

From: Pupil Premium Select Committee
To: Scrutiny Committee – 29 November 2017
Subject: Pupil Premium Select Committee Topic Review – timetable extension
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To agree the proposed extension and the amended timetable of the Review

1 Introduction

One of the key ambitions of Kent County Council is for Kent to be a place where families thrive and where all children and young people develop well and are equipped for achievement in life.

Education is the greatest opportunity young people have to achieve life-long benefits but at present the life chances of some are greater than those open to others, as social and economic conditions determine more than ever a child's success in the education system and labour market.

Although the school system alone cannot solve the issue of low social mobility, it can make a significant contribution to improving the life outcomes of disadvantaged children.

The introduction of the Pupil Premium in 2011 provided schools with additional funding for disadvantaged pupils with the aim of improving their academic achievement and narrowing the attainment gap between them and their peers. Although the schooling system in Kent is performing generally well, gaps in educational achievement for pupils supported by the Pupil Premium - such as children in receipt of free school meals and Looked After Children - remain too wide.

KCC, as a champion and advocate for all children, young people and families in Kent, aims to ensure that there is high quality support to improve the life prospects of vulnerable pupils in the County. The Pupil Premium Select Committee has been set up to investigate the impacts of the Pupil Premium, and to inform policies aimed at narrowing the attainment gap and at helping disadvantaged children and young people achieve the educational and life outcomes they deserve.

2 Committee Membership

The Select Committee consists of nine elected Members of Kent County Council:

Mrs Clair Bell (Conservative)

Mr Andy Booth (Conservative)

Mrs Penny Cole (Conservative)

Mrs Trudy Dean (Liberal Democrat)

Mrs Lesley Game (Conservative)

Ms Sarah Hamilton (Conservative)

Mr James McInroy (Conservative)

Dr Lauren Sullivan (Labour)

Mr Mike Whiting (Conservative)

3 Terms of Reference

1. To contextualise the Pupil Premium and to identify the groups of vulnerable learners who are currently supported by the Pupil Premium in Kent.
2. To assess the extent to which the Pupil Premium is currently effective in closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in Kent.
3. To identify best practice interventions and strategies where the Pupil Premium has been used successfully to narrow the attainment gap between vulnerable learners and their peers.
4. To recommend initiatives and strategies to improve the effectiveness of the Pupil Premium in raising the educational achievement of disadvantaged learners and in narrowing the attainment gap in Kent.

4 Scope

The complexity of this topic and the tight timeframe of the review require a clear and focused approach. Possible key themes and aspects to be covered by the review are detailed below:

- 1. To contextualise the Pupil Premium and to identify the groups of vulnerable learners who are supported by the Pupil Premium in Kent.**
 - a. To define and contextualise the Pupil Premium, the Early Years Pupil Premium and the Pupil Premium Plus as school funding policies.
 - b. To identify the groups of vulnerable learners who are currently supported by the Pupil Premium in Kent.

- 2. To assess the extent to which the Pupil Premium is currently effective in closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in Kent.**
 - a. To examine how the Pupil Premium is allocated, and whether it is currently used to support the children in Kent who need it the most.
 - b. To assess the extent to which the Pupil Premium is closing the attainment gap between vulnerable learners and their peers at every academic Key Stage in Kent.

- 3. To identify best practice interventions and strategies where the Pupil Premium has been used successfully to narrow the attainment gap between vulnerable learners and their peers.**
 - a. To identify best practice examples of Kent primary and secondary schools that have successfully used the Pupil Premium to narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
 - b. To explore best practice interventions and strategies in other local authorities in England where the Pupil Premium is closing the attainment gap between vulnerable learners and their peers.

- 4. To recommend initiatives and strategies to improve the effectiveness of the Pupil Premium in raising the educational achievement of disadvantaged learners and in narrowing the attainment gap in Kent.**

5 Proposed Extended Timetable (revised timetable in red font)

It is proposed to extend the review's timetable to allow for a wider and more comprehensive evidence gathering process. A summary of the revised timetable is provided below.

28 September 2017	Informal cross-party meeting for Committee to discuss the Terms of Reference of the review
12 October 2017	First meeting of Select Committee, to appoint the Chair and to discuss and agree the Terms of Reference of the review
October 2017	Arrangements for hearing sessions, site visits, written evidence and other evidence gathering methods
November 2017	Hearings and visits
December 2017	Arrangements for additional hearing sessions, site visits, written evidence and other evidence gathering methods
Christmas Break	
Mid January to mid February 2018	Additional hearings and visits
Late February 2018	Committee meets to identify key issues and to make recommendations
Late February to late March 2018	Report writing, production of first draft
Easter Break	
Late April 2018	Committee discusses the first draft of the report and suggests amendments. Amendments carried out accordingly
Mid May 2018	Select Committee share the draft report with Cabinet Member(s) and Corporate Director(s)
Late May 2018	Select Committee to agree the final report
Early June 2018	Report shared with relevant boards (by email)
18 June 2018	Despatch for Cabinet
25 June 2018	Report presented to Cabinet
28 June 2018	Despatch for County Council
5 July 2018	Report presented to County Council

6 Evidence Gathering – Hearings

It is proposed that a number of additional hearing sessions of 45 minutes each will take place between mid-January and mid-February. Hearings will normally be open to the public unless there is a specific requirement to hold a closed session.

It is proposed that Members remain for 20-30 minutes after each set of interviews (normally no more than 3 in each set) to ensure that all views, key points and emerging recommendations are captured.

Details of suggested witnesses/organisations to invite to hearings are outlined below (written evidence may be requested from those who are unable to attend or cannot be included in the timetable).

- **Mr Matt Dunkley**, new Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education Directorate
- **Peter Reed**, Independent Education Adviser, Kent Independent Education Advice
- **Representatives of Kent Early Years settings** that are narrowing the attainment gap through an effective use of the Early Years Pupil Premium
- **Representatives of Kent schools/academies/PRUs** to discuss issues in relation to the Pupil Premium and the attainment gap.
- **Academics, professionals, advisers** and other witnesses who can make relevant contributions
- **Other**

7 Site Visits

A number of site visits may be arranged to provide Members with the opportunity to gain a better insight into particular issues with relevance to the review. This could include visits to Kent schools, academies and Pupil Referral Units.

Recommendations:

1. To agree the proposed extension and the amended timetable of the Review.

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