

Great Chart Primary School, Kent | Pupil Premium Strategy Review | 8th December 2016

Strategy

1. Great Chart Primary School has excellent outcomes for *all* learners, but particularly those from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds. The school has a ‘no excuses’ approach underpinned by compassion and understanding of the challenges some of the most vulnerable pupils face.
2. High expectations are evident in every aspect of school life. Teachers and leaders consistently talk about *accelerated progress* to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve at *greater depth* at the end of key stages. The ambition for pupils is never the minimum.
3. The school’s Pupil Premium statement exemplifies a strategy that is very well led. It is evidence based, focused on:
 - Relentlessly high quality teaching
 - Professional learning
 - Subject knowledge
 - Personalised learning strategies
 - Consistency, monitoring and evaluation.
4. This strategy is underpinned by good communication and strong relationships between adults. There is a collective vision for disadvantaged pupils across the school.

School Culture and Ethos

5. Teachers and leaders have a strong commitment to knowing pupils and their families well. Staff use positive language when discussing disadvantaged families who struggle to engage with school. There is a consistent understanding of the barriers to learning and the profile of the pupil population, particularly where pupils have multiple barriers.
6. Support for pupil emotional wellbeing is evidence based, with the school adopting a ‘tag team’ approach to avoid individual pupils becoming dependent on individual adults.
7. Where appropriate, the school does not hesitate to draw in outside expertise to develop professional learning, or to directly meet the needs of pupils (for example, with the use of trained counsellors from Barnardo’s).
8. The school’s culture and ethos work well in helping staff support disadvantaged pupils. Communication is good and adults feel valued. Staff do not wait for a label before taking action, rather they are confident and secure in using their professional judgement.

Teachers and other staff are supportive of each other. Teaching Assistants have paid non-contact time to work effectively with teachers.

9. There is a collective ambition for success for all pupils from all staff. The success of one pupil during the visit was greeted with enthusiasm across the school community. In classrooms, adults and pupils model the process of learning well.
10. Governance of the Pupil Premium is good. There is an excellent understanding of the school's strategy and how effectively it is being implemented. There is a strong understanding that success for disadvantaged pupils goes beyond just academic attainment, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils.

Teaching and Learning

11. Where necessary, leaders have moved quickly to address any concerns in teaching quality.
12. There is a strong focus on the importance of Subject Knowledge at the school. High quality teaching strategies are understood and communicated to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils.
13. There is a strong investment in time and professional development to help teachers support the needs of disadvantaged pupils. The 'mop up' pre and post teaching approach improves outcomes and also builds even greater teacher expertise. Teachers and middle leaders frequently referred to the importance of 'more disadvantaged pupils working at greater depth'. There was no sense that the minimum was acceptable, whether in conversations, classrooms or books.
14. Whilst the culture of sharing and collaboration is strong, there is also a clear understanding of the importance of monitoring, evaluation and internal quality assurance through book scrutiny, learning walks, curriculum discussions, pupil voice and more. The 'transition' Pupil Progress meetings exemplify this well: where (for example) the future Year 4 teach attends the final current Year 3 pupil progress meeting, getting to know and understand pupil needs, what has worked well and what has been a challenge.
15. Pupils are very proud of their work. There are high expectations in the use of language, both in English and Maths.

Areas for development

16. The school has identified that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils remains a challenge. During the review we discussed the importance of separating any persistent absence due to ill health when determining strategies to improve attendance and punctuality. Strategies must focus on barriers to attendance.

17. A greater focus should be placed on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in foundation subjects. This will help build cultural literacy and children's readiness for the secondary curriculum. If necessary, subject leadership time to improve outcomes should be funded with Pupil Premium.
18. Invest in whole school Attachment Aware training so staff can even better understand the barriers to learning some pupils at the school face.
19. More can be done to build better understanding of the quality and quantity of Early Years provision disadvantaged pupils access prior to joining Great Chart Primary School. This will help learners make even better progress in Year R, and (in the longer term) enable the school to influence Early Years settings in adopting evidence based practice.
20. Building on existing networks the school could share its excellent work on tackling educational disadvantage more widely. The school should enter the 2016/17 Pupil Premium awards. External interest and feedback will further improve learning for disadvantaged pupils.

Marc Rowland, December 2016