

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

Hampstead School is a state maintained school in the London borough of Camden. The school has a Good Ofsted rating and has a Progress 8 score of 0.29 which puts them nationally within the top 25% of schools in England. The school has an intake of 1253 with 56% of students eligible for pupil premium students. The London average of secondary school pupils eligible for pupil premium in 2016–17 is 39.7%.

Key insights

- In class support by artists and cultural practitioners can be integrated into a school's curriculum offer. Artist's in residence can enhance the experience of learning and provide additional support to students to contextualise their learning.
- The importance of communication and dialogue between arts and cultural subject teachers and senior leadership on pupil premium strategy, with opportunities available for staff to present a rationale for supporting arts and cultural opportunities.

CASE STUDY

Hampstead School

How does the school aim to support disadvantaged pupils?

The school's pupil premium strategy aims to raise attainment and close the gap between pupil premium students and non-pupil premium students to ensure all students reach their full potential, both academically and socially. Their strategy sets out to engage a range of interventions to provide support to overcome barriers to pupil premium students' learning and reduce the difference in experiences with non-pupil premium students.

"We look at how to use the pupil premium to have maximum impact to develop the school and make sure the students are making progress. At the same time ensuring the students have an enjoyable time at school, so we have a very strong focus on the arts, dance and performing arts specifically. We will want them to go away with a wide range of GCSEs but we will also want them to leave with a love of learning and broader sense of learning of the history and culture".

Assistant Head Teacher, Hampstead School

The strategy is developed by the Headteacher and senior management team (SLT). The allocation of the budget must meet the school's broader aim of closing the gap in the context of the whole school improvement plan. The Assistant Headteacher has overall oversight of expenditure. Governors are also consulted on the expenditure for successive academic years.

The budget is split into core activities, alternative educational provision, and extended curriculum and services. Core activities include expenditure on: teaching and learning, achievement for all, the student support centre, improving attendance and targeted intervention groups (e.g. a literacy and numeracy programme). Approximately 75% of the budget is spent on areas that the SLT have identified as a priority after reviewing the attainment data at the end of the academic year. 25% of the budget is reserved for staff led projects for disadvantaged pupils.

There is an application process for staff led activities. Staff must complete a proforma which includes the rationale of why the intervention is needed, the specific pupil premium students targeted and how it will benefit them. Staff are required to include baseline attainment data and the estimated impact on student attainment progress.

The school aims to make sure that all pupil premium funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils directly but spend will also include strategies that benefit the whole school too, for example – providing teaching assistants as part of the whole school strategy to improve literacy levels. Some enrichment opportunities are for the whole school but they use the funding to support a proportion of costs in line with the number of pupil premium students who will benefit.

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

The strategic rationale for including arts and cultural opportunities is to increase cultural capital for disadvantaged and vulnerable students. Pupil premium students are less likely to experience the same level of cultural opportunities as other students due to family financial circumstances. The school feels it is important that students get a balanced learning offer both within the curriculum and enrichment opportunities.

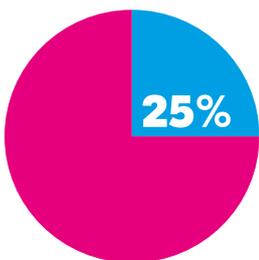
"More affluent students will get exposure anyway – music lessons, theatre trips. We are broadening the horizons of those families who can't afford it or have never been encouraged or exposed. It may ignite a passion or interest".

Deputy Head Teacher, Hampstead School

Arts and cultural opportunities are also seen as a way to encourage students to experience a different way of thinking and develop wider skills and capabilities including group working, communication, resilience and self-confidence.

There had been no resistance to utilising pupil premium on arts and cultural opportunities within the school and governors have been very supportive of the school providing cultural opportunities via pupil premium. The local catchment area is also regarded as an arts-supporting community and that commitment to creativity is integrated into the ethos of the school.

Ensuring arts and cultural opportunities are available is seen as particularly important in the context of increased budgets constraints and the need to make hard decisions on prioritising school budgets. The SLT have



25% of the budget is reserved for staff led projects for disadvantaged pupils.

observed other schools making cuts to their creative offers within KS4 subjects choice and extra-curricular activity, but have taken a clear view that the school must continue to support arts and cultural opportunities for their students.

"We have made a conscious decision to look at how we can make a more balanced curriculum. How can we promote subjects where people clearly have talent and are very good, but the system that we work in as a school and the society they exist in doesn't necessarily support that view and doesn't necessarily value what creative subjects can give to someone".

Deputy Head Teacher, Hampstead School



Pupil premium funding has been allocated to a range of workshops and activities across music, dance and drama.

Pupil premium funding has been allocated to a range of workshops and activities across music, dance and drama. The school provides pupils with specialist support via an artist in residence programme, in which creative specialists are available to work with students in class and run afterschool activities. GCSE Drama is supported by a director in residence. The director has the flexibility to work with specific groups of students, particularly supporting disadvantaged high potential learners with further development of their drama pieces and examination work. Discussions with the director also give students an insight into how artists work in the real world and provides greater awareness of career opportunities for the future.

Additionally, there are set specifications for GCSE drama which require students to access and visit productions supporting them in writing evaluations for their assessments. Pupil premium has been used to subsidise a proportion of the cost of theatre trips so that all students can access these opportunities at a lower price.

"It creates equality between them. It means they can all see a good show production. We could all go somewhere cheaper for £5 but it wouldn't be the same level of quality. They need to see something that ticks all the boxes for the specification. It creates a sense of fairness and no one is embarrassed that they are being paid for or not".

Head of Performing Arts faculty, Hampstead School

The school has also employed a gardener in residence who works with students across Years 7–11 to support cross curricular learning between art and more academic subjects, for

example, monitoring and recording the growth of plants through a combination of creative visual, scientific and mathematic methods. These interventions have enabled lower ability pupil premium students to contextualise their learning within real life projects.

The school has seen a difference in the overall enjoyment and experience of the courses supported by the artists in residence. The interventions have allowed the students' learning to be stretched and challenged by professionals and experts within these fields. Staff have observed changes in students' behaviour such as increased confidence in class and how they interact and make connections with others. Extra-curricular opportunities have also supported students who have behavioural problems to engage in arts and cultural workshop opportunities they are interested in, and this has contributed to improved attendance and behaviour in school.

Students themselves enjoyed coming together with other pupils to develop their own creative projects. The learning of new skills and interests has also helped raise their self-esteem, resilience and ability to relate to others.

"Learning social skills and how to cooperate with different people, it gives you an understanding of other people. If something isn't going right there is always something to do to get over it and that's a skill I've learnt which you can use in everyday life as well".

Pupil, Hampstead School

The support in the classroom from the artists in residence was directly beneficial to their learning because the artists facilitated discussions and activities that helped students to develop their own ideas and communicate with other students.

"I'm doing my GCSE Drama. He (The Director of Residence) used to come to Hampstead and is now a professional actor. He is really helping us devise the work and making it the best it can be. I think without him we would be lost. He has been really helpful. He gives us lots of good tips".

Pupil, Hampstead School

Students also discussed the fact that they would not necessarily have access to these opportunities if not offered by the school. They also had developed skills and interests which they could potentially study further and pursue in future careers. For some students it

also encouraged them to discuss and share their creative interests with parents outside of school.

Evaluation, monitoring and reporting

Analysis of each funded intervention takes place at the end of the academic year. As part of the review process, the Assistant Headteacher refers to the Education Endowment Fund toolkit to look at what kinds of impacts specific interventions should have and how that compares with the impacts of the interventions implemented. Impact is measured via outcome indicators including KS4 attainment levels, attendance and behavioural records within class, and staff feedback on their social and emotional progression (e.g. levels of communication and confidence). The uptake of related subjects will also be considered, for example whether selection of arts and cultural subjects at KS4 have increased and reflects a strengthened understanding and interest in that subject. Progress of students is also monitored throughout the year. The Assistant Headteacher will look specifically at pupil premium students and consider the impact of the activities they have taken part in and question whether they are making the expected progress. Heads of Faculty will also report back on how they are supporting pupil premium students and their strategy for closing the gap.

"We look at the non-pupil premium students within the school against those with the same starting points and are pupil premium students keeping up and exceeding expectations, and if they are not what are we doing about it".

**Assistant Head Teacher,
Hampstead School**

For arts and cultural interventions specifically, it was perceived as a challenge to show the impact of interventions where intended outcomes are holistic and aimed at increasing cultural engagement and cultural capital. Outcome data from 2015/16 show positive feedback from students about impact the of the theatre trips and artist of residence

programme. The gardener in residence has seen improvements in progress of individual students, particularly year 7 literacy and year 11 photography. Although attainment data had not yet shown a narrowing of the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students in relation to the theatre trips and director in residence, there are indications of the impact of these interventions on all students in the most recent Year 11(2016/17) unit 3 performance exams. 89% of all students achieved an A*– C grade in the unit 3 exam – the highest result in Hampstead's history. 84% of pupil premium students achieved A*–C and all pupil premium students achieved their target grade or higher.

Key learning for the future

Katy Brown, the Head of Performing Arts, urges other teachers who are interested in expanding their arts and cultural offer to engage with senior leadership and pitch ideas to support creative interventions and opportunities for pupil premium students. She feels teachers need support and confidence to write bids with a clear rationale for why they need funding. She has found that other teachers delivering creative subjects assume pupil premium would not be allocated to support their subjects and do not have an effective dialogue with their SLT on how they spend and prioritise their funding.

"From speaking to other teachers, it's the confidence to ask in the first place. Pupil premium is not just for English and Maths interventions, it's more than that. The Arts are about the whole child and this is for the children who can't access those opportunities".

**Head of Performing Arts faculty,
Hampstead School**

She feels it is also useful to gather the views from pupils to plan activities and engage young people from the inception of an intervention. Katy has found that speaking to students directly about the wider value and benefits of arts and cultural opportunities is important because students will not automatically perceive the wider potential benefits if they do not see themselves directly pursuing a creative career.

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