

By: Mr Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

To: Pupil Premium Select Committee Meeting, 2nd September 2019

Subject: Select Committee: The Pupil Premium - update on progress

Summary: To receive and comment on the update on progress against the recommendations set out in the report produced by the Select Committee on the Pupil Premium.

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 others. 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 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 was established 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. Select Committee

2.1. Membership

The Chairman of the Select Committee was Mrs Lesley Game. Other members of the Committee were Mrs Clair Bell, Mr Andy Booth, Mrs Penny Cole, Mrs Trudy Dean, Ms Sarah Hamilton, Mr James Mcinroy, Dr Lauren Sullivan and Mr Mike Whiting. Mr Whiting stood down from the Committee in December 2017 due

to his new appointment as Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste.

2.2. Terms of Reference

The final terms of reference were:

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.

2.3 Evidence

The Pupil Premium Select Committee held 25 hearing sessions with a wide range of witnesses, including representatives of nurseries and of Kent primary and secondary schools, the Education Endowment Foundation, other local authorities, as well as a number of senior KCC officers.

The Committee also made one visit to local children in care, four visits to local primary and secondary schools, and one visit to the Sacred Heart Catholic School in London -the 2017 National Pupil Premium Award (Secondary) winner. Finally, the Committee received written evidence from a variety of sources, including the Kent Association of Headteachers.

A list of the witnesses who provided oral and written evidence, as well as details of the visits, are in Appendix 1.

2.4 Timescale

The Select Committee conducted a programme of hearings and visits in September 2017 and in January 2018. It reconvened in February 2018 to make recommendations, before producing its report. The report was considered by a meeting of Full Council on 12 July 2018.

3. The Report

3.1 The key themes of the report's 10 recommendations include:

- Ensuring that Pupil Premium best practice at many Kent schools continues to be encouraged and shared across all Kent schools and Early Years providers.
- Carrying out an indepth investigation into the reasons behind the under registration of children eligible for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium funding, and into interventions that will promote Free School Meal registrations and Pupil Premium take up.
- Informing the Secretary of State for Education that the Committee supports the recommendation of the Social Mobility Commission's report that Early Years Pupil Premium funding should be doubled, funded by either a re distribution of Primary Pupil Premium or from elsewhere within the DfE budget.
- Carrying out a pilot in Kent to determine the extent to which increasing the Early Years Pupil Premium funding rate would have a positive impact on narrowing the attainment gap.
- Working with other local authorities that place children in care in Kent schools to ensure that consideration is given to the appropriateness of the placements, taking into account whether adequate support is in place for the Pupil Premium Plus to be spent effectively.
- Continuing to promote better information sharing between Kent Early Years providers, primary and secondary schools in order to facilitate a smoother transition for disadvantaged children.
- Explore opportunities to support and promote additional speech and language provision in pre-school settings.

3.2 The executive summary of the report is attached in Appendix 2. To obtain a copy of the full report please contact the report's authors (details below). The full report can be accessed via the link below

https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/82043/Pupil-Premium-report.pdf

3.3 Appendix 3 provides an update on the work undertaken within CYPE and through its contract with The Education People in progressing the specific recommendations made by the Select Committee.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Appendix 3 sets out the progress against the recommendations that were made. As indicated in the appendix there is national data that will demonstrate what impact the work has had but much of this national data will not be available until early in 2020 so a further update will be needed in order to set out for Members whether the desired impact is being achieved.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members comments on the report and the progress against the Select Committee recommendations would be welcomed.

Background Documents

None