

AREA OF FOCUS – PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING

What is it?

Pupil Equity funding is additional funding provided directly to Scottish schools to close the poverty related attainment gap and improve outcomes for children affected by poverty.

Allocation

PEF is primarily allocated based on the number of pupils in P1-S3 who are registered for free school meals (FSM) and under national eligibility criteria. The allocation methodology uses recent census survey data to estimate the number of eligible pupils, ensuring schools can plan strategically over years. While FSM is the main factor, other factors may include clothing grant, SIMD band (quintile 1). Head teachers are also encouraged to use professional judgement and knowledge of their school community to target funding most effectively to support families. This may include Care Experienced Young People (CEYP), hidden poverty, families in challenging situations.

Whilst schools have discretion of how PEF is spent, it is additional to universal improvement plans and focused on improving outcomes for children affected by poverty.

Examples may include –

- Tailored learning interventions supporting literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- Enhanced learning experiences to ensure equitable access such as trips, residential experiences, wider achievement opportunities, extra-curricular opportunities
- Support for pupils with additional barriers, including those with additional support needs
- Support around attendance
- Engagement programmes to improve attendance, confidence and participation in school life

There is tight planning, tracking of progress and evaluation throughout the process, with all stakeholders asked for their views to ensure inclusivity and transparency.

A proportion of the PEF has to be decided through a participatory budget group of pupils. The budget group looks not only at PEF, but school devolved spending (such as school books), school fund spending (such as theatre in-house trip, sports spending, expressive arts related spends, resources), charity focus for each year (one local, one national generally), playground spending, any grants, etc. The PB group are a key group for our school and can have a significant impact on change. An example is that following one meeting, we now fund residential experiences for families with twins.

West Lothian use a PEF planning format for this that we can share with you. There is a parent friendly visual shared each year.

What does this look like at Williamston PS?

- Williamston receives £15,925 per annum
- There is a small proportion used for Central Support for the administration of PEF, evaluation and reporting.
- Last year £477.75 was allocated to participatory budgeting (PB). The pupils continued to choose that these funds went towards all P7s having an opportunity for a residential. We continue to fund more from school funds than PB covers.
- We do not cover any staffing costs using this allocation.

How do we use it?

Share an example of the PEF plan – what this looks like in practice

This is simplified into a visual that is shared with all parents each year on the website and through the app. It is part of our SIP.

- ✓ Tailored learning interventions supporting -
LITERACY, NUMERACY AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING. THIS INCLUDES CHALLENGE GROUPS
- ✓ Enhanced learning experiences to ensure equitable access such as -
TRIPS, RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCES, WIDER ACHIEVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES, VIP INVITATION TO EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES, COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY RELATED ACTIVITIES. AS A SCHOOL, WE MADE THE DECISION TO SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES WITH TWINS
- ✓ Engagement programmes to improve attendance, confidence and participation in school life –
HI5 YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
- ✓ Support for pupils with additional barriers, including those with additional support needs –
SENSORY SPACES DEVELOPED IN SCHOOL AND IN PLAYGROUND
- ✓ Support around attendance –
INDIVIDUAL TO FAMILY NEEDS

The plan is reviewed at 4 identified times throughout the academic session, but we use it regularly and review interventions as and when required.

We can use planned interventions to target other learners with similar barriers or needs that are not PEF identified learners.

We use PEF for both support and challenge groups.

Where an intervention proves to have a positive impact, we may move towards this becoming a universal approach for all learners (such as the High5 Youth Achievement Awards at P7, anything that reduces the cost of the school day for all families).