

Culture, Creativity and Narrowing the Gap – using pupil premium to enrich cultural education

Graveney school is a secondary school academy located in the London Borough of Wandsworth. The school intake is 2064 with 22% students eligible for pupil premium funding. The London average of secondary school pupils eligible for pupil premium in 2016–17 is 39.7%. The school was rated Outstanding by Ofsted in 2015 and has a Progress 8 score of 0.34 which is above the national average within the top 20% of schools.

Key insights

- Facilitating pupil premium parental engagement through information evenings to increase awareness of the opportunities available, the purpose of pupil premium to provide equal access and entitlement and the impact that interventions can have.
- Measuring and monitoring pupils destinations post Year 11 and Year 13 can help schools to understand the longer term impact of pupil premium funding on future education and employment pathways.

CASE STUDY

Graveney School

How does the school aim to support disadvantaged pupils?

Graveney school's pupil premium strategy sets out to support pupils who may be at a disadvantage in accessing opportunities in relation to their peers because of financial or family circumstances. The school aims to remove barriers to pupil premium students' academic achievement and ensure they can participate in the curriculum and enrichment activities at an equal level.

"Our aim is to make sure no pupil premium child is deprived of any opportunity that is openly available to other pupils. That is why we fund musical tuition, the Duke of Edinburgh and subsidise pupil premium students for other trips. Another aim is to make sure that any barriers that do exist for pupil premium students are overcome early and that a child's pupil premium status does not hold them back academically."

Deputy Headteacher, Graveney School

The strategy and allocation of funding is developed by the Deputy Headteacher and school bursar. The allocation of the budget is finalised after review of the impact of the previous year's budget allocation against KS4 attainment data. The school feels it is important not to see pupil premium students as a homogeneous group and look specifically at the progress of individuals or groups of pupils (e.g. eligible students who have different ability levels) to tailor interventions. The school also takes into consideration wider evidence and research from the Education Endowment Fund on what interventions work effectively in supporting students. The Deputy Headteacher also has an open dialogue with each department within the school. Subject departments can request funding for extra provision they think will assist the progress of pupil premium pupils.

The school governors are presented with information regarding the progress and impact of activities. The curriculum governors' committee provide full oversight of the allocation and effectiveness of pupil premium spend and hold the senior leadership to account for the decisions made.

The main activities funded include: small group and one-one English and Maths tuition; additional support staff to promote high levels of attendance and engagement with parents/carers; provision of additional resources (e.g. exam revision materials); free participation in

school journeys; grant support with residential visits; and free tuition in a musical instrument. Most of the funding is spent directly on eligible pupil premium students but some activities have overlapping participation with the whole of the school, for example – extra tuition groups may also include non-pupil premium students who need additional support and are underperforming.

To facilitate access and awareness of the opportunities available, the school holds an engagement evening for all parents and pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. Through the course of the evening parents are provided with information on: how the school aims to support their children; how parents and carers themselves can support their children; information of the range of support available; and, evidence of the outcome destinations of previous cohorts of pupil premium students.

"It makes it very clear to the parents that the school is very conscious of the group and committed to their achievement but also gives them an insight into what they can do at home to support their child's progress. I think it breaks the ice between the school and the families as well. It's an evening where we do talk about pupil premium as a very positive thing, as a thing that can really enhance both the academic work of the child but also their involvement in enrichment activities."

Deputy Headteacher, Graveney School

How is narrowing the gap strategy aligned with providing access to arts and cultural opportunities for disadvantaged students?

Graveney school aims to provide a full range of arts and cultural opportunities across the curriculum and enrichment activities, and it perceives this to be particularly important in the current climate of some schools reducing opportunities for arts and cultural education because they need to focus resource on achieving key academic outcomes at KS4.

"We are very aware with all the targets that schools have to reach these days and the pressure on schools to produce really good outcomes at the end of key stage 4, that there are some schools who have really slashed the Arts. Not just in the



The programme of free musical tuition has been running for 3 years.

curriculum, but some have said to pupils that if you're in key stage 4 you are not participating in the school play. We know out there, there has been a narrowing of the curriculum and arts related enrichment activities. We are absolutely committed to keeping those things going."

Deputy Headteacher, Graveney School

The aim of pupil premium to address the differences in access to resources and opportunities was seen to align with the school's commitment to offer all students the same chance to explore arts and cultural activities. 40% of the school's pupil premium funding is spent on extra-curricular/cultural and arts activity. The senior leadership team feel that differences in socio-economical background can not only limit the financial means to access but also the confidence to access these types of opportunities. Offering arts and cultural opportunities are also perceived to have wider life enhancing benefits to students including raising confidence, instilling self-discipline, and can contribute to academic development. Musical tuition was selected specifically because it is an activity where children have different access depending on their ability to pay and where increasing participation would benefit the life skills of pupil premium students.

"Why music tuition? We think it opens a lot of doors to appreciation of the Arts in general and getting rid of that feeling of being intimidated by those ideas. But we also think that learning a musical instrument gives you not just learning the obvious skill of playing a musical instrument but also, if you stick with it, it gives you self-discipline and there is some research that suggests learning a musical instrument actually improves your cognitive abilities."

Deputy Headteacher, Graveney School

The programme of free musical tuition has been running for 3 years. Free lessons are offered to all pupil premium eligible students from year 7. Students are entitled to a free paired lesson for 30 minutes each week. Students also can sit musical grade exams which are funded via pupil premium. Many of the students have not accessed lessons before because of financial reasons.

One of the perceived benefits of participation in musical instrumental lessons is that it requires learning and practice which are key skills for achievement in education and employment. Staff have observed students gain increased confidence not only in their

musical ability but also more widely in their approach and attitude towards learning in school.

"We can see the bigger picture of what music can do for an individual. For some it is building their confidence, for others it is developing their social skills, for others it's having a focus and being able to learn. There are so many different skills you can learn through music."

Head of Music, Graveney School

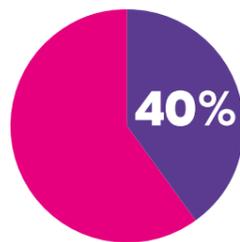
The lessons also provide more focused attention than students would receive in regular lessons and can have wider benefits to general behaviour and how children feel about attending school. Another knock-on effect is that pupil premium students are motivated to join other arts and cultural activities within the school. The widening of participation in musical tuition has also encouraged the music department to look at the gaps in their broader enrichment offer and to increase the range of musical clubs, for example introducing a more informal band to meet the musical interests and styles of all students. Pupil premium pupil's involvement in extra-curricular activities also allows them to socialise and develop relationships with a diverse mix of students across the school.

"I think the pupils that learn musical instruments are more confident and learning a musical instrument opens up opportunities for further involvement in the musical life of the school so for example they can join ensembles, they can join choirs... if you're learning an instrument you can become part of something bigger in the school."

Deputy Headteacher, Graveney School

The music department has also seen a steady increase of pupil premium students going on to study GCSE Music. It was felt this was partly due to the free musical tuition increasing wider musical engagement in KS3 of pupil premium students.

Students discussed how they enjoyed the experience of learning a new instrument. For some, it has increased their general confidence because of the sense of achievement they have gained from learning a new skill and/or passing musical grade examinations. One student felt it had helped him with learning the theory needed for GCSE Music and had taken his exam early.



40% of the school's pupil premium funding is spent on extra-curricular/cultural and arts activity.

“Playing an instrument allowed me to take my GCSE music early. It’s also given me skills to play the piano and sax and thinking quickly from my sight reading ... When I came in to start the GCSE I already had an understanding of what was going on. It made it easier and it helps with my performance sections.”

Pupil, Graveney School

Evaluation, monitoring and reporting

The Deputy Head reviews the previous academic year allocation of spending each September. This also informs the final allocation of budget for that upcoming year. The review is based on self-evaluation of attainment data comparing the attainment and progress of pupil premium and non-pupil premium students within the school and nationally. The recent impact of pupil premium funding has been regarded as extremely positive. Both pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils performed well above the national average for all pupils in English and Maths. However, there is still a small gap in attainment within school between pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils. The school also monitors the percentage of pupil premium students who progress into the sixth form and destinations of students after Y11 and Y13. School attendance and participation rates in extra-curricular activities are also used as outcome indicators.

The focus on the progress of pupil premium students also feeds into the school’s wider evaluation systems. Heads of year and heads of subjects are provided with specific data for the pupil premium cohort to analyse attainment and progress as part of their improvement and evaluation process.

“The pupil premium is a focus for all departments and year teams as well. Every year in the Autumn we have the team improvement and evaluation meeting which is formally written up and data focused. Every head of year and every head of department will have a formal meeting with their line manager and the principal to review the outcomes, namely exam results and progress data, and part of that will be to drill down and look at how the pupil premium cohort did, did they make the expected progress or did they exceed it?”

Deputy Headteacher, Graveney School

The success of the provision of free musical tuition is looked at in view of the wider review of musical department and outcomes. It was felt that it is too early to look specifically at impact as students have not yet had their overall KS4 attainment outcomes. A positive indicator of success so far has been increased pupil premium students’ participation in extra-curricular activities and progression to study GCSE music.

Key learning for the future

Deputy Head, Maeve Hamill, has learnt that activities and interventions to support pupil premium need to be actively promoted and that children and parents will not just gravitate to these opportunities without effective communication as to what is available and the wider benefits. The school has increased engagement through the pupil premium parent evenings. It also feels that it is important not to stereotype pupil premium families and assume they will be uninterested in their child’s education or too intimidated to come into school. They feel schools should communicate pupil premium as funding to support families to get the same entitlements as other children rather than additional money because families are on a low income.

“It’s our philosophy that pupil premium provides the opportunities rather than it is some sort of label and that’s the way we want to present it.”

Deputy Headteacher, Graveney School

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