

Children, Young People and Education Committee - Follow-up questions

ERW Submission

Additional financial information:

- A breakdown by local authority of the £250,000 they are receiving in 2019-20 from their local authorities.

	19-20
LA	Amount
Powys	33,561
Ceredigion	18,691
Pembrokeshire	33,837
Carmarthenshire	53,178
Swansea	69,913
Neath Port Talbot	40,820
Grand Total	250,000

Specific groups of pupils

1. In our 2018 inquiry on the PDG and schools causing concern, we heard that schools use a number of different tracking tools to monitor pupils' progress, including 'Alps'. Do the consortia favour or promote a particular tool in their region or is there quite a lot of variation in the methods used by different schools?

ERW does not favour or promote one specific model. However, we provide financial support for the 'Alps' programme across some of the member local authorities. Those opting not to utilise this tool provide support for their schools through other strategies. We are currently reviewing these plans and evaluating the effectiveness of tools such as 'Alps.'

Our Challenge Adviser work captures both discussion and practice with regard to the role and effectiveness of tracking tools in general. This facilitates awareness and understanding of the range of models available across the Consortium.

In addition, both our ERW Head teacher Reference Board and ERW Data Group support healthy levels of sharing good practice. The current climate with regard to revised evaluation and improvement

arrangements sits very neatly with this work with all parties focused on the intelligent use of performance data in support of all learners.

2. How much progress is being made in reducing the attainment gap between pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM) and their peers in your region?

Increasing the regional focus on improving use and understanding of the PDG has been our primary focus over the last two years. We have worked to improve pupil attainment through improved teaching and learning, creating opportunities for schools and learners to undertake new professional learning, share up to date research and guidance, share effective practice, provide one to one support, facilitate school to school working and develop strategic support where necessary and possible. This work has include:

Increased understanding and awareness of the PDG:

- a new Strategic Adviser / Regional Coordinator is in place to provide direct support to schools and develop regional strategy
- extensive engagement with school leaders, local authority officers and school staff to discuss and challenge best use of grant funding and how it is being both targeted towards individuals and used to support whole school approaches to wellbeing
- engagement with clusters via attendance at Cluster meetings to ensure support and awareness raising in an ongoing manner across the region along with direct, one to one interaction with schools
- developed strong relationships with LA PDG, PDG LAC Leads and CAs to ensure understanding and knowledge of local context and key information

Increased opportunities for Professional Learning:

- new professional learning communities set up to give schools regular opportunities to share effective practice and learn from others
- regional training opportunities provided around Attachment and Trauma, Parental Engagement and improving attainment strategies from the Education Endowment Foundation
- PDG Effective Practice Network launched to provide school staff with local access to bite size sessions on specific research and what works etc.
- increased opportunities made available for 2019-20 and beyond that will include – Supporting Adopted Learners, Attachment and Trauma within the context of Curriculum

2020+, Empowering Disadvantaged Learner through Creative Learning, Designated LAC Leads Training and regional conference on supporting all learners (with specific focus around wellbeing and inclusion).

Increased opportunities for School to School working:

- numerous opportunities have been put in place for schools to learn from each other and share effective practice
- 'Peer Review' pilot set up with three Welsh medium secondary schools to explore use of the PDG grant and wellbeing provision within schools, the intention is to roll out the programme further following evaluation of the pilot and development of template documents
- support brokered for schools through CAs where appropriate (based on analyses of use of funding)

Additional funding provided to schools and clusters:

- to support specific ideas and pilot projects we have provided schools and clusters with additional funding through the PDG Ideas Fund (this was from additional money provided to the region on top of the PDG*). This has allowed schools to consider projects that could support attainment locally and allow them to pilot ideas and collaborations. Some excellent examples of spend have been witnessed including, PRU Wellbeing Conference with over two hundred PRU staff attending from across the region, projects to support literacy and numeracy, aspirational programmes and projects to support more able and talented learners and engaging external specialist organisations to support schools with specific issues and strategic priorities. Much of this work will continue to evolve and develop in support of schools' needs.

*40 schools received funding in 2018-19 with a wide range of projects delivered, including:

- Family Engagement - increased engagement with harder to reach families, direct one to one support provided for some families and increased engagement with families supporting reading and literacy programmes;
- A range of entrepreneurial projects set up in partnerships between schools. FSM pupils working directly with external artists and community leaders to produce and sell products;

- A range of literacy and numeracy programmes developed and delivered with improvements seen across the schools and clusters;
- Professional Learning events developed and delivered – improving and increasing staff awareness around trauma and attachment, resilience and strategies for improving pupil wellbeing;
- New projects such as ‘Empathy Lab’ introduced to schools supporting increased engagement around reading;
- Pupil enrichment and aspiration programmes developed and delivered across numerous schools across the region, offering FSM pupils the opportunity to undertake new and exciting activities;
- Implementation of a Restorative Practice pilot;
- Schools utilising the money to develop pupil wellbeing through activities such as yoga and mindfulness in the classroom. Schools report clear improvements in behaviour and engagement from pupils as a result of this work.

3. How much of a role do the consortia have in supporting minority ethnic pupils and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners? How has the approach changed in recent years? Is this work led by a lead authority in the region rather the consortium?

As noted within our submission, WG grant funding in support of these specific pupils is provided directly to local authorities. The six local authorities undertake this work within their individual LA. Each local authority has continued to deploy varying levels of resource based on their individual context in the most beneficial and productive manner. Their strategies to ensure progress and achievement for these pupils include:

- Utilisation of funding to provide centrally based staff and school-cluster based models along with material resources for schools
- Engagement with the Language Acquisition model
- Provision of guidance, policy documentation and materials electronically to support school provision
- Enhancing training for schools to engender greater self-sustainability and impact
- Analysis of survey data to identify specific needs and appropriate targeting of resources
- Securing participation and representation within key groups e.g. Youth Council
- Consultation with pupils to glean their ‘voice’ with an emphasis on ‘learning styles’

- Strengthening awareness and understanding of cultures and expectations through training, workshops and partnership activities

Several local authorities are reviewing their practice and delivery service models to ensure longer term effectiveness and sustainability.

The work of Challenge Advisers across our region focuses on pupil provision, progress and achievement. This work understandably encompasses discussion with school leaders with regard to the progress and outcomes of various groups of learners.

All of work as Consortia on supporting effective pedagogy and leadership ensures an ongoing emphasis on awareness of the needs of all learners within wholly inclusive schools.