



Report of the Chair of the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee

Cabinet – 16 May 2019

Pupil Development Grant

Purpose:	To brief Cabinet on the recommendations of the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee (municipal year 2018-2019).
Policy Framework:	Examination of the issues around Pupil Development Grant (PDG), and its link to the gap in achievement of free schools meals children and those not on free school meals, identify areas of good practice and sharing of this with other schools.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Legal, Finance, Members of Education and Skills PDC.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that Cabinet consider the information provided and to endorse recommendations within the report to establish a Swansea Council policy on the use of the PDG.
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1. Background

- 1.1 In June 2018, the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee (ESPDC) agreed to examine the issues around Pupil Development Grant (PDG) formerly known as Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG). The ESPDC has met regularly during the 2018-2019 municipal year. It has cross party membership and is a forum for Council Members and Officers to work together to form policy. The ESPDC determined to examine the link to

the gap in achievement of free schools meals (FSM) children and those not on FSM, to identify areas of good practice and sharing of this with other schools. Areas of focus were identified, to include, the following:

- data trends in relation to FSM performance in Swansea and nationally;
- Welsh Government (WG) guidance on PDG;
- role of Education through Regional Working (ERW) / local authority (LA) in monitoring use and promoting good practice in use of the PDG;
- good practice in Swansea schools – views of learners and headteachers;
- the role of the Education Endowment Foundation (EFF) and other third party organisations in promoting good practice;
- effective use of the Pupil Premium (PP) in England and in particular in Lambeth Council; and
- emerging findings and ways forward.

2. Briefing

2.1 Data Trends in relation to FSM

The difference in attainment between FSM and non-FSM pupils is almost 20 percentage points at foundation phase (3-7 year olds) and has been higher in Swansea than in Wales during the last five years. FSM pupils in Swansea have more than double the rate of additional learning needs (ALN) in comparison to non-FSM pupils. FSM boys have an even higher rate of ALN than FSM girls do. The achievement of FSM autumn born girls and summer born boys is around a 20-percentage point gap. Similar statistics to those above, are repeated across Wales, so a national issue. Historically, there has been under claiming of eligibility for FSM. Key stage 4 Level 2 including mathematics and English/ Welsh (Level 2i indicator) measure below indicates that although Swansea is above the national average there tends to be over a 30 percentage point difference in the performance of FSM pupils in comparison to non-FSM.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Swansea	59.1	64.0	64.7	57.8	59.8
Wales	55.4	57.9	60.3	54.6	55.1
Swansea FSM	27.3	39.5	40.2	32.4	35.4
Wales FSM	27.8	31.6	35.6	28.6	29.5
Swansea non-FSM	67.5	70.4	71.5	65.0	66.8
Wales non-FSM	61.6	64.1	68.8	61.0	61.7

2.2 Guidance on the use of PDG

Pupil Development Grant formerly called the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) was introduced in 2012-2013 to provide extra money to schools based on number of pupils eligible FSM. PDG also provides money to regional consortia to be spent on looked after children (LAC). Extension of PDG in 2015-2016 included 3-5 year olds. Further extended in 2017-2018 to included children educated otherwise than at school (EOTAS).

WG has produced comprehensive guidance to schools on the use of PDG. Challenge advisers monitor the use and implementation of this guidance in schools. Local ERW adviser supports the work of the region. There are over thirty overarching recommendations from WG on how the money should be targeted to improve educational outcomes. Sir Alasdair McDonald, National Lead for the initiative 'Reducing the Attainment Gap and Learning from Others but Implementing in Your Own Way' visited Swansea in February 2019 because of the impetus created by the ESDPC. The director of international partnerships, Stephen Fraser of the EEF also visited Swansea to speak to headteachers about the teaching and learning toolkit.

2.3 Use of after school clubs (ASC) to support FSM pupils

The primary school sector places great value on ASC. In a majority of primary schools, the after school provision will be carefully co-ordinated at the beginning of the school year by the senior leadership group.

Teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff all provide a vital role in the provision of ASC. Parents, grandparents and volunteers may provide some external assistance but school staff on a voluntary basis provide the vast majority of clubs and activities.

The secondary school sector provision of clubs is split between after school and lunchtime. There are various different types of clubs and groups such as revision, study, catch up, homework, sporting, drama etc. At secondary level ASC and intervention/catch-up activities are generally separate entities, notwithstanding a degree of overlap.

After-school study/revision sessions would generally be informal and attendance would not be compulsory. However, attendance for intervention/catch-up sessions would be expected, sessions would normally run in the school day and pupils' progress would be tracked more closely.

The majority of provision at secondary level is provided on a voluntary basis by staff, this can include revision classes during school holidays.

There is an increased movement to improve quality of "first teaching" and the need to better track pupils who are falling behind, in order to better target support and assistance for them.

For older secondary aged pupils, there is more emphasis on revision/study clubs to assist with preparation for examinations.

2.4 Best practice schools in schools with high FSM rates

Collaborative working between all staff across the school and the importance of working with the children, parents and community was emphasised.

The positive impact of Flying Start programme and ability to have additional staff which enables regular contact with children and parents from age 2 and the excellent working relationship with Health was also outlined.

PDG can seem low for an inner city primary school at £32k a year.. The percentage of free school meals pupils was over 25% but has fallen during the last few years. This is often due to non-declaration therefore free school meals can only be a proxy indicator for a few schools in very challenging contexts. The PDG has to be spent appropriately to achieve the maximum impact and benefit to the children.

St Helen's primary school offers many clubs for the children to attend on an extra-curricular basis. Clubs include debating club, literacy club, maths club, choir, school magazine and board games club.

St Helen's Primary school targets both lower and higher achieving pupils with appropriate help and encouragement to progress and achieve.

The school engages well with parents through the provision of drop in clubs for parents – computer help, English language, home visits and keep fit, for example. The school demonstrates an overwhelming effort and commitment from staff to make a difference for each child.

Bishop Vaughan's headteacher outlined the equally diverse make up of her school, which is now 50% non-Catholic, and comprises of 42 different nationalities and 46 languages, with 21% FSM pupils.

The high percentage of FSM and levels of deprivation in the surrounding communities means the school receives a PDG grant of c£254k. The school receives £1150 per eFSM pupil to arrive at the £254,150 total. PDG allocation is currently determined by the number of eFSM pupils on roll at an annual point in time.

The school examines and utilises areas of good practice such as the Sutton Trust Toolkit, EEF and Estyn good practice guidelines.

Bishop Vaughan has increased levels of support and assistance on hand for all pupils through the provision of various support activities and clubs such as the learning zone, peer support, improved library/IT provision, pupil diagnostic initiative, and outlined the excellent take up of these by pupils on a very regular basis.

PDG has enabled the school to employ both a health and wellbeing manager and deputy. These staff are hugely involved with both pupils and parents in all aspects of their school and personal lives such as ALN and encouragement, social/emotional/health needs, safeguarding issues etc.

A “nurture” programme has been developed from the above and is proving very successful. The school has a successful sixth form, with 99% of pupils achieving their first choice of higher education.

The school does focus highly on exam results, as they provide young people with “currency for life”, social mobility and key outcomes that are essential for adult life. 44% of GCSE students achieved five A*-C grades in 2017, which is double the figure achieved in 2010.

Members received a detailed document relating to Bishop Vaughan that outlined a wide variety of information relating to the various topics the committee has been examining including data of FSM pupils, PDG percentage and amount reviled, evidence based approaches, good practice, internal school initiatives, in and after school provision.

2.5 Regional Leader of Learning for PDG

The Leader of Learning for the PDG in ERW consortium gave an overview presentation to the Committee on the barriers to learning and links to the PDG.

Included in the presentation were the following areas:

- close working relationship with WG, Consortia PDG leads, LA PDG lead and challenge advisers;
- research carried out at local, national & international levels;
- support for schools to plan, monitor and evaluate their PDG spend;
- challenge and monitoring of schools;
- PDG eligibility – Disadvantage v Vulnerability issues and influences;
- barriers to Learning – reduced funding to schools, health & well-being, parental support, guidance & support in schools, mental health issues, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), poverty;
- school to school peer reviews, pilot schemes, sharing good practice, research and reviews, training;
- PDG mitigation – whole school approach, WG guidance on PDG spend, developing resilience, anti-bullying initiatives, nurturing schemes, restorative practice, importance of attendance;
- PDG Post 2019 – funding amounts been set for next two years, good practice around the pupil premium review in England and possibility of pilot schemes being introduced in Wales, is there a need to review and reinvigorate the PDG, use of templates in schools and need to update these, future training;
- recent event held with three Swansea schools/WG and ERW;
- need to nurture and encourage the more able and talented young people who fall under the disadvantaged/vulnerable categories;
- impact of additional out of school “paid for” tuition on achievements, and steps being taken by schools to provide additional learning opportunities outside core hours for all pupils;

- sharing of best practice ideas already in place at local and regional level;
- availability of good academic research via EEF;
- WG self-evaluation proposals;
- progress of vulnerable learners;
- recent report on the review of PDG undertaken by challenge advisers;
- school to school peer reviews;
- templates; and
- challenge advisers' reports.

2.6 Evaluation of the use of PDG across Swansea schools.

The evaluation by challenge advisers of PDG in Swansea schools in Autumn 2018 was considered carefully and the areas for development were noted as follows:

A named senior leader within the school (from within the senior leadership team) to champion pupils who are eligible for FSM. They will have responsibility for the strategic implementation of the grant. Regular review of intervention strategies to be evidenced and undertaken by the leadership team. Interventions that are selected to be implemented should be based on sound research and evidence. They should feature measurable entry and exit criteria that inform staff and pupils' of the progress being made. Optimise the progress of MAT pupils eligible for FSM through more targeted and effective use of the PDG for this group of pupils. The PDG plan should identify these pupils and demonstrate/evaluate the actions/activities to support them. Where relevant, the provision and evaluation of the activities/resources used to support the learning of LAC-FSM pupils should be included. Regular tracking of academic progress of this group of pupils to be developed further. Standardised reporting for the use of the PDG to be submitted to the challenge adviser as part of autumn annual monitoring and submitted to the LA by a specific date. Areas to be reported on include budget amounts and a breakdown of the impact from the previous year in the following areas, early years, foundation phase, key stage 2, 3, and 4, ALN, MAT and LAC. Reporting should also include planned expenditure with the chosen approach/rationale for selecting this implementation strategy stated with lead staff named and a review timescale with desirable outcomes. Schools could alert the Education Directorate's finance team by a specific date to confirm that their plans for PDG expenditure for previous and current financial years are live on website.

Proposals for the change in delegated funding for LAC pupils from April 2019, which will be on a cluster basis rather than a centrally led team. The emphasis will move from a focus on year 10 and 11 pupils to a more whole school approach. The potential staffing implications of the change were outlined, and the Head of Achievement and Partnership indicated that dialogue was continuing with schools on the proposed changes.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To establish a Swansea Council policy on the use of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG).
- 3.2 As part of this policy challenge advisers will advise schools and governors to:
- Appoint a senior leader within the school to champion pupils who are eligible for FSM with responsibility for the strategic implementation of PDG.
 - Optimise the progress of MAT pupils eligible for FSM through more targeted and effective use of the PDG for this group of pupils.
 - Establish a PDG plan clearly identifying eligible pupils and demonstrate/evaluate the actions/activities to support them.
 - Undertake regular tracking of the academic progress of this group of pupils.
 - Include the provision and evaluation of the activities/resources used to support the learning of LAC-FSM pupils where appropriate.
 - Undertake an annual review of intervention strategies to be evidenced and undertaken by the leadership team. Interventions that are selected to be implemented should be based on sound research and evidence.
- 3.3 Swansea Council will establish a formal system of standardised reporting for the use of the PDG to include the following actions:
- Schools to email the local authority finance department by a specific date to confirm that the PDG plans, previous and current year, are live on website.
 - Swansea Council to maintain a Swansea schools directory of good practice that will include regularly updated examples of evidence-based good practice.
 - Schools to submit monitoring information to the challenge adviser as part of autumn monitoring by a specific date. Areas to be reported on include budget amounts and a breakdown of the impact from the previous year in the following areas, early years, Foundation Phase, key stage 2, 3, and 4.
 - Reporting should also include planned expenditure with the chosen approach/rationale for selecting this implementation strategy stated with lead staff named and a review timescale with desirable outcomes.
- 3.4 Swansea Council will establish a formal process to link with the Lead of Learning for the PDG in the regional consortium (or other appropriate officer) to disseminate best practice in a) implementation at school level and b) local authority monitoring and support.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6. Equality and Engagement Implications

6.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

6.2 This report has no direct Equality implications. The recommendations, if approved, will be subject to the Council's Equality Impact Assessment process.

Background papers:

Glossary of terms: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/glossary>

Guidance for Using Pupil Deprivation Grant

<https://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/140512-what-really-works-en.pdf>

Appendices: None