

Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice

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Key Findings

Schools have used an average of 18 strategies to support disadvantaged pupils since the Pupil Premium was introduced in 2011. Greater success for disadvantaged pupils was associated with schools using fewer strategies and a combination of metacognitive, collaborative and peer learning strategies.

The way schools implement their strategies is important. The research identified **seven distinct 'building blocks of success'** including: an emphasis on achievement for all pupils, addressing the needs of individual pupils, using evidence in decision-making and responsive leadership.

Schools' typical pathways to improvement take around three to five years. Beginning with a focus on attendance and behaviour alongside quality teaching, schools can embed their support for disadvantaged pupils, and the most successful are able to contribute to system improvement.

Certain school characteristics have a strong relationship with disadvantaged pupils' performance. For example, lower performance was associated with higher absence levels and lower proportions of disadvantaged pupils. Schools in London and the North East had better results for disadvantaged pupils. However, these relationships do not entirely explain the variation in disadvantaged pupils' performance, between otherwise similar schools, demonstrating that schools have meaningful scope to make a difference.

The Seven Building Blocks

The NFER research identified seven key building blocks for Pupil Premium Interventions.	What we do at SWGS to address these
1. Whole school ethos of attainment for all	Every student has subject specific, personalised target levels or grades and progress is measured against these.
2. Addressing behaviour and attendance	Incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with at department level and overseen by pastoral support managers and heads of section. Attendance is carefully monitored by attendance officers in each of the key stages.
3. High quality teaching for all	Our comprehensive department review process along with rigorous appraisal systems ensures that teaching is of high quality. On-going CPD focusses on the quality of teaching with follow-up process to ensure that new skills are embedded.
4. Meeting individual learning needs	Differentiated teaching strategies are employed during lessons. Individual needs are constantly monitored by tutors and class teachers. There are many different opportunities for students to ask for additional support including pastoral support managers, heads of section, school nurse and lay Chaplin.
5. Deploying staff effectively	Heads of department work with SLT line managers in the deploying of staff when the timetable is planned.
6. Data-driven and responding to evidence	Every student's progress is tracked regularly through each academic year. This data is then analysed centrally, checking specific vulnerable groups and students that are not making rapid progress are identified and intervention strategies applied to support the students.
7. Clear, responsive leadership	Clear expectations are set out through exam review meetings, departmental review, school improvement plans and the setting of challenging student targets for every student. Progress is tracked throughout the year and data is analysed at student, teaching group, subject and whole school level. Intervention/Support is put in place to respond to underachievement.