

Pupil Premium in NCC Maintained schools

Pupil Premium is additional funding for publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities and to close the gaps between them and their peers.

During February 2017 BDO LLP, on behalf of Norfolk Audit Services, visited a representative seven NCC maintained schools as part of a thematic audit, to review the systems and procedures schools have in place for applying for, spending and monitoring their Pupil Premium funding.

Based on the results of this sample they were able to provide assurance that the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is closely monitored. However, the methodology applied by some schools to allocate Pupil Premium funds to staff costs could be more robust. There are also inconsistencies in the use of the budgetary control reports (BCRs) to monitor Pupil Premium expenditure throughout the year. This reduces the ability of schools to determine how effective their use of Pupil Premium funds has been during the year. Subsequent decisions about whether or not particular interventions should be funded are therefore not as well informed as they could be.

Audit findings and recommendations

The following is an overall summary of the issues they found from the schools visited:

Monitoring Pupil Premium funding:

- Pupil Premium expenditure was not easily identifiable from the records kept at some of the schools. Please liaise with your Finance Support Officer to establish the best way to separately identify Pupil Premium which will also assist with more efficient monitoring.
- The majority of funding was used to support staff costs, however the link between the funding allocated to support staff costs and actual salary amounts was not always clear. As far as possible schools should allocate funding for staff interventions on the basis of salary costs and proportion of time spent by those staff supporting disadvantaged children.

Review of Pupil Premium information published on the school website against DfE requirements:

- Information not included on the main barriers to education achievement faced by eligible pupils at the school
- No information on how the school intends to spend the Pupil Premium funding to address the barriers highlighted
- Methods used to measure the impact of the Pupil Premium are not clearly identified
- Current information regarding Pupil Premium expenditure was not available on the school website
- the date of the next review of the school's Pupil Premium strategy was not included

Please ensure the above details are included on your school's website and kept up to date.

Schools should ensure they maintain sufficient detailed records regarding the administration of Pupil Premium. We recommend the above issues are considered by each school's leadership team, together with any proposed actions for improvements you need to make in relation to your school. Any issues and proposed actions should be presented to the relevant Governing Body for approval and monitoring.