

# **THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND**

## **Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)**

### **Interim Advice to EIS Local Association Secretaries and School Representatives**

This interim advice paper comprises the key details from the Scottish Government's Draft National Operating Guidance on the Pupil Equity Fund, published in February 2017, with accompanying EIS advice.

The Scottish Government has indicated that the National Operating Guidance will be finalised at the end of March 2017, following which the EIS will finalise its advice on PEF for Local Association Secretaries and School Reps.

#### **What is PEF?**

- Announced 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017, PEF is additional funding allocated by the Scottish Government, directly to schools, and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- Part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge programme from 2017-18
- Forms part of the £750m Attainment Scotland Fund.
- PEF draft national guidance issued to help schools plan how they will most effectively invest their PEF allocation.
- Local authorities will issue complementary guidance about how the funding will operate locally.

#### **How much is it and how will it be allocated?**

- £1200 per child in Primary 1 to S3 eligible and registered for free school meals.
- Funding allocation will be calculated using the most recent Healthy Living Survey and Pupil Census data relating to free school meal entitlement in Primary, Secondary and Special schools. (This method will be kept under review as efforts are made to improve the quality of data used to identify children living in households affected by poverty.)
- Funding for 2017-18 will be paid directly to local authorities via a ring-fenced grant.
- Individual school allocations will be clearly identified by Scottish Government.

#### **How can PEF be used and who will decide how it is spent?**

- Should be focused on activities and interventions designed to realise improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.
- Although allocated on the basis of FME, Scottish Government has indicated that Headteachers have discretion to make decisions about which children and young people will be included in any intervention focused on equity.
- Family learning and transitions are areas that might be the focus of additional interventions.

- An online framework 'Interventions for Equity' has been developed which provides examples of relevant interventions though not an exhaustive list.
- Interventions should be considered within the school improvement planning cycle.

### **EIS Advice**

Initial Scottish Government press releases stated that the additional funds would be 'spent at the discretion of teachers and school leaders to close the poverty related attainment gap in their schools'. This message was echoed during various Headteacher briefing events.

Subsequent draft guidance has stated that Headteachers can work at an individual school and local community level, or collegiately in wider school clusters and beyond at local authority level to address common interests.

The EIS expectation is that Headteachers will work collegiately at school, school cluster and at local authority level.

Teachers at local level must be involved in identifying the children and young people in the school who are affected by poverty; their needs with regards to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing; and in decision-making around the nature and scope of the interventions designed to address these needs, taking account of school Working Time Agreements.

Consideration should be given within such discussion as to how targeted support for individuals and groups of children can be achieved without stigmatisation of the children and young people whose progress is affected by poverty.

**Time must be factored in to WTAs to allow for all such collegiate discussion to take place.**

### **Key Principles of Scottish Government Guidance**

- Headteachers must have access to the full amount of the allocated PEF.
- PEF must enable schools to deliver activities, interventions or resources which are clearly additional to those which were already planned.

### **EIS Advice**

Under no circumstances should PEF be allocated in such a way as to enable savings from other budget streams to be made.

Any incidence of this at school or school cluster level should be reported to the Local Association Secretary immediately.

- Headteachers should work in partnership with each other, and their local authority, to agree the use of the funding. Schools must take account of the statutory responsibilities of the authority to deliver educational improvement, secure best value, and the authority's role as employer. Local Guidance will set out more detail on how this will operate.

### **EIS Advice**

The EIS view is that teachers both within and across establishments must be involved in collegiate decision-making with regards to how the funding is spent. This is in the spirit of the Scottish Government's original announcement of the funding and subsequent briefings to Headteachers.

- Operation of PEF should articulate as closely to existing planning and reporting procedures as possible – e.g. through School Improvement Planning and Standards and Qualities reports.

### **EIS Advice**

The EIS is clear that there is no room within the system for additional layers of bureaucracy and that both teachers and Headteachers require protection from additional workload that may emanate from the management of PEF at school level.

Administration of funding streams should be possible within existing local authority mechanisms, thereby minimising additional administrative burdens for schools/

- Parents and carers, children and young people and other key stakeholders should be involved in the planning process.

### **EIS Advice**

Time for meaningful engagement with parents and carers, children and young people must have allocation of time from the WTA.

- Funding must provide targeted support for children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. Although the Pupil Equity Funding is allocated on the basis of free school meal eligibility, Headteachers can use their professional judgement to bring additional children in to the targeted interventions.

### **EIS Advice**

As mentioned previously, the EIS view is that teachers' professional judgement is also key to this decision-making. Decisions about which children will be supported by interventions must be made collegiately.

- Headteachers must base their use of the funding on a clear contextual analysis which identifies the poverty related attainment gap in their schools and plans must be grounded in evidence of what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty.

- Schools must have plans in place at the outset to evaluate the impact of the funding.

### **EIS Advice**

Headteachers and teachers may require professional learning in data gathering and analysis to enable clear, contextual analysis of the poverty-related achievement gap and evidence-based evaluation of what interventions are effective in reducing it.

### **Equalities**

Evidence shows that some children and young people from equalities groups are disproportionately affected by deprivation and can therefore face significant additional barriers to learning. Education authorities have responsibilities to actively address inequality. In this context, headteachers should promote equity by taking into account equality groups when planning support and interventions. Funding should not be used in ways that stigmatise children and young people or their parents.

### **EIS advice**

Teachers at school and cluster level should be involved in discussions around which children and young people should be the focus of additional interventions and on how their needs in relation to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing can best be met. In doing so, the following should be kept in mind.

Many children and young people share characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act (2010). The protected characteristics for the schools provisions of the Act are: **disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.**

The single public sector equality duty requires public authorities to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- **Advance equality of opportunity between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not**
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimization of those who share protected characteristics
- Foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

Having 'due regard' to the need to advance equality of opportunity is defined further in the Equality Act 2010 as having due regard to the need **to remove or minimise disadvantage; take steps to meet different needs; and encourage participation when it is disproportionately low.**

Examples of ways in which children and young people from protected groups may be disproportionately affected by deprivation are young people with additional support needs arising from a disability being 40% more likely to be living in poverty than their non-disabled peers; and children from immigrant communities whose parents are more likely to be living on low income and who have English as an additional language.

For schools, having 'due regard' means, in particular:

When making a decision or taking an action a school must assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.

It should consider equality implications before and at the time that it develops policy and takes decisions; not as an afterthought, and it needs to keep them under review.

The equality duty has to be integrated into the carrying out of a school's functions. The analysis necessary to comply with the duty should be carried out rigorously and with an open mind – it is not a question of just ticking boxes.

Schools need to do this themselves and cannot delegate responsibility for carrying out the duty to anyone else.

## Partnerships

Parents and the local community are a valuable source of support and partnership. In many contexts schools may be able to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people by working with a range of bodies such as parent groups; parent councils; other local authority services; third sector organisations (including youth work, family learning organisations); other educational sectors; and/or centres of expertise. Understanding the needs of children and young people should help to identify appropriate areas for collaboration.

### EIS Advice

Time will be required for teachers to engage in partnership working with external bodies. Such time must be accommodated within the parameters of the 35 hour working week.

## Staffing

Where schools identify the need to recruit additional staff for an appropriate intervention or activity, they should work closely with the Local Authority (as the employer) to ensure that the job remits and specifications are clearly tied to the aims of the intervention. Headteachers need to take full account of local HR policies and procedures. Any teachers recruited will be excluded from the authority's contribution to any national teacher numbers and / or ratio commitment.

### EIS Advice

Teachers at school level must be involved in discussions as to how PEF is spent, including in instances where additional staff are to be employed. **In instances where additional teachers will be employed, the terms and conditions of such employment must be fully adherent to teachers' conditions of service as agreed by the SNCT.**

The EIS is clear that the principle of additionality applies here, also. Where a member of staff is awarded additional management time to carry out duties associated with PEF interventions and initiatives, this must be at no detriment to school staffing levels and must not result in additional workload for other members of staff in the school.

**Discussion on new roles, remits and the mechanisms for deployment should be had at the LNCT and School Reps are asked to advise their Local Association Secretary of all proposals involving additional staffing.**

## **Procurement**

Purchase of resources, equipment or services must comply with existing local authority procurement procedures. This will be particularly important when buying ICT resources (see below) or, for example, services from third sector partners. Schools should liaise with their relevant local authority finance partners to ensure compliance with procurement policies and legislation.

## **ICT**

The Pupil Equity Funding can be used to procure digital technologies, including hardware and software, when its allocation and use is particularly focused on supporting children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. The Scottish Government provides access to a range of national procurement frameworks for the purchase of digital technology products and devices, including a range of desktops, laptops and tablets. The frameworks offer a direct route to market and significant savings against RRP.

To prevent issues arising with compatibility and connectivity, schools seeking to purchase digital technology should do so in close consultation with the IT Department at their local authority.

We know that simply providing more technology does not result in improved outcomes for learners. Therefore, any deployment of technology in an educational setting should be undertaken in line with the objectives of the national Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/09/9494](http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/09/9494)

## **Support**

There is a package of support available to assist schools in planning how to use their Pupil Equity Funding. This includes:

A framework of evidenced and proven educational interventions and strategies to help tackle the poverty related attainment gap. The framework can be used by all partners and should help to inform the decisions schools make. The structure and content will be dynamic and will continue to evolve as an integral part of the National Improvement Hub, where a wide range of improvement, self-evaluation and research materials are available and where practice exemplars can be shared. Other research summaries and intervention examples will be incorporated as these become available.

This suite of materials will be developed further in the coming months as the Scottish Government works with the Education Endowment Foundation to develop a Scottish specific version of their Teaching and Learning toolkit.

A series of regional events aimed at school leaders which will take place in February 2017. Scottish Government will support locally organised events where possible.

Attainment Advisors who will be able to provide advice on a regional basis.

A dedicated Scottish Attainment Challenge community on Glow where all educators can have online discussions, ask questions, post responses, exchange ideas, access additional resource materials and share examples of practice. In addition, this secure community will be used to host regular discussions about the interventions and strategies being developed through the Pupil Equity Funding.

Access to collaboration and communication tools on Glow including Yammer, Sharepoint, Blogs and Glow TV. These tools provide great opportunities for joint working and for sharing materials across all involved in the Scottish Attainment Challenge, with the ability to control visibility where required.

School Improvement Planning guidance. This will be provided through the National Improvement Framework.

Local authorities will also offer their own packages of support for schools to help them plan how to use the funding effectively.

### **EIS Advice**

Time must be made available within WTAs for engagement with any support packages provided by the local authority.

### **Outcomes, impact and measurement**

At a school level, it is essential that teachers continue to make best use of the data they have access to locally to understand which children and young people would benefit from targeted support and to monitor and track learners' progress over time. Further guidance on the BGE assessment model was issued in November 2016.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/Interventions-for-Equity-framework.aspx> 5 <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/curriculum-for-excellence-benchmarks>

### **EIS Advice**

Teachers should continue to use make use of a wide range of assessment data relating to pupil progress.

CfE Benchmarks for English and Literacy, and Maths and Numeracy must not be used as the basis for a bureaucratic, auditing approach to BGE learning, teaching and assessment. Indeed, where schools have their own framework for supporting teacher professional judgement of learners' achievement of CfE levels, and are confident that their framework delivers at least the same function as the Benchmarks, they are not required to use Benchmarks within their daily practice.

## **Accountability and reporting**

The Headteacher will be accountable to their local authority for the use of Pupil Equity Funding within their school. To ensure transparency, schools will be expected to incorporate details of their Pupil Equity Funding plans into existing reporting processes to their Parent Council and Forum, including in their School Improvement Plans and Standards and Quality Reports. These reports should be publicly available so that parents can understand what is happening in their school. The arrangements for publication will be confirmed by your local authority.

School inspection and other review processes will be used where necessary to ensure schools use their funding appropriately. The 'How Good Is Our School? 4' includes an evaluation on the six point scale of the school's success in raising attainment and achievement and ways in which they can demonstrate improvements to equity for all learners. In addition, the operation, use and effectiveness of the Pupil Equity Funding at closing the poverty related attainment gap at a local authority level will feed into other existing quality assurance processes, such as Audit Scotland's Shared Risk Assessment.

### **EIS Advice**

The views of teachers must be reflected in the evaluations of how effective any interventions funded by PEF have been in reducing poverty-related attainment gaps.

The requisite time for evaluation and reporting of the impact of PEF funding must be allocated within WTAs.

## **Unspent funds**

Where schools are unable to spend their full allocation during the financial year, any underspent grant may be carried forward to the next financial year though it would be expected that it would normally be spent within the school year. Schools will need to liaise closely with their local authority to agree arrangements for carrying forward Pupil Equity Funding, which should be considered separately from other funding within the devolved school management budget.

### **EIS Advice**

Each school should have a committee whose role it is to discuss and agree how funding allocations are spent. Elected staff representatives should have a meaningful voice on such committees. Where they do exist, such committees must operate on a collegiate basis and comprise of both teacher and school management representation.

School finance committees must be kept fully and accurately informed of spending and carrying forward of PEF.

Members in schools which have no such committee should raise the matter with the Headteacher with a view to one being established. Advice should be sought as necessary from the Local Association Secretary.

**To summarise:**

**The advice above indicates a number of areas where additional time may be needed to assist the PEF process and School Reps should seek advice from their Local Association Secretaries on this and on any other contractual matter as necessary.**

**Posts funded through PEF should be agreed through LNCT mechanisms and will come under SNCT conditions of service. The job-sizing of promoted posts will follow SNCT rules and locally agreed protocols.**

**If any proposal appears to breach either national or local agreements, or if you or colleagues have concerns over workload implications from any proposal, please contact your Local Association Secretary.**