Poverty Proofing the School Day
Action Plan & Report

Adswood Primary School

29th April 2019

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Poverty Proofing the School Day

"This appalling gap between the life chances of poor children and the rest is a scar on the face of English education."

"No school, however impressive, can be an "Outstanding School" if it is not achieving excellence for its most disadvantaged pupils."

Schools Minister, The Rt Hon David Laws MP, ATL Conference, 25th March 2013

"Our defining challenge in Britain is to level up opportunity; making sure that all young people get every chance to go as far as their talents will take them."

Secretary of State for Education, The Rt Hon Justine Greening, MP, Education at the Core of Social Mobility Speech, 19th January 2017

What is Poverty Proofing the School Day?

We live in a time where there are real concerns about the impact of poverty and inequality in our society. In one of the richest countries in the world, the numbers of children living in poverty are predicted to hit 5.2 million by 2022.[i]

And yet we hope – perhaps even expect – our schools to be able to address or compensate for this situation. We aim to improve social mobility, but the link between being poor in childhood and being poor in adult life is stronger now than at any time since the 1970s. Research overwhelmingly shows that there is a significant gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, at every stage of their education. At the end of Primary School poor pupils are eight months behind their peers in reading, writing and maths.[ii] Students eligible for Free School Meals are half as likely to achieve a good pass at GCSE in English and Maths in comparison to other students.[iii] The Education Policy Institute has recently reported that at the current rate of progress it will be 2155 before the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is eradicated.[iv]

The unequal outcomes of English education reflect, to a large extent, the unequal outcomes in our society, but we still expect schools to 'close the attainment gap'. Schools have been given the Pupil Premium to target support to children and young people in order to improve

outcomes. Schools are free to spend the funding in the best interests of children, but will be judged and held accountable for closing the gap. This is an increasing Ofsted priority. The latest handbook states that Leadership and Management will be graded 'Outstanding' if:

> '*Leaders and governors focus on consistently improving outcomes for all pupils, but especially for disadvantaged pupils. They are uncompromising in their ambition.*'[v]

So can education compensate for society? If we have low expectations of children from disadvantaged backgrounds our education system is likely to continue to produce and reproduce a highly unequal society. We know that there is a stigma and shame attached to poverty, with people in receipt of benefits being portrayed as 'scroungers' or 'shirkers'. But if we can ensure justice and fairness in schools, we can begin to move towards a more just and fair society. If we can ensure that policy and practice in schools do not repeat the same mistakes that are made outside the school gates, we can begin to build a society that is more inclusive and less discriminatory.

Schools do not have to mirror the society in which they are situated and, one might argue, should 'aspire' to achieve a lot more than this.

Poverty Proofing the School Day was developed by children, young people and teachers and is built on the following guiding principle

> *All activity and planned activity in schools should not identify, exclude, treat differently or make assumptions about those children whose household income or resources are lower than others.*

Poverty Proofing the School Day aims to support schools to identify and overcome the barriers to learning faced by children and young people from families with fewer financial resources. This action plan sets out measures that the school can take to reduce the stigma and discrimination pupils face.

What do we mean by Poverty?

A widely used definition of poverty is

'Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities, and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary patterns, customs and activities.'[vi]
Peter Townsend

According to government statistics, there are approximately 4.1 million children living in poverty in the UK today, and this is around 30% of all children in the United Kingdom.[vii] In the North East, 33% of all children in the region are living in poverty.[viii]

Poverty means that children – and their parents – have to go without things that other families take for granted. For example, 55% of workers surveyed stated that they have had to decline a social invitation due to a lack of money, and 30% has walked to work as they could not afford the travel fare.[ix] Parents – especially mums – often make sacrifices to protect their children from the effects of poverty, and more than a quarter of adults cannot afford to replace and repair broken and electrical items[x]. Furthermore, 23% of parents with children under eighteen reported to skipping meals in order to make ends meet and feed their children.[xi] The number of people accessing food banks has substantially increased in recent years with more than 1.3 million emergency food parcels being distributed by the Trussell Trust in the 12 months prior to March 2018, of which more than 400,000 were provided for children.[xii]

67% of children living in poverty live in a household where at least one parent works.[xiii] This is because low paid jobs, such as those on the minimum wage, part time, or temporary contracts, are often not enough to provide a sufficient income.

Within schools poverty is often equated with children and young people in receipt of Free School Meals. For the purpose of this project the definition is much broader than that. We already know that many children and young people living in low income households are not entitled to free school meals, yet are experiencing poverty. Each individual school also has a different set of circumstances, or additional factors to consider such as ethnicity and rurality.

Effects

Child poverty can have devastating effects for children (not just in their childhood but in their adult life as well), their families and for society more generally.

- The impact on children's lives of chronic illnesses, such as asthma, seems to be greater among poor children. Poor children are more likely to experience hospital admission.[xiv] In England's most deprived areas, 40% of children are overweight or obese compared to 27% in the most affluent areas.[xv] Research has shown that poverty also has a significant impact on life expectancy[xvi] and infant mortality levels in deprived areas are twice as high as in more affluent areas.[xvii]

- There is an 'attainment gap' between pupils who receive Free School Meals and those pupils that don't receive FSM. In 2017 68% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals reached the required standard for the phonics check compared to 83% of non-Free School Meals pupils.[xviii] Furthermore, in 2017 48% of pupils in Key Stage Two who were eligible for eligible Pupil Premium achieved the expected standard in reading writing and maths, compared to 67% of non-Pupil Premium students- a gap of 19%.[xix]

- The attainment gap persists for pupils throughout secondary school. In 2016 the average attainment 8 score of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium was 37, compared to an average score of 49.8 for pupils not eligible for Pupil Premium.[xx] 24.5% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals achieved a pass (grades 9-5) in Maths and English in comparison to 49.4% of non-Pupil Premium students. Progress 8 scores were also significantly lower for pupils eligible for both Pupil Premium and Free School Meals.[xxi]

- Students eligible for Free School Meals in Year Eleven are more likely to be either temporarily or permanently excluded from school than they are to achieve the English Baccalaureate.[xxii] In general, the poorest students are four times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than their peers.[xxiii]

- A recent study showed that students eligible for Free School Meals in Year Eleven were three times more likely to claim out-of-work benefits at ages twenty-seven, nine years after leaving school, than those who were not in receipt of Free School Meals.[xxiv] Disadvantaged students are six times more likely to be NEET (Not in educational, employment or training) at aged sixteen than other students.[xxv]

- Children who live in poverty are more likely to live in bad housing. They are a third more likely to suffer respiratory problems such as chest problems, breathing difficulties, asthma, and bronchitis than other children. Overcrowding and spells living in temporary accommodation also affect children growing up in poverty.[xxvi]

- There is a strong stigma attached to living in poverty and poor children are often bullied at school.[xxvii] Not wanting to appear poor means that a lot of children who are entitled to Free School Meals don't actually take them and poor families will often go without other items to protect their children from this stigma.[xxviii]

- Only one in eight children from low income backgrounds will become a 'high earner' when they are adults.[xxix] The UK has very low 'social mobility' which is sometimes expressed as 'poor children grow up to be poor adults'.

- It has been estimated that 20% of the nation's schools budget is spent on tackling issues associated with poverty.[xxx]

[i] Institute for Fiscal Studies (2017) *Living standards, poverty and inequality in the UK: 2017–18 to 2021–22.* [online] Available at: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/comms/R136.pdf> [Last accessed 04/09/2018]

[ii] Fair Education Alliance (2018) *Report Card 2018* [online] Available at: < https://static1.squarespace.com/static/543e665de4b0fbb2b140b291/t/5b8928a10e2e728743b52f37/1535715549432/report_card_2018_FINAL_Aug-31b.pdf> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[iii] Ibid.

[iv] Education Policy Institute (2018) *Education in England: Annual Report 2018* [online] Available at: <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/annual-report-2018> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[v] Ofsted (2018) *School inspection handbook* [online] Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/730127/School_inspection_handbook_section_5_270718.pdf> [Last accessed 06/09/2018], p. 46.

[vi] Townsend, Peter (1979) *Poverty in the United Kingdom*. [online] Available at: <http://www.poverty.ac.uk/free-resources-books/poverty-united-kingdom> [Last accessed 16/06/2017] p.31.

[vii] Department for Work and Pensions (2017) *Households below average income: an analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 to 2016/17*. [online] Available at:<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201617> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[viii] Ibid

[ix] Survation, on behalf of the Living Wage Foundation (2017) *Life on Low Pay Poll* [online] Available at: <https://survation.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Final-LWF-Life-on-Low-Pay-Tables-1c0d1h6-040617LMCH.pdf> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

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[xi] Sustain (2018) *1 in 4 UK parents skipping meals due to lack of money* [online] Available at: <https://www.sustainweb.org/news/jan18_calls_grow_for_government_food_insecurity_measurement/> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[xii] Trussell Trust (2018) *End of year stats.* [online] Available at <https://www.trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats/end-year-stats> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[xiii] Department for Work and Pensions, *Households below average income* (note vii).

[xiv] Nuffield Trust (2017) Admissions of inequality: emergency hospital use for children and young people [online] Available at: <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/files/2017-12/nt-admissions-of-inequality-web.pdf> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[xv] Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2017) *State of Child Health*. [online] Available at: <http://www.rcpch.ac.uk/state-of-child-health> [Last accessed 04/09/2018]

[xvi] Office for National Statistics (2015) *Life Expectancy at Birth and at Age 65 by Local Areas in England and Wales: 2012 to 2014* [online] Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/lifeexpectancies/bulletins/lifeexpectancyatbirthandatage65bylocalareasinenglandandwales/2015-11-04> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[xvii] Office for National Statistics (2016) *Child mortality in England and Wales: 2016* [online] Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/childhoodinfantandperinatalmortalityinenglandandwales/2016> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

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[xxi] Ibid.

[xxii] Teach First (2018) *Disadvantaged pupils 'more likely to be excluded than to achieve the EBacc'* [online] Available at: <https://www.teachfirst.org.uk/press-release/disadvantaged-pupils-more-likely-be-excluded-achieve-ebacc> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

[xxiii] Fair Education Alliance, *Report Card 2018* (note ii)

[xxiv] Department for Education (2018) *Outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals and identified with special educational needs* [online] Available at:

,https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/730977/FSM_and_S END_outcomes-statistics.pdf. [Last accessed 07/09/2018]

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[xxvi] NatSen Social Research (2013) *People Living in Bad Housing: Numbers and Health Impacts*. [online] Available at: <https://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/726166/People_living_in_bad_housing.pdf> [Last accessed 16/06/2017]

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[xxix] Social Mobility Commission (2016) *State of the nation 2016: social mobility in Great Britain*. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2016> [Last accessed 04/09/2018]

[xxx] Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2016) *Counting the cost of UK poverty* [online] Available at: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/counting-cost-uk-poverty> [Last accessed 06/09/2018]

How was the project carried out?

Children & Young People's Experiences

A member of staff interviewed all of the children in each year group and explored what is poverty in a UK context; do they know who experiences poverty in their school? And if so how do they know? The researcher examined the school day from start to finish unpicking all policies and practices within their school. They also attended after school clubs and had lunch with pupils. See findings below for more detailed analysis of the students' responses.

Parents' Experiences

All parents were given a short questionnaire to complete anonymously and return to school. There was a limited response to the parent questionnaires however some valuable input. We also spoke to a number of individual parents and carers before and after school. A researcher asked questions to better understand how families experience poverty and how well the school is able to support them. We looked for examples of what was working and potential areas for improvements.

Staff Experiences

All staff were invited to share their views and experiences of the school - looking at the impact of poverty, the support available, and any issues that the school struggles with. We also spoke to staff informally throughout the course of the audit and visited various classrooms. 17 members of staff completed the online / paper questionnaire.

Governor Experiences

Governors were also invited to share their views of the impact of the cost of the school day, their awareness around the support available and their awareness of the pupil premium spend. 4 Governors completed the online / paper questionnaire

How to read the findings?

Everyone gave their views anonymously. The findings represent a summary of what people told us. We have highlighted things that the school is doing well and should be continued as well as exploring areas that people raised as a concern. All of the points raised in the action plan are practical steps that the school can take to reduce the stigma and discrimination that pupils and families from poorer backgrounds may inadvertently face.

Timescales & reporting impact

Some of the actions can be taken with immediate effect with little or no impact on time and resources. Some will require further investigation and thought about the best way to implement them. Children North East will be able to offer support and ideas to the school in drawing up an action plan. We recommend that senior leaders including the governing body agree a timescale for completion.

Findings

A report on all of the collected findings following an audit on the school day.

Behaviour, Rewards and Attendance

We explored whether children from poorer backgrounds were rewarded or punished differently from other children. We looked at the consistency of the delivery of the rewards and sanctions system and how this impacted on pupils' experience of the school day. We investigated how the school supported pupils who are struggling with attendance and how pupils perceived the attendance policy.

What works?

Children across the school were able to talk about the behaviour rewards and sanctions with a good understanding that showed there was consistency. They all talked about the code of conduct and were able to explain a good understanding of what it meant "to be safe; "to be responsible" and "to be respectful". Children were able to say who / where they would go if they needed help when behaviour caused fights/ upset / hurt.

Mindspace is used effectively with children talking about having a short visit which helps them calm and settle and then return to class and go back to learning.

Observation of the process at the beginning of the day show that the staff team work together to ensure that all children receive a warm welcome regardless of the time they arrive. A smooth registration and "check-in" process happens that enables children to get to class quickly with a positive start. Colleagues throughout school use this time effectively to be aware of children who may be struggling and who need additional support during the day.

Whilst children experience and express challenging behaviour the school has implemented a range of additional adults, resources and space that support children. This ensures that children's expressive behaviour does not impact on the ability of other children to access learning.
"now they talk to Miss Smart and sometimes that helps"

"You come in with your mum"

"Good, now that parents know- they have to have a meeting – they see the red dojos"

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
1.	Some children talked about lunchtime and shared that some of the adults go to red dojo quickly, however some children commented that warnings were given before red dojos and lunchtime was the same as in class.	Pupil - "it happens less because Y5+6 go out at different times – we have dojos and parents get called in" "the dinner ladies don't really sort it out" "sometimes they have favourites" " they say stop but the people just come back to wind you up when the dinner ladies aren't looking"	School could consider developing the work already undertaken to improve lunchtime for children by working with lunchtime staff to review how they respond to children / how children respond to them.	
2.	Every week in assembly the attendance of each class is read aloud. The class with the highest attendance is rewarded with a flag and extra play. Some children said that if they are off school other children in the class talk to them about it if it means that they miss out on this reward.	"It's not really your fault if you are ill so that doesn't help" "You don't want other people to catch your ill" "If you have been sick school says you have to stay off two days"	Consider if whole class attendance rewards are the most effective way to support pupils who have attendance issues.	
3.	Pupils talked about the rewards for 100% attendance with mixed responses particularly if they have been ill. Some children are not motivated by the 100% attendance reward as this is seen to be unachievable.		Consider a lottery style process whereby all names that get over 96% are entered into a prize draw. This also allows for individuals to be put in where they have shown great improvement. A random prize draw is a great way of rewarding attendance as it does not draw attention to	

		individual pupils who may be struggling with attendance. Discuss with children/ parents how tweaks to attendance rewards may help to encourage those with low attendance.	
4.	Children shared that teachers ask about their absence when they return to school but only as they need a reason. This is done when taking the register in the presence of their peers.	**"they comment but only asking if you are ok"** **"sometimes you have to revisit work that you missed"**	Discuss with staff how they should support pupils who are struggling with attendance. Ensure that discussions about reasons for absence do not take place in the presence of other pupils as some children may not feel comfortable sharing this with their peers.	

Bullying

We explored pupils' understanding of bullying as well as whether or not bullying as a result of poverty took place within the school and if so how this was handled.

What works?

Children talk confidently about the various types of bullying and have a good understanding of how they are supported to address any incidences.

The children overwhelmingly talked about positive experiences around how the school is aware of and addresses bullying. **"If I saw it I would make sure that they are ok – then I would tell a teacher", "they help us help each other", "It does sometimes happen – but we go to a teacher", "you can have a meeting with the RA team", "We have no bullying", "We used to have lots but there is not that much right now", "Teachers help".**

The children were able to name a long list of adults who they can go to for help. They **"get right into what started the fight so it gets sorted"; "they help you reflect on how it makes others feel and we are asked to say sorry".** Alongside the wider staff team this work ensures children feel safe in school. In response to the question do people call each other names/ use unkind language a child shared - **"a few years back it used to happen but it doesn't so much now because everyone is open to the differences in people" "the inclusion team help us sort out arguments and fights"**

There are displays around school sharing the school's expectations with regards their behaviour towards each other and much work is done to recognise children's differences, whilst acknowledging each other's unique and valued place in the school community. This was reinforced through the choice of song in Monday's assembly and the way all children engaged with singing and signing throughout the song.

Children talk confidently about anti-bullying week; assemblies and class based work that ensures that they have a good understanding of bullying, including cyber and online bullying.

Barriers to Learning:

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
5.	Some children commented on how some children behaved.	Pupil - "People call each other names some of the time" "They sometimes use unkind language" "I know the school are aware and trying to stop it but it's difficult to know what can happen if a child really doesn't want to stop."	Continue with the programme of work that school are currently undertaking to enable children, parents and carers to share when they have experienced negative behaviour/ bullying.	
6.	Some children experience negative behaviour at lunchtimes.	"Older children sometimes pick on younger children" "Boys make fun of girls who want to play football" "I gave up football because of it" "I got intimidated"	School could consider developing the work already undertaken to improve lunchtime for children by working with lunchtime staff to review how they respond to children / how children respond to them/ how children respond to each other. School could consider work to address gender bias in Football – The successful National Women's Super League/ FA Cup with teams at Man City and Man United and England playing in the World Cup this summer can provide opportunities to promote football/ sport for girls.	
7.	Pupils said that bullying takes place based on material possessions such as shoes and often happens on non – uniform days.	"Look at what you are wearing" "Look in the mirror and see how horrible you are"	Raise awareness around material possessions and explore the impact of poverty within PSHE lessons.	

This was balanced with positive comments about the way school uniform meant children were the same.	**"look at that shirt its babyish"** **"I saw that some people make fun of other children who wear scarfs"** **"my school pants don't fit so I wear these"** **"people in class make fun about my clothes and shoes – it makes me sad and angry"** **"…because everyone wears the same uniform – that stops you being picked on for the clothes that you wear."**	Children North East will be able to provide you with a lesson plan on material possessions. Consider the use of non-uniform days and the impact they have on some children.	

Celebrations

We explored how occasions such as holidays, birthdays and Christmas are celebrated in school. We also looked at how key events within the school calendar are marked, exploring whether there were any barriers for poorer pupils.

What works?

Children in year 6 shared that they are given Leavers hoodies at the end of the year and this is a gift so there is no additional expense for families.

Children shared that we sing Happy Birthday in French/ sign language during assembly – this is a consistent way to celebrate Birthdays and does not require families to spend any money or bring in items from home to take part.

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
8.	Some children shared that when they return to school after holidays some adults ask them to share with the class where they have been and what they have done including discussions around Christmas presents. Some children shared that this was on a one to one basis and some shared that this was during circle time or during the register, so in front of the class. This highlights financial differences between families.	Pupil - "we were asked to share about our holiday" "because I didn't go anywhere I shared that I have spent time with my family" "we speaked about what we did – where we went on holiday – how we travelled" "they don't ask everyone – just as part of the	There is some inconsistency in practice. As a staff team discuss the impact for children in poverty and use the strength in practise to support colleagues across school. It may be appropriate to compose a set of questions which can be used as part of whole class discussions but which do not highlight financial inequalities between children and families. Instead of asking 'What did you do during the holidays?'	

		conversation when you go into class" "you can keep it to yourself" "we don't do any writing about that"	teachers could ask 'Who did you spend time with?' Staff may also consider the approach they use when asking questions about home - Could these discussions take place on a one-to-one basis between pupils and staff rather than with the whole class?	
9.	When it is a pupil's birthday children often bring in cakes and sweets to share with the class- this is not done by all families and children didn't appear to be upset by this	"we can bring in sweets" "we get to give sweets out at the end of the day"	You may consider whether to discourage pupils from bringing in birthday cakes and sweets by deciding upon a consistent whole school approach to the celebration of birthdays. Some schools have curtailed the bringing in of sweets and cakes by explaining to parents that they are not permitted as they contradict healthy eating policies and may pose problems for pupils with allergies.	
10.	Pupils are currently allowed to hand out party invitations to their peers in school. Pupils discussed that often not everyone in the class is invited to the party and this can make some pupils feel left out or excluded.	"sometimes people get upset at not being invited" "you can give them out at break or dinner or the end of the day" "sometimes I don't get invited – it makes me sad"	Agree a consistent approach to distributing party invitations in school that do not involve children handing out the invitations in front of the whole class.	

11.	Some pupils bring in gift for staff at the end of the year and at Christmas. There was a mixed response with some children feel under pressure to bring in gifts for their teachers, whilst some happy to share that they didn't.	**"You can choose to bring presents but you are not asked to"** **Some children bring flowers/ chocolates"** **"Loads of stuff"** **"we know who hasn't brought in something but it doesn't matter"** **"I don't give presents – its ok not to"**	Consider other ways that children can show their appreciation to their teacher rather than bringing in gifts. Families could be asked to make a donation to the foodbank rather than bring in a gift for their teacher with donations collected in a central area in school so that pupils cannot identify who brings in donations. Alternatively all pupils could be provided with time and resources to make their teacher a card or write a letter of appreciation.	
12.	Some staff give gifts to all of the children in their class at Christmas and at the end of the School Year. This is not done by all teachers in all classes meaning that there is an inconsistent approach.	**"When teachers leave they give us some equipment"** **"At Easter we get eggs"**	Consider adopting a whole school approach to teachers giving pupils gifts at certain times of the year such as Christmas and the end of term in order to further curtail the culture of gift giving.	
13.	The school has end of year parties.	**"At the end of year we have a class party in the hall. We wear non-uniform. You don't have to come in non-school uniform"**	Explore with pupils alternative ways of celebrating the end of the year which does not involve non-uniform or supports ways to dress up for a party; e.g. could all children make a hat (during the school day) to wear at the party.	

Charity, Fundraising and Community

We explored whether all pupils could engage within fundraising activities for the school and for charities, including the costs associated with these activities. We also looked at opportunities pupils had to engage with the wider community and whether there were any barriers to engagement for poorer pupils.

What works?

The children confidently shared the Charity Wall that displayed the small number of events that take part over the school year. The children were pleased to share a picture of children in a rural African community who were wearing their school jumpers that had been donated by the children at Adswood. Children commented about the charities that the school supported but no child shared that there was any pressure to donate.

The children talked about school discos positively – they are not very often and when they are there is no cost.

All children are involved [during the school day] in making items for the Christmas and Summer Fair so that everyone is included and feels that they have contributed in some way. **"I like buying things that other children have made – it goes to charity"**

The school has held bake sales. All children have an opportunity to bake cakes in class or with additional adults ensuring that everyone can take part.

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
14.	Pupils shared that the school sometimes has non-uniform days. There was a mixed response with some children sharing that other children commented negatively on the clothes they wore.	**Pupil - "I once forgot but it didn't matter – I didn't get into trouble – I felt a bit weird but no-one made a thing of it"**	Consider alternative fundraising activities to non-uniform day. When fundraising for charities could the focus be around raising awareness of charities and the issues that they	

		"On non-uniform day some people say about the clothes I wear so it makes me sad and angry."	tackle rather than raising money? The focus could be on campaigning rather than raising funds and then families and pupils could be directed to the relevant charities donation page if they wished, but this would prevent money from being collected in school. Alternative fundraising activities could include: bag packs, a stall selling items within the community, writing letters to local businesses. Pupils could also put on a small performance and ask for donations from the local community.	
15.	The Summer and Christmas Fair take place from 4pm to 6pm so enables families to choose whether or not they attend. Children shared that they are involved in making gifts that are sold at the Christmas fair. There are no free activities that pupils can take part in if they do not have any money on them.	**"I don't go – if you don't go it doesn't matter"**	Consider having as many free activities as there are paid activities at the Christmas and Summer fair so everyone who attends can feel the same sense of belonging. Some schools have also given children two tokens each so that they get a go on two of the stalls for free and then families pay for additional items and games. Review with children how they feel if they make things but then don't get to go to the fair.	

16.	The school has held bake sales. Children can then bring in money to buy a cake. Whilst all children have been enabled to make cakes not all children can buy a cake. This is particularly problematic for free school meal pupils as they are not able to use their free school meal allowance.		When fundraising consider how all pupils can be involved in the activities that are organised regardless of whether or not they have brought in money from home. For example when organising a cake sale, donations could be collected and then all pupils provided with a cake regardless of whether or not they have brought in money.	
17.	The school sells items on behalf of charities such as poppies for remembrance day and red noses for comic relief. Not all pupils are able to participate in these activities.	**"You go to the office to buy the poppy"** **"I didn't buy a snap band – I just bought a poppy and that's ok."**	See action 9 For example when selling poppies, donations could be collected and then all pupils provided with a poppy regardless of whether or not they have brought in money.	

Curriculum and Ability Groups

We sought to explore whether pupils from poorer backgrounds were as able to engage with all areas of the curriculum. This included looking at how ability setting was used within the school.

What works?

Children shared that the groups that they worked in were different for English, Maths and the afternoon. They didn't comment on these seats as being about ability – **"they [the teachers] pick where we work best".** Some children talked about the classroom organisation being to in a way that enabled the adults to help children. **"There is one table where some children have easier work and they get help" – "it's actually fair because they need more help", "If you ask then the adults help lots".** This suggests that the grouping enabled support to be directed where it was needed. There were no comments that suggested that this was linked with poverty.

For World Book Day an author came in and the children made a book with her – the children were very proud of this book and took me to see a copy. **"everyone got to meet her – it was the best world book week" "it's actually a good book!"**

At varying times across the school year children take part in swimming; playing a ukulele, recorder and steel pans. There is no additional cost and all children take part. **"School have ukulele and recorders for us to use." "We can practise at lunchtime"**

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
18.	Pupils are required to bring in their own bikes from home to take part in Bikeability sessions. Those that do not have bikes are not able to take part.		Explore with Bikeability providers if they could bring bikes with them. Alternatively some tips will give away recycled bikes for free, explore if this is something that could be used your School.	

Extra-Curricular

We sought to better understand how pupils with less financial resources took part in extra-curricular activities. We were trying to find out whether activities were affordable and accessible by all, and what support the school offers for poorer families.

What works?

All Clubs are free and children talked about a range of activities including sport, physical activity, art, singing, languages, with the older children sharing that they helped with clubs for the younger children. Children who take part in clubs that are physically active wear their school PE kit so there is no named sports kits being worn.

51 parents returned questionnaires and 100% felt that any costs for trips were reasonable, **"the odd trip but worth the money", contribution to school trips (occasionally) (fair to ask), "school trips which are always quite reasonable", "I think this is reasonable considering how inadequately funded they may be due to cuts", "all at reasonable costs", "yes I think it's reasonable" and "I think the school offer very reasonable".** On average 63 children attend Breakfast Club. 37 of these children are eligible for pupil premium funding. This is 59% and above the school PP figure of 47%.

Letters sent home about trips sometimes require parents to pay, however letters clearly show that this is a voluntary contribution. Children shared that everyone went on the trips. Newsletters go out at the start of each half- term to highlight the activities taking place and individual letters are sent out for trips. There was no feedback from parents to say whether they were pleased with / unhappy with the length of time between receiving a letter and needing to return to school. The year 6 residential was discussed with parents when the children were in year 5 and there is a payment scheme to support payment throughout the year. The school currently subsidise £100 per pupil. **"it's the only trip we pay for"**

In addition to learning an instrument as part of the curriculum, 54 children [44 being eligible for pupil premium] have music tuition. **"School have ukulele and recorders for us to use." "We can practise at lunchtime"**

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
19.	Despite the school's provision being free Pupil Premium attendance at clubs is currently low in comparison to the school's overall Pupil Premium percentage. There are 162 PP children in the school, this is 46.6% of the whole school. During the spring term 73 children attended after school clubs. 12 of these children are eligible for pupil premium funding, this is 16%.	Parent – "… they no longer offer after school club which was reasonable for families on low income" "There is no after school club for working parents. I would happily pay £5 – 10 a session." "Create some sort of after school club at a reasonable price" "after school club offer"	Some of these comments refer to an after school provision rather than clubs. The school could consider further parent voice/ pupil voice to ascertain what the reason behind this could be and consider The PE and Sport Premium Funding is £16,000 +£10 per pupil. School could consider using Stockport SHAPES alliance which offer a range of services to develop a high quality PE provision across the school, including after school festivals and inter-school competitions.	

Food

The way in which Free School Meals are administered often reveals to pupils who is poor in their school. We explored how this sensitive issue was handled, how packed lunches were administered, how debt was tackled as well as the quality of the lunchtime experience for pupils.

What works?

Children were not able to identify who had a Free School Meals and the school work closely with the cook [Dolce] to ensure that children were not aware if there was any debt. Families at Adswood pay for school lunches through an online payment system. This system of money collection is positive as it means that children do not hand over money in class. The school also collects money at the office for those families who still prefer to pay with cash.

You appear to have considered how milk is distributed. The children commented that they were able to get milk at lunchtime so that all pupils who would like to have milk are able to access it. **"you can get milk and water at lunchtime"**

All children were able to have a bagel at the start of the day and breakfast club is £1, which was commented on by a number of parents as being very reasonable. Children and parents also commented on being able to have snack at playtime which again was considered to be very reasonable.

The reorganisation around lunchtime was seen as a positive change. **"it's better because it's got children eating more"; "it's better because there are less children hurting each other", "its good cause it stops us rushing our food", "the 20 minute sit time has made dinners better".**

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
20.	Letters regarding dinner money debt do not signpost families to places where they can get support.		Ensure that letters and text message send to families about dinner money often support and encourage families to discuss any financial issues that they may be facing with the school.	
21.	School lunches were unpopular with pupils in year 6. It was unclear as to the accurate reason for this as children shared a number of concerns around food standards and portion size.	**Pupil - "vegetables are very wet and soggy"** **"the only good thing is fish fingers"** **"the chicken is too dry"** **"on the pizza it's just a mountain of puree"** **"When it's all day breakfast you can't swap any of the bits"** **"I moved off school dinners cause I didn't like them."** **"I used to but I stopped because they were too small"** Staff feedback **"5/10, please look at them"** **"Yes they are good – I have them"** **"I eat a school lunch every day. I quite enjoy them and think there is a varied**	Continue with the work already undertaken between the school, Dolce and the children [school council] who have worked on developing the menu for the summer term. Continue to monitor to see whether this issue is specific for year 6 children.	

		selection. I eat with the children, the majority of which enjoy their lunches"		
22.	The uptake of Free School Meals is low. 45 children in KS1 (UFSM) have a packed lunch.		Explore further why the uptake of Universal Fee School Meals is low and then consider options to share with parents. Some schools invite new Reception families in to school during the Autumn term to take part in a reading workshop with their children- they are then encouraged to stay and have a school lunch with the children in the dining hall.	
23.	Pupils on packed lunches are not able to sit with those that have school lunches in the dining hall.	**"you can sit anywhere with your class but packed lunch sit together and hot dinners sit together"** **"if you've got a friend you really want to sit with you can't"**	Explore alternative ways to organise the seating lunch time so that pupils' lunch choices are not influenced by whether or not they get to sit with their friends.	
24.	Some children in Reception and Key Stage One opt to bring in a packed lunch from home rather than having a school lunch. All of these children are eligible for Universal Free School Meals and are missing out on this entitlement.	During our visit on the day Reception were spoken with 11 had a packed lunch and when asked why, said that they don't like school dinners but some said **"I love school dinners" "I eat it all"**	Explore further why a number of pupils in Reception and Key Stage One are not taking up their Universal Free School Meal. Some schools have tried themed family taster days where parents were invited in to school for a week to have lunch with their child to see the food that is available.	

25.	Some letters sent home regarding packed lunches on trips state that packed lunches can be provided only for those eligible for Free School Meals: *"those children who have free school meal will be provided with a packed lunch provided from school."*		Revise the wording on letters regarding lunches on trips- provide lunches for all pupils as standard so that those receiving a Free School Meal are not identifiable to their peers.	
26.	On trips the take-up of school packed lunches in low in comparison to the number of pupils who usually have school dinners.		Discuss the promotion of school packed lunches with the catering team. The school council could be involved in working with the catering team to develop a school packed lunch option that is more popular with pupils.	

Homework

We explored how homework was administered, what resources and materials pupils needed at home to complete homework and the various ways in which the school supported pupils.

What works?

The changes to homework with the "Home Learning" have been positively received by children – "**we don't have homework, we have home learning".** Children across the school shared that they have access to a range of resources that they can borrow from school to help with home learning activities. They also shared that if some of the tasks needed a computer / internet access they could use school resources at lunchtime / after school although they could also choose some of the other tasks and there was no pressure to complete all the tasks

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
27.	Some pupils do not have anywhere suitable at home to complete their homework.	Pupil - "I do my home learning on my bed." " I do it on the floor in the front room"	Make staff aware that sometimes the reason pupils haven't done their homework is linked to a lack of space at home. Explore if there are opportunities for pupils to complete their homework in school through a homework club.	
28.	There was a lack of consistency that pupils shared about rewards and sanctions associated with home learning, reading at home and reading record books. Some children received dojo rewards whilst some children were given red dojos for not completing tasks.		Discuss and decide upon as a staff team a consistent approach to be followed when pupils do not complete homework. Alongside this consider ways to support pupils who might not have somewhere suitable	

			at home to complete tasks that are set.	
29.	Pupils are rewarded for reading at home, with some receiving sanctions if they do not/ parents do not complete reading record books.	**"I had a red dojo for leaving my reading book at home"**	Explore the impact of rewards which publically show which pupils have and haven't read on those families where it may be more difficult for reading to take place on a regular basis. Explore alternative reading rewards which do not draw attention to and exclude those pupils who may find it more difficult to read at home. Other schools have tried: Allowing pupils to fill in their own reading diaries in Key Stage Two so that pupils are not reliant upon family members or carers being available to sign their diary to receive a reward. Rewarding children based on the number of books, rather than number of times that they have read with small quizzes at the end of each book to check for comprehension and understanding. A target number of books for pupils to read over the course of a year, twenty for Key Stage One, and fifteen for Key Stage Two with certificates awarded when pupils reach these milestones	

30.	Different classes have different expectations in relation to reading at home.		Ensure that there is consistency in relation to expectations around reading at home and that there is not variation between classes as to what happens if a pupil does not do enough reading at home.	

Leadership and Governance

We explored with staff and governors their awareness and understanding of issues relating to poverty; including their accountability in relation to Pupil Premium spending and reducing the attainment gap in their school. We looked at the role of senior leaders in tackling the impact of poverty on their school.

What works?

The Pupil Premium link governor was well informed about poverty and the impact it has on some families within Adswood. The Governor was kept informed on a regular basis through the reports shared at Governing Body meetings.

The HT and DHT are part of the NW Diminishing the Gap – Disadvantage and Poverty Research Network with a group of Stockport Schools, Children NE and The University of Manchester so is well informed. The Leadership team are competent, reflective practitioners who have shown a real commitment to the Poverty Proofing ethos.

Governors were knowledgeable about Pupil Premium spending and said that it was discussed at full governing body meetings.

Barriers to Learning

Consider becoming an accredited member of the Living Wage Foundation. Further information can be found at: www.livingwage.org.uk.

Resources

We explored whether pupils needed additional resources to fully take part in the school day, and how the school supported pupils who could not afford the resources required to engage with all lessons.

What works?

Lots of children talked about the inclusive ethos at Adswood **"Everyone gets to join in – school make sure." "School give you all you need." "You already have it at school so you don't need to bring anything in." "The teachers give us everything – we don't need to bring in anything".** Everyone at Adswood should be commended and proud that so many children commented and felt included in everything.

School provide an extensive range of resources (SATs revision guides, water bottles, PE kit, wellies and waterproofs for EYFS) so that all children can access and be included in the whole school curriculum. **"I like it that I get a water bottle" "PE kit is red t-shirt and black shorts, we get it from Miss Smart – its good."**

The Reading Rocket is a mini library where children can go to read books. **"We can borrow books to take home over the weekend – that's good"**

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
31.	Some children talked about being able to bring in toys/ cards from home for the "work hard / play hard" reward on a Friday afternoon. There was some inconsistency across classes.		Curtail the bringing in of toys. Some pupils may feel excluded from friendship groups if they do not have trading cards or toys to join in with games.	

32.	There was a mixed response with some children saying they did have 'show and tell' and some saying they didn't have 'show and tell.'	Pupil - "we did in year 2 but not now" "sometimes during an assembly – you put them in the hall" "yes on a Wednesday assembly" "No we don't" "we used to but not know"	Consider if alternative questions could be asked during show and tell time which do not possibly highlight inequalities, and which discourage pupils from bringing in toys, for example: 'tell us one thing that made you happy this week' or 'show a piece of work you've been proud of this week'.	
33.	Some children shared concerns as to the way that water bottles and PE kit was organised that meant they felt uncomfortable about using them	"the water bottles are all chewed by someone else" "it would be better if we had one at the start of the year with our name on" "can we do it so we don't share PE kit"	Consider sharing the examples of good practise that exist around school with regards water bottles and PE kit.	

Support to Parents and Families

When interviewing parents we sought to understand the pressure points from a parent's perspective. We tried to establish the ways in which the school was already effectively supporting families in relation to poverty as well as exploring areas where this support could be improved.

What works?

Parents/ Carers were extremely positive about the support that school provides for the children and families. **"I think they do as much as they can to support families" "Staff make you feel very welcome and always listen" "There is and inclusion team who help children and families" "anytime – always supportive" "the teachers are warm and receptive" "The school / staff are very approachable and understanding. I have always found them happy to assist where they can" "I don't believe that they could do anymore" "I feel confident approaching the school if needed it" "if you have a problem, school will always help out" "provide PE kit"**

The school provides free after school clubs and school trips are subsidised to enable everyone to attend. **"School has voluntary payments for trips" "trip donations" "doesn't make paying mandatory"**

Staff across school work hard to ensure that children are able to access enough food (Breakfast Bagels, Snack,) **"Snack in mornings – good price" "school dinner – reasonable" "snack – breakfast club – I think it's reasonable" "Breakfast Club and snack – very reasonable"**

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
34.	Despite the school's provision being free Pupil Premium attendance at clubs is currently low in comparison to the school's overall Pupil Premium percentage.	**Parent – "… they no longer offer after school club which was reasonable for families on low income"**	There was no feedback from children about why they do not attend school could consider further parent voice/ pupil voice to	

Spring term 73 children attended after school clubs. 12 of these children are eligible for pupil premium funding. On average 63 children attend Breakfast Club. 37 of these children are eligible for pupil premium funding.	**"There is no after school club for working parents. I would happily pay £5 – 10 a session."** **"Create some sort of after school club at a reasonable price"** **"after school club offer"**	ascertain what the reason behind this could be.

Uniform

We sought to understand the way in which school uniform and PE kits is supplied, how much it costs, and the expectations that the school had in regards to uniform and PE kits.

What works?

Children were very proud to wear Adswood school uniform and there were lots of positive comments about the PE kit too. **"uniform keeps it fair".**

Parents / Carers were pleased that non-branded clothes were allowed and when the school changed to a new logo each child was given a new jumper/ cardigan. **"The new uniform was a great support"**

Families can buy the logo top in the school office. Parents / Carers commented that this was at a reasonable price too.

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
35.	There is some pressure in some classes for children to have branded shoes.	**"some people say stuff when I wear these trainers"** Staff feedback **"insist on plain, non-labelled footwear"**	Consider issuing more specific guidance on the footwear that is permitted at Adswood to lessen the pressure that pupils currently face to purchase certain brands.	
36.	Some pupils feel under pressure to have branded hair accessories/bows. Some older children also commented on nail varnish.		Consider issuing some guidelines about what hair/ nail accessories pupils are allowed to wear in school.	

Wellbeing and Mental Health

We explored how the school supported the development of pupils' social skills, emotional wellbeing and how it tackled the negative impact of mental health difficulties that pupils may face. We looked at how pupils accessed support from the school and what impact the strategies have had.

What works?

The "mindspace" zone was commented upon by nearly every group that we spoke to. The children at Adswood clearly feel supported. Some of them also talked about the responsibility that they had to go to the "mindspace" area, calm down and return to lessons and learning. **"it helps with my emotions" "When I was upset I went to mindspace and played with a toy for 5 minutes then went back to class" "Mindspace is used to calm down – this is good then there's no shouting in class and we get to listen and learn" "I feel safe in our school" "If I need to go to mindspace I can then go back to class and I'm calm" "my friends and teachers make me happy because they are there when you need them."**

Children were very clear on the behaviour management systems - how they were used to praise/ reward and how they provided sanctions for misbehaviour **"If someone hurts me, someone else helps me and then I'm ok. The person who hurt is told off so I feel happy again"**

Children talked about the inclusion team, "check-in time" during the register, "worry boxes and happy boxes" **"they make you feel safe and calm"**

When the children return to class after the dinner break all children take part in a child-led session of peer massage. It is incredible about how supportive, thoughtful and committed they are to this session. It clearly enables the afternoon session to start well with children ready to learn after dinner break – amazing to observe.

The staff team **"know our children very well and know their needs"** with staff trained in team teach and restorative approaches to conflict resolution.

Other

Any issues that arose beyond those subjects discussed above.

What works?

I asked some children to give me words that described how they felt about being a pupil at Adswood: honour, secure, amazing, educational, fun, get a really good education, safe, happy included, inspirational, enjoyable, everyone gets treated the same, we get to learn, we get ready for High School, everyone gets treated the same, best school in the world –we love it

If children are asked to take part in a Christmas/ end of year production all of the costumes are sourced from within school – children and families are not asked to provide them.

All staff were able to signpost where sanitary products were available if children needed them

Barriers to Learning

	Barrier	Comment from stakeholders	Recommendation	School Plan
37.	The school undertakes a range of activities to support pupils with their career goals and ambitions such as aspiration week and visits from Manchester Storm, Alan Newton, Stockport County etc. Some pupils reported that they have not discussed their career ambitions with staff at Adswood.	Staff feedback **"we give them all positivity to believe in themselves"** **"we provide children with life skills to enhance National Curriculum learning"** **"we have theme weeks to help children believe in themselves"**	Consider the frequency of this work or establish a school display that can share the links with local colleges and businesses that are used to support the career aspirations of pupils. Primary Futures http://www.inspiringthefuture.org/schools-and-colleges/primary-futures/ has some great resources, and may be able to help with arranging a wide range of visitors to come in to school to talk about their occupations.	