

John Dunford 10 point plan for maximum impact for Pupil Premium students

John Dunford is the Pupil Premium Champion. An article containing this 10 point plan was published in the ASCL magazine in Feb 2015

Step 1. Set an ambition for what you want your school to achieve with PP funding.

Some of the schools aiming high express this ambition in terms of becoming one of the 17 per cent of schools in which those on free school meals (FSM) do better than the average for all pupils nationally.

We aim for students at SWGS with PP funding to make progress in line with all students at SWGS.

Step 2. The process of decision-making on PP spending starts with an analysis of the barriers to learning for PP pupils.

Barriers to learning might include poor parenting, limited access to language, poor literacy levels, poor attendance, low aspirations, low expectations, narrow experience of life outside school. Each school will want to make its own list.

We talk to our students regularly about their progress and identify any barriers to learning. We also contact parents annually to update them on how the school is using the PP funding and ask for any further suggestions. It is regularly discussed at SLT meetings and with governors.

Step 3. Decide on the desired outcomes of your PP spending.

Schools should decide for themselves what outcomes they are aiming for with PP funding, but these might include: raising attainment of PP-eligible pupils; closing the gap between PP pupils and others in the school; closing the gap between the school's PP pupils and all pupils nationally; improving attendance; reducing exclusions; accelerated progress by all PP pupils; increasing the engagement of parents with their children's education and with the school; increasing opportunities for PP-eligible pupils and broadening their experience. Our desired outcome is to ensure that the attainment of PP students is as good as, if not better, than all students. We want students, parents, staff and governors to be a part of this process and for all teachers to support the students to the best of their ability.

Step 4. Against each desired outcome, identify success criteria.

Against each of the desired outcomes which the school decides to pursue, school leaders should set one or more success criteria. This could be expressed as a number – 'closing the gap between the attainment of PP-eligible pupils and that of all pupils nationally by x per cent this year and by y per cent the following year'. For outcomes such as parental engagement, there are no easy metrics, so schools need to discuss what success looks like for them against these aims

Step 5. Evaluate your current PP strategies.

Having set out a range of desired outcomes and put success criteria against them, schools can evaluate their current strategies and assess how successful each of the strategies is in pursuit of the stated outcomes. Consider how much of your PP spending is on year 6 or year 11 pupils and how much on younger pupils. What are the percentages?

Consider how much you are spending on the needs of individual pupils and how much on whole-school strategies. What are the percentages?

There are no 'right answers' for the proportion of PP funding spent on different groups, but it will help your evaluation to know these figures.

[A lot of PP funding is spent on additional classroom assistants, so schools should use the research report on the deployment and impact of support staff](http://fdslive.oup.com/www.oup.com/oxed/primary/literacy/osi_teaching_assistants_report_web.pdf?region=uk)

[\(http://fdslive.oup.com/www.oup.com/oxed/primary/literacy/osi_teaching_assistants_report_web.pdf?region=uk \) to help them evaluate the effectiveness of learning assistants and ensure that they are working in the most effective way.](http://fdslive.oup.com/www.oup.com/oxed/primary/literacy/osi_teaching_assistants_report_web.pdf?region=uk)

Our on-going audit is maintained throughout the year of each strategy. This is reviewed regularly and shared with staff, SLT and governors.

Step 6. Research the evidence of what works best.

Schools need to look outwards for evidence of what works well elsewhere. I recommend three places to look initially.

First, seek out excellent practice in other schools, using

http://apps.nationalcollege.org.uk/closing_the_gap/index.cfm and <http://www.pupilpremiumawards.co.uk> and consider how you might adapt their successful PP strategies to the context of your school.

[Second, use the excellent Education Endowment Foundation Toolkit](http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/)

<http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/>, looking first at the strategies that make the most difference (feedback, metacognition, peer tutoring, etc.) and think about how these could best be used in your school.

[Third, study the Ofsted report on pupil premium, published in February 2013, where there is a list of successful approaches on page 3: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/pupil-premium-how-schools-are-spending-funding-successfully-maximise-achievement](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/pupil-premium-how-schools-are-spending-funding-successfully-maximise-achievement). Evaluate PP strategies in your school in the light of the points made in this report.

The latest research and advice is regularly reviewed to inform our practices. We are also part of different groups of schools including SWAT, a group of local grammar schools, where current practices are discussed and success evaluated.

Step 7. Decide on the optimum range of strategies to be adopted.

Using the evidence gathered from other schools and through your research in the EEF Toolkit and elsewhere, involve the leadership team, staff and governing body in deciding on the best strategies to use in the context of your school.

These should not be seen as separate from your other efforts to raise attainment and accelerate progress. Make sure that the PP strategies are embedded in your overall school improvement plan.

Consider too how you can adapt the curriculum to benefit disadvantaged pupils. The question 'What curriculum does most for disadvantaged pupils?' promotes rich discussion among staff and governors about the knowledge and skills that will maximise the life chances of young people from less well-off backgrounds. See the Whole Education website (www.wholeeducation.org) to learn about how Whole Education Network schools are developing a fully rounded education for their pupils as part of their 'closing the gap' and raising achievement strategies.

Don't forget the needs of bright PP-eligible pupils. You can spend funding on them to push them further and also to broaden their expectations and opportunities. Oxbridge visits and music tuition are fruitful examples.

Another group that especially needs additional help and support is the group of looked-after children, who have historically generally obtained very poor qualifications. Each school may have few of them, but heads need to work with the local 'virtual head' to deploy resources effectively for these children with their varied backgrounds and needs.

And, don't forget, excellent teaching can be the best strategy of all for raising the attainment of PP-eligible pupils and closing the gap.

Step 8. Staff training.

There are no short cuts to success with the strategies you adopt. If they are to be successful, in-depth training for all staff must take place

Step 9. Monitor the progress of PP-eligible pupils frequently.

Collect, analyse and use your data to maximum effect in monitoring the progress of every PP-eligible pupil. This should be done frequently, so that interventions can be put in place quickly, as soon as a pupil is starting to slip.

Regular monitoring of student progress takes place to evaluate attainment, commitment and progress.

Step 10. Put an audit trail on the school website for PP spending.

The school needs to put in a prominent place on the website an account of PP spending. The head and governing body are held to account for the impact that the school is making with PP funding. This can be done in tabular form, listing each strategy, its cost, evaluation reports on its effectiveness, and its impact. In addition, schools can use anonymised case studies of the difference that PP funding is making to the lives of pupils.

This also fulfils the governing body's legal obligation to report to parents on how the PP is being spent and the impact that is being made with it.

Information is provided on our school website that explains how we are using the funding and the attainment of PP funded students compared to the whole cohort.