Estyn

Rhagoriaeth i bawb ~ Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

Supplementary guidance on inspecting the approaches taken by schools to reduce the impact of poverty on educational attainment

September 2014

The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:

- ⌁ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities;
- ⌁ primary schools;
- ⌁ secondary schools;
- ⌁ special schools;
- ⌁ pupil referral units;
- ⌁ independent schools;
- ⌁ further education;
- ⌁ adult community learning;
- ⌁ youth and community work training;
- ⌁ local authority education services for children and young people;
- ⌁ teacher education and training;
- ⌁ Welsh for adults;
- ⌁ work-based learning; and
- ⌁ learning in the justice sector.

Estyn also:

- ⌁ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the Welsh Government and others; and
- ⌁ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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1 Introduction

This document contains guidance on inspecting how well maintained schools (primary, secondary and special) reduce the impact of poverty on disadvantaged pupils.

The guidance provides a commentary and questions for inspectors to consider when evaluating evidence to determine the impact of the approaches taken by schools to reduce the impact of poverty on the educational achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

The guidance should be read in conjunction with the compilation of Estyn's remit reports on tackling poverty published as a summary report and related materials at http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/best-practice/tackling-deprivation-and-raising-standards/

When inspecting the approaches taken by schools to reduce the impact of poverty on educational attainment, inspectors will consider:

- how well disadvantaged pupils achieve;
- the impact of approaches designed to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils;
- the extent to which schools take a strategic and co-ordinated approach to improving the achievements of disadvantaged pupils;
- the impact of the school's work with partners; and
- how well schools use resources, including specific grants for pupils eligible for free-school meals and the impact on improving the achievements of those pupils.

2 Reporting requirements

1.1: Standards

Under aspect 1.1.2 of the common inspection framework, inspectors should report on the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals. Annex 7 of the Guidance for the inspection of schools provides guidance on the use of data for reporting on the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Inspectors should consider how well pupils eligible for free school meals perform in headline indicators compared to pupils eligible for free school meals in the family, locally and nationally. Inspectors should also take into account baseline information and consider how well the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals compares to that of other groups of pupils, including those pupils not eligible for free school meals.

At the Foundation Phase, inspectors should consider trends in performance of pupils

eligible for free school meals in relation to the Foundation Phase indicator (FPI). Inspectors should include any good features or areas for improvement in the separate areas of learning that influence the FPI.

At key stage 2 or key stage 3, inspectors should consider trends in performance of pupils eligible for free school meals in relation to the core subject indicator (CSI). Inspectors should include any good features or areas for development in separate core subjects that influence the CSI.

At key stage 4, inspectors should consider trends in performance of pupils eligible for free school meals in:

- the level 2 threshold, including English or Welsh and mathematics;
- the level 1 threshold;
- the level 2 threshold;
- the core subject indicator; and
- the capped points score.

At post-16, inspectors should consider the performance of students eligible for free school meals on the level 3 threshold and the average wider points score, where schools have presented this analysis.

Where the school offers the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification and can present an analysis, inspectors should consider the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals at different levels in key stage 4 and post-16.

3.4: Resource management

Under aspect 3.4.2 of the common inspection framework, inspectors should report on the extent to which the school makes good use of the pupil deprivation grant. The judgement on how well the school uses the pupil deprivation grant should not usually be higher than the judgement on the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals made under 1.1.2, but it may be lower.

Inspectors should consider whether the school:

- can measure the impact of the pupil deprivation grant on improving outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals;
- uses the pupil deprivation grant to raise the achievement of all pupils eligible for free school meals and not only those that are lower ability learners;
- targets support specifically at pupils eligible for free school meals, particularly those that attain at average or above average levels;
- has a clear plan or approach for deploying resources to meet the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals;
- has developed the knowledge and expertise of staff on strategies to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and their families;

- is effective in developing the skills of staff to meet the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals through specific intervention programmes;
- has effective systems for mentoring and supporting pupils eligible for free school meals; and
- shares resources and expertise, within and beyond its cluster, to improve the outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals.

3   Lines of inquiry

Taking into account the school's self-evaluation report, the data analysis, the briefing on the school from the local authority and any other information already held by the inspectorate, the reporting inspector will complete a pre inspection commentary. This will include hypotheses based on the self-evaluation report and other information that inspectors will use to direct **lines of inquiry** during the inspection. The reporting inspector should make the impact of poverty a line of inquiry if the standards of pupils eligible for free school meals are a cause for concern and/or there is insufficient evidence to judge the effectiveness of the school's approach to reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment. Inspectors should consider the following questions when following this line of inquiry.

1.2: Wellbeing

- How does the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals compare with other groups of pupils within the school and with similar schools?
- How do the exclusion rates of those eligible for free school meals compare with other groups of pupils in the school and with similar schools?
- How do the participation rates of pupils eligible for free school meals at extra-curricular activities and trips and visits compare with other groups of pupils?
- To what extent do pupils eligible for free school meals take on responsibilities and play a part in the school and wider community?
- To what extent are the views of pupils eligible for free school meals captured within the school? For example, what proportion are on the school council?
- How does the attitude to learning of pupils eligible for free school meals compare with other groups of pupils?
- How effective are pupils eligible for free school meals at improving their own learning and thinking to move on to the next stage of learning?

2.1: Learning experiences

- How well does the school tailor its curriculum and target out of school learning to meet the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- What opportunities, during and out of school hours, are there for pupils eligible for free school meals to enrich their learning experiences? What is their participation level?

- How effective is the school in providing work-related education for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds?
- How well does the school's provision improve the literacy and numeracy skills of all pupils eligible for free school meals, not only the lower ability?
- How effective is the range of intervention programmes to address any deficits in the literacy and numeracy skills of individual pupils eligible for free school meals?
- What proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals are educated off site for part or all of the week and how successful is this provision in engaging pupils?

2.2: Teaching and assessment

- Do teachers have high enough expectations for pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How knowledgeable are staff about the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals and how well do teachers meet these needs?
- How well do teachers track and monitor the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How well do teachers use assessment information to inform the next steps in learning for pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How well do teachers use assessment outcomes and benchmarks to intervene in individual cases if necessary?

2.3: Care, support and guidance

- How well does the school attend to the confidence, motivation and self-esteem of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How does the school ensure that there is sufficient support for pupils' social and emotional needs?
- To what extent do policies and arrangements for promoting healthy living and wellbeing identify the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How well does the school's PSE programme cater for the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals? How does the school make all pupils aware of the impact of poverty?
- To what extent do strategies to improve attendance specifically focus on the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How well does the school match support to the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How well does the school support pupils eligible for free school meals to make choices about courses in key stage 4, the sixth form and for higher education?
- How well does the school use specialist services and agencies to support the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- What proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals also have an additional learning need? How are these pupils supported to achieve as well as they can?

2.4: Learning environment

- How well does the school establish an ethos that meets the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How effective is the school in offering equal access to the curriculum?
- How well does the school ensure equal access to pupils eligible for free school meals to out of school learning, including educational trips and visits?
- How successful is the school in providing access to resources that may not be available at home to pupils eligible for free school meals, for example access to a computer or a quiet place to work?

3.1: Leadership

- How well do school leaders prioritise tackling poverty and plan strategically to raise the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- Do school leaders take a systematic, coherent whole school approach to supporting pupils eligible for free school meals?
- Does the school have an identified a senior member of staff to lead and coordinate the work to support pupils eligible for free school meals?
- Does the school development plan contain clear and focussed actions for the use of the pupil deprivation grant? How well has the school used data to inform this plan?
- How effective are governors/management committee members in providing a lead in promoting the school's work in reducing the impact of poverty for pupils eligible for free school meals?

3.2: Improving quality

- How well do school leaders use data to identify and track the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals? For example, do leaders gather information from a range of sources and use it to analyse the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals against benchmarks and prior attainment, and track the progress of individual disadvantaged pupils?
- How well do leaders evaluate the impact of strategies to improve the achievement and wellbeing of pupils eligible for free school meals?
- How well do leaders listen to the views of pupils eligible for free school meals and provide opportunities for them to play a full part in school life? For example, do leaders gather their views about teaching and learning give disadvantaged pupils a key role in school development and involve disadvantaged pupils directly to improve standards?
- How do subject/departmental/faculty plans link with the school's plan to improve standards for all pupils eligible for free school meals?

3.3: Partnerships

- How well does the school manage and co-ordinate multi agency working? For example, does the school engage strategically with multi-disciplinary agencies to improve the achievement and attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals? (Flying Start, Families First, Communities First - TAF, TAC, LA, Social Services, LHB, Third Sector etc)
- How well does the school evaluate its own work and that of external agencies against clear measures of pupil performance? Do leaders use data to evaluate the impact of new initiatives and share performance information with partners to help join up the school's approaches with other interventions?
- How good are the school's strategies to engage parents of pupils eligible for free school meals? For example, does the school communicate and work face-to-face to help them and their children overcome barriers to learning?
- Does the school make the most of community-based work so that it can impact on disadvantaged pupil's achievement? For example, do staff have the skills to work in partnership and engage the community?
- How well does the school target support for pupils eligible for free school meals when making they make the transition to the next stage of their education?
- How well does the school work with partners and other schools to pool their funding and resources to improve the outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals?

Possible sources of evidence include:

- annual performance data for achievement of expected level of performance at the end of key stages and the Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Mathematics (L2inclusive) at the end of key stage 4;
- samples of work of FSM pupils across the ability and age range, compared to non FSM pupils work;
- reading and numeracy test data of pupils entitled to FSM compared to similar non-FSM pupils;
- teacher assessments of pupils entitled to FSM compared to similar non-FSM pupils;
- attendance and exclusions data for FSM pupils;
- lesson observations;
- school tracking information of FSM pupils;
- interviews with relevant staff;
- interviews with groups of pupils;
- the school's documents for self-evaluation and improvement planning; and
- the school's action plan for the pupil deprivation grant, including evaluation[1] of activities taken and impact on standards.

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[1]The Education Endowment Foundation provides an evaluation resource for use by schools. http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/EEF_DIY_Evaluation_Guide_2013.pdf

Annex 1: Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) and School Effectiveness Grant (SEG)

The **Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG)** and the **School Effectiveness Grant (SEG)** are the Welsh Government's principal means of providing financial support for the three national priorities for schools:

- reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment;
- improving standards in literacy; and
- improving standards in numeracy

The PDG is intended to overcome the additional barriers that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds face which prevent them from attaining as well as their peers, whatever their ability.

In December 2013, the Welsh Government produced Pupil Deprivation – Short guidance for practitioners on the use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant which is available at: http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/school-effectiveness-grant-2013-2015/?lang=en.

The guidance is clear on what the PDG can and cannot be used for.

"What the PDG supports

"The PDG must only be used to improve attainment for e-FSM and LAC learners. It is intended to overcome the additional barriers that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds face which prevent them from attaining as well as their peers, whatever their ability.

"The PDG may be used for whole-school initiatives that will particularly benefit learners who are e-FSM and LAC. These include whole staff development activities such as INSET days which focus on the impact of deprivation on attainment and train staff to use strategies which are known to be particularly effective. Successful strategies include the use of feedback, working with parents/carers, metacognition and learning about learning.

"The grant can be used to introduce effective tracking systems which identify needs and help practitioners to design tailored solutions which can be monitored and evaluated for impact.

"What the PDG must not be used for

"The funding is **not** for tackling underachievement across the school. The SEG provides support to improve underachievement generally, with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy. The RAISE grant failed to achieve its objective to reduce the difference in

attainment between e-FSM learners and their peers because many schools focussed on under-achievement, rather than tackling the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

"The grant must not be used for strategies to tackle particular barriers faced by learners who are already supported through funding from another source. This includes ethnic minority learners, Gypsy and Traveller learners or those with special educational needs. These learners, however, may be supported by the PDG if their support needs are linked to being e-FSM or LAC."As a result of the pupil deprivation grant, schools should be able to demonstrate a reduction in the difference in end of key stage outcomes between learners eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after with the overall school population."

In order to achieve the above outcomes, schools should:

- adopt a whole-school strategic approach to tackling disadvantage;
- make intelligent use of data tracking systems to identify learners' needs;
- target interventions and monitor impact;
- adopt strategies that involve parents and carers in learners' education;
- engage communities in the life of the school and the school in the life of the community; in particular in Communities First areas;
- improve attendance;
- recognise the relationship between wellbeing and standards and adapt practise to reflect this;
- work in partnership with each other and with other organisations; and
- employ interventions that are evidentially the most effective.

In addition to the PDG and SEG,

- **The Communities First Pupil Deprivation Grant** (2013-2015) is available to support proposals, which bring communities and schools together in improving educational outcomes and tackling poverty. The allocation must be match funded with Pupil Deprivation Grant money on a 50/50 basis.

- **Additional funding for Band 4 and 5 secondary schools.** In order to access the funding schools were required to submit clear action plans with improvement targets to their local consortia.

Annex 2: Eligibility for free school meals

Children whose parents receive the following support payments are eligible to receive free school meals:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income, as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs, does not exceed £16,190
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

Free schools meals are awarded where the parent or pupil meets the eligibility criteria and a request has been made by, or on behalf of the parent for free school meals.