,245
Learning mentors	£81,156
Revision class salaries	£5,500
Summer school salaries	£3,834
Organisation of reading scheme	£2,440
Summer school expenditure	£739
Home visits (mentors)	£350

Purchase of Kindles	£445
Purchase of equipment, clothes, shoes	£3,000
Subsidised fruit and water	£1,216
Student travel expenses	£900
Peripatetic music tuition	£290
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£124,115</b>

**£138,550 (secondary)**

<b>Use of funding</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Curriculum resources	£15,000
1:1 tuition (600 hours)	£20,000
C/D borderline mentors	£21,500
Literacy mentors	£25,000
Y9/10 learning mentors	£25,000
Free school meal support	£17,500
Extra teaching staff	£14, 550
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£138,550</b>