

Poverty Proofing the School Day

Action Plan & Report



Pentland Primary School

February 2017



NORTH EAST



**CHILD
POVERTY
COMMISSION**



Contents

Poverty Proofing the School Day Page 3

What is Poverty Proofing the School Day?

What do we mean by poverty?

How was the project carried out?

How to read the findings?

Findings Page 10

Ability/Sets Page 11

Behaviour, rewards & Attendance Page 13

Bullying Page 16

Exams Page 19

Extra-curricular Page 20

Food Page 25

Homework Page 28

Resources Page 31

School Leadership & work Page 33

of the Governing Body

Support to Parents & Families Page 35

Transport Page 38

Tutor Groups Page 39

Uniform Page 41

Other Page 44

Social and Emotional Wellbeing Page 46



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

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 3.4 million by 2020¹ and the number of people accessing food banks has increased from just over 300,000 in ².

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. We know that poverty is a strong predictor of educational attainment with more than 6 in 10 children on free school meals failing to secure 5 good GCSEs. Overall, this means a gap in outcomes of around 27% at Key Stage 4 between those pupils on Free School Meals and other pupils.³

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’. We have very high hopes of our teachers to bring the best out of every pupil and yet the impact of poverty on children is not covered in any detail during a teachers own education and training.

Schools have been given the Pupil Premium to target support to children and young people, to improve outcomes. Schools are free to spend the funding in the best interests of

¹<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/may/07/uk-children-poverty-2020-thinktank>

²<http://www.trusselltrust.org/stats>

³ <http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/david-laws-speaks-at-the-atl-conference-on-the-pupil-premium>



children, but will be judged and held accountable for closing the gap. This will become an increasing priority of Ofsted inspections.

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, that children and young people from families with less financial resources face. 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'

Pete Townsend

According to government statistics, there are approximately 2,800,000 children living in poverty in the UK today. This is around 21% of all children. In the North East, there are approximately 132,000 children living in poverty and this equates to around 24%^[4] of all children in the region.

Poverty means that children – and their parents – have to go without things that other families take for granted. For example nearly two-thirds of children who live in poverty cannot afford to go away on holiday (anywhere) with their family for a week and a quarter cannot afford to go swimming once a month. Parents – especially mums, often make sacrifices themselves to protect their children from the effects of poverty and around half of the adults in households in poverty cannot afford to replace worn out furniture, get electrical items repaired or have household insurance. A third of parents do not have enough for a hobby or leisure activity of their own.^[5]

Around 55% of children living in poverty live in a household where at least one parent works.^[6] This is because low paid jobs, such as those on the minimum wage or part time or temporary contracts, are often not enough to provide an income above the 60% level.

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 for example 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.



- Infants in the poorest families have an almost 10 times higher chance of dying suddenly in infancy than those in the highest income group.^[7]
- The impact on children's lives of chronic illnesses, such as asthma and diabetes, seems to be greater among poor children. Acute illnesses are more likely to affect poor children and they are more likely to experience hospital admission.^[8]
- There is an 'attainment gap' between pupils who receive Free School Meals and those pupils that don't receive FSM. 15% of boys receiving FSM did not get 5 GCSEs in 2010, whereas only 5% of boys that didn't get FSM failed to get 5 GCSEs.^[9]
- Children who live in poverty are twice as likely to live in bad housing and this means that 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 are also factors that affect children growing up in poverty.^[10]
- There is a strong stigma attached to living in poverty and poor children are often bullied at school. 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^[11]. This issue was covered in a BBC animated film called 'The Wrong Trainers'^[12]
- Save the Children estimate that poorer families often have to pay a 'poverty premium' of around £1,280 per year for goods and services^[13]. This is because of different tariffs for gas and electricity suppliers, higher interest rates for loans and purchases and higher insurance premiums for living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
- Only one in nine children from low income backgrounds will reach the top 25% of earners as adults^[14]. The UK has very low 'social mobility' which is sometimes expressed as 'poor children grow up to be poor adults'.
- It is estimated that child poverty costs the UK approximately £25 billion per year, including around £17 billion that would go back to the government (through increased taxes and reduce benefits payments) if child poverty were eradicated^[15].

[1] *Poverty in the United Kingdom*, Peter Townsend, 1979

[2] *Households Below Average Income: An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2008/09*, DWP, 2011

[3] *Minimum Income Standards*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Accessed at: <http://www.irf.org.uk/focus-issue/minimum-income-standards>

[4] HMRC: The revised local child poverty measure. Accessible at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/child_poverty.htm

[5] *Households Below Average Income: An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2008/09*, DWP, 2011

[6] *A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families' Lives*, DfE, 2011

[7] *Health Consequences of Poverty for Children*, End Child Poverty, 2008



[8] *Ibid*

[9] *National Pupil Database*. 2009/10

[10] *Health Consequences of Poverty for Children*, End Child Poverty, 2008

[11] *Poor pupils prefer hunger to stigma of free meals*, Times Educational Supplement, 2011. Accessed at: <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6070031>

[12] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/filmnetwork/films/p005d74f>

[13] *The UK Poverty Rip-Off: The Poverty Premium 2010*, Save the Children, 2011

[14] *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility*, Cabinet Office, 2011

[15] *Estimating the costs of child poverty*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2008



How was the project carried out?

Children & Young People's Experiences

A member of staff interviewed children and young people in all year groups 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? They examined the school day from start to finish attending Breakfast Club before school and dance, gymnastics, football, hockey, choir and the reading café after school unpicking all policies and practices within their schools. See findings below for more detailed analysis of their responses.

Parents' Experiences

We spoke to individual parents and carers at events in school and in the playground before and after school as well as at the weekly reading café to help us better understand how they experience poverty and how well the school is able to support them. Parents were also invited to fill in a short questionnaire, and we had a number of responses which gave an insight in to parent's perception. We looked for examples of what was working and areas that they would like to improve.

Staff Experiences

All staff were invited to share their views and experiences of the school online looking at the impact of poverty, the support available, and any issues that the school struggles with.

Governor Experiences

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

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. We will then re-visit the school to assess whether all partners have noticed the impact of the changes.



Findings

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

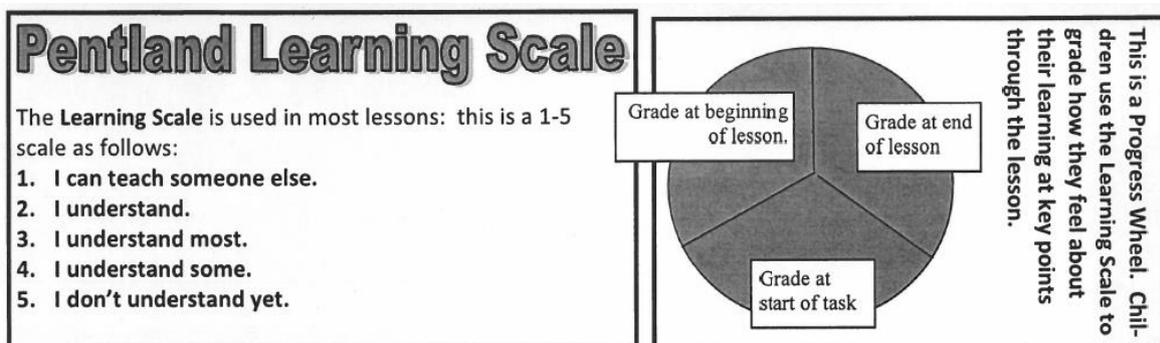
Ability/sets

We sought to explore whether pupils from poorer backgrounds were concentrated in lower ability sets and whether behaviour had any impact on setting.

What works?

Pupils in Key Stage 2 are in mixed sets for English and Maths. In the afternoon they work in mixed year group classes. Children regularly change classes and as a result there is no stigma attached to working in different groups or with specific teachers.

The school uses progress wheels in Key Stage 2. Pupils rate how confident they feel with a topic on a scale of 1-5 at the beginning, middle and end of the lesson. Before students begin a task they rate how confident they are feeling, the teacher then uses the students own self-assessment to rearrange groupings within the classroom. Sometimes teachers partner a child who has rated themselves as 1 with a child who has indicated that they are a 5 so that they can work together. On other occasions the teacher will ask all of the children who have rated themselves a 4 and 5 to sit together so that the teacher can offer additional support, while those who have rated themselves 1 or 2 will sit together and work independently on the task that has been set. It is a very flexible system and children said that **'some people understand the work one day and some people don't'**. Children are not confined to working in particular group in any of their subjects and as a result name-calling and bullying does not take place amongst pupil about their ability in lessons.



Recent data shows that the lowest attaining pupils at Pentland make progress above the national average due to tightly targeted interventions based on pupil progress meetings.



Areas to explore

More than half of the small number of teachers who responded to the survey stated that they thought that students eligible for Free School Meals are concentrated in lower sets. The bottom 10% of academic ability is 87% students eligible for Pupil Premium.

Actions

- N/A

Behaviour, rewards and attendance

We explored whether children from poorer backgrounds are rewarded or punished differently from other children.

What works?

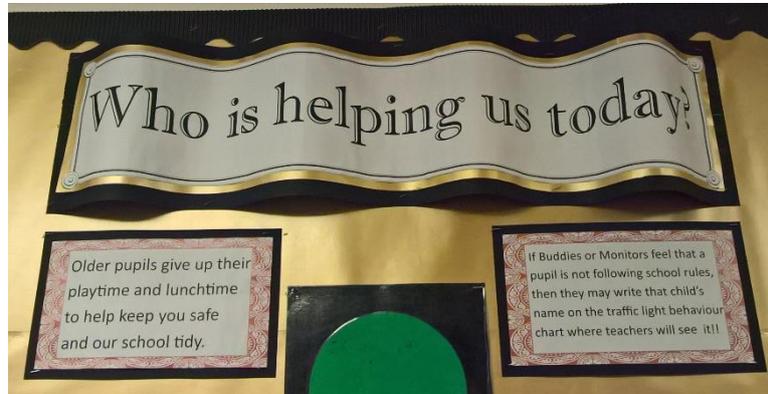
The school uses a traffic light system. If students misbehave then they are given a warning, if their misbehaviour persists they have to move their name on to the amber circle, if the misbehaviour still persists then they are asked to move their name on to the red circle. Children miss some of their playtime if their name ends up on the red circle. Students in all year groups have a clear understanding of this system and all staff stated that they always adhere to this behaviour policy.



The school rewards pupils with an additional break time if the overall school attendance for the week is above 96.6%. Students look forward to finding out in assembly each week if they achieved their extra play time.

There are a range of jobs that pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to do including school councillor, sports crew, library crew, e-safety group, and buddy. Children are very proud of the roles that they hold in school and talked passionately about the decisions in school that they have helped to bring about such as additional toys and equipment at playtime and new

bully boxes around school. For jobs in school such as Buddies students have to fill in an application form for the position, they are then asked to attend an interview with a teacher before they are selected. Other roles in school such as School Councillors are voted for by the children in each class.



Pupils are reward with Bee Points for good behaviour. The children in the school are split in to 4 different coloured bee teams. The team with the most points at the end of the week gets to go in for lunch first the following week. The staff at the school try hard to ensure that all teams, and consequently all children get the opportunity to regularly win the most points and go in for their lunch first. The school also awards worker bee awards in a reward assembly on Friday.



Areas to explore

Some pupils said that some children are chosen for more than one position in school and that others do not get the opportunity to hold a position of responsibility. For many of the positions such as sports crew and library crew the children stated that teachers choose who will get to do the jobs. A perception amongst a small number of children is that **'it's mostly the same person'**. Children are able to vote for their school councillor and who would represent them at the e-safety group. Some children in Year Five thought that **'everybody votes for their friends'** and that **'it's always the most popular people'**.



Actions

- Monitor carefully through provision mapping which pupils undertake which roles in school to ensure that there is not a small number of children who are missing out on these great opportunities.

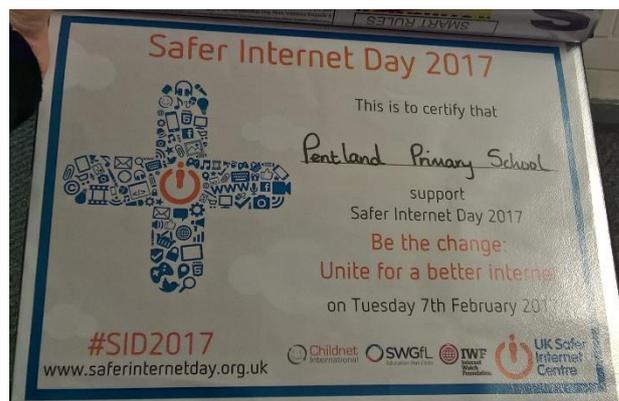
Bullying

We explored whether bullying as a result of poverty took place within the school and if so how this was handled.

What works?

Pupils stated bullying is very rare at Pentland Primary School and when it does occur it is dealt with by staff. Staff stated that all staff are responsible for bullying and adhering to the schools anti-bullying policy. Children said **'if somebody bullies you they [teachers] believe you'**.

Pupils at Pentland know how to stay safe online because of the work that teachers have carried out with pupils. There is an e-safety group who helped to produce a whole school assembly for Safer Internet Day. Students know how to report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or worried when using the internet.



In the playground children mix well and play with children from different classes and year groups. The school has invested in lots of toys for the playground which the pupils really enjoy playing with. The toys encourage the children to play games with each other and it was obvious during the course of the audit that pupils are very good at sharing the toys. A group of pupils who are members of the Sports Crew are responsible for putting out and collecting in the toys.

Pupils in Key Stage Two volunteer to be buddies. Buddies go on to the Key Stage One playground during morning break and ensure that children have someone to play with and are joining in with games. If buddies identify a child who does not have someone to play with or looks sad they will initiate a game with them.

The school has been made aware of issues that have arisen between pupils outside of school using social media and messaging apps. Children in upper Key Stage Two talked about the range of apps that they use particularly SnapChat and Whatsapp and the falling out that has taken place amongst friends as a result of these apps. Pupils also talked about messaging over games such as Xbox live. The school has already undertaken with all pupils about how to stay safe when using the internet and has informed parents about how to ensure that the children are safe online via their newsletters.

Pupils are able to email their teachers which offers students the opportunity to tell their teachers about any worries or concerns or to tell them something positive. This may include bullying – however this was not mentioned by the students.

Areas to explore

Pentland has bully boxes where pupils are able to notify their teachers if they are worried about bullying by putting their name and the name of the other child in to the box. The teachers then check the boxes and discuss the issues that have been identified with the children involved. Pupils stated that they are very reluctant to use the bully boxes because **‘if the bully finds out they’ll just bully even more’**. Children stated that the pupil accused of bullying is always able to find out who has put their name in the box because the teacher either brings them together to discuss it, or their friends see the names being put in the box. Pupils in Year Five and Year Six stated that children take names out of the bully boxes.





Children are worried about name calling on non-uniform days and discos. One pupil said **'I've got nothing to wear. I don't know which ones [clothes] I should wear'**. Another remarked that **'Sometimes you feel like you need to pick out your best clothes or you feel like people will judge you if you're not wearing something nice'**. One child said **'the type of stuff you like people might not and they might make fun of you'**.

Actions

- Consider if bully boxes could be renamed and used for children to share general thoughts, feelings and worries. It could potentially be used to celebrate positive things as well so there is not a negative stigma attached to it.



Exams

We sought to explore how well prepared pupils were for exams and tests. In particular whether they need resources and if they received food and water.

What works?

The school runs a breakfast club for all Year Six pupils during the week of their SATs tests. Pupils in Key Stage 1 were unsure if breakfast would be provided for them during their SATs tests. Staff stated that it has been discussed and this is something that the school are keen to be able to implement.

All resources are provided for tests.

Areas to explore

N/A

Actions

N/A

Extra Curricular

We sought to better understand how pupils with less financial resources took part in extracurricular activities. We were trying to find out whether activities were affordable and accessible by all.

What works?

The school has a fantastic system for music tuition. Pupils are able to learn the trumpet and saxophone. Lessons and instrument hire is free for students and the school encourages pupils to practice their instruments in school. As well as weekly music tuition pupils are able to attend the recently established school band and can practice their instruments on Friday lunchtime.



All of the school trips are subsidised and the school undertakes fundraising throughout the year in order to lower the cost of trips. One parent commented that **'contributions from school to subsidise trips is fantastic...no child seems to be left out because of their parents financial situation'**. Some pupils said that **'it doesn't really matter about the money'** and that if you don't bring it in you still get to go on the trip.

Reception and Nursery have a weekly 'penny pot' collection where parents are asked to donate 50p towards the school fund which subsidises trips and coach travel. Parents stated that this was an optional donation and do not mind being asked to make a donation.

Pupils in Year Six stated that they were made aware that there was financial support available with the cost of the residential trip to Carlton. One child said that **‘Mrs. Fryett said if anyone is having struggles with money to get parents to ring the school and we’ll sort something out’.**



The cost of the residential trip to Carlton has been reduced further for those pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

Pupils are able to pay for the residential trip through instalments. Pupils were notified about the Carlton residential trip in January and parents could pay it off through an instalment plan through until June.

Please note that as a result of your generous support in fundraising, the school is subsidising the full cost of £135 by £30 per pupil. If the school receives Pupil Premium funding for your child, an additional subsidy will be applied.

The cost of the trip is £105 which includes transport by coach, all food, accommodation and activities.

If the school receives Pupil Premium funding for your child, we will subsidise the cost by a further £25 to a cost of £80.

The school had also recently established a choir for parents, staff and pupils. It is well attended and positively thought of by those who participate. Parents and children are provided with refreshments and the opportunity to socialise as well as have fun singing.

The school organises charity discos which are held in school time. It only costs children 10p to enter the disco. During Key Stage One discos pupils are given tokens so that they are able to have the same amount of turns on games and the same number of refreshments.

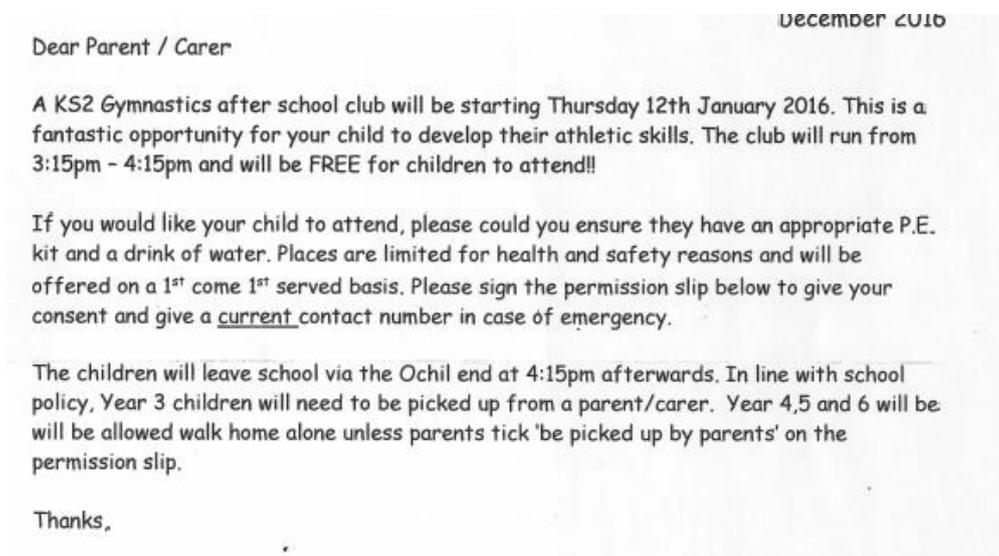
One of the most popular after school clubs at Pentland is cookery club. The club is now so popular that students are only allowed to attend for 3 weeks, rather than 6 weeks so that all students get the opportunity to attend. Parents are able to attend this club with their children and make a range of dishes. The school provides all of the equipment, including aprons and all of the ingredients. At the end of the session the children and their parents sit down together and eat the food that they have prepared, they are also given the remainder

of the food to take home and share with the rest of their family at supper time. The club has a lovely atmosphere with adults and children working together



As well as an after school club the school runs Phunky Foods in school. Pupils in all year groups get the opportunity to cook and bake in school with all resources provided. Children are often able to take home what they have made and the recipe.

The school runs a wide range of free and well attended after school clubs including, football, hockey, gymnastics, and dance. 71% of pupils who attend dance club and 69% of pupils who attend gymnastics are eligible for Pupil Premium funding.



Areas to explore

Pupils are allowed to take spending money with them on school trips. A trip to the library to meet an author and an illustrator took place during the course of the Poverty Proofing audit. Pupils were allowed to take money to buy a signed book or a picture from the illustrator. Children said that if they did not take money for a book **‘we had to sit on the floor’** while the other children purchased their books. Another pupil said that one of their friends tried to borrow money off them during the trip, **‘somebody didn’t have money. I had £1 left so**



they wanted me to buy a picture for them'. On a trip to the Blue Reef Aquarium pupils said that if they **'wouldn't have money in their pockets they would have to stand outside the shop'** while other children in the class went in.

Pupils in some Key Stage Two classes said that when a trip has been organised a list has been read aloud in class and **'if they [the teacher] didn't read your name you had to put hand up'**. Students thought that if your name was not read and you put your hand up it meant that you had not brought in your letter and money for the trip.

Letters for the Carlton residential trip were sent on the 23rd of January. The letter stated that the £20 deposit was required by the 1st of February so families had just over a week to pay the deposit. Parents were allowed to pay the deposit after the 1st of February deadline and were notified via text that all that was needed to secure their child's place was the permission slip.

During football club many pupils wear a football kit, rather than their P.E kit. Pupils said that there is **'only three people who don't wear a kit. They don't have one'**. Another pupil said that **'people say why don't you have a proper football kit?'** 38% of pupils who attend football club are eligible for Pupil Premium funding, this is a lower percentage than the other clubs that Pentland has on offer.

During Key Stage Two discos pupils are able to bring in money to spend on food and games. Pupils stated that they can tell how much money people have brought in by **'how many games they have been on'**. Another pupil said that **'everyone always shows how much money they've got'**.

The school does lots of fundraising to subsidise the cost of school trips. Cake sales have been held after school and on occasion at break time. Pupils stated that when cakes are sold at break time **'not everyone buys a cake cause they might not have no money'**.

Pentland Primary School organises an annual sponsored walk. The walk takes place after school and is optional. Pupils stated that there are prizes for the person who does the most laps, the person who has the best costume and the person who raises the most sponsorship money.

The school uses an external school photographer with varying packages and prices starting at £12. Pupils said that some children purchase school photographs and some children do not.

Actions

- Consider if it is necessary for pupils to take additional spending money on trips.
- Clarify with staff a consistent approach to chasing up trip permission letters.
Consider if students in Key Stage Two could be reminded to bring in trip letters on an



individual basis, rather than a list being read aloud in class which identifies them in front of their peers.

- When planning residential trips try to give parents 4 weeks' notice to make deposit payments, and make this clear in the initial letter that is sent home.
- Change the uniform code for football club so that students have to wear PE kit rather than some bringing in expensive football kits.
- Explore alternative ways of organising a cake sale that is held within the school day so that all children are able to participate. You could ask pupils for an unspecified donation towards the cost of the cakes and then ensure that all pupils get a cake regardless of how much they have donated.
- Consider alternative ways for pupils to raise money for charity that are not reliant upon them asking family and friends for sponsorship money. Pupils could write letters to local business asking for their support or they could take part in a bag pack at one of the local supermarkets. They could put on a small performance and ask for donations from the local community.
- At the school disco consider how you can ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to play the same number of games and have a snack. Could a token system also be used in Key Stage Two?



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?

The payment of dinner money is usually done through the school office and thus pupils are not aware of who pays and does not pay for school lunches. Most children are not able to identify who is eligible for Free School Meals.

The issue of dinner money debt is dealt with sensitively and discussed directly through contact with parents, not pupils. Parents are notified if dinner money debt is owing by a letter that is sent directly to the home address. Parents are able to gradually repay any dinner money debt that is owing. If dinner money debt continues to accrue parents will be approached by the Home School Workers who support the families with any financial difficulties that they may be having. This support includes helping parents to fill out forms to apply for Free School Meals and Food Bank vouchers. If the Home School Workers become aware that a family may need support from the foodbank they have also in the past collected and delivered the food for families.

Pupils are allowed to have a second helping of food at the end of lunchtime if there is any food left over, this means that there is very little food waste. Students like this option.

The order that pupils go in to lunch changes on a weekly basis. Children go in to lunch based on their colour group and therefore all pupils have the opportunity to go on first sittings, and all pupils have the opportunity to have seconds.

Pentland has a breakfast club for a small number of pupils in Key Stage 2, partially funded through an application made to the Teeside Philanthropic Society. Pupils are identified by the class teacher and invited to breakfast club. They have a wide range of food available and pupils really like attending. Breakfast Club has a very homely feel, the table is set for pupils with a table cloth and they are served at their table by their teacher.

Pupils in Cosy Corner and Nurture are given toast or another snack every morning.

When pupils stay for some after school clubs such as band practice the school provides a snack such as fruit or juice and biscuits after school.



On school trips teachers take additional packed lunches which are shared out amongst all pupils to ensure that they have all had enough to eat at lunch time.

In some classes pupils have been provided with their own named cup which they can use to get a drink of water in the classroom throughout the day.

Areas to explore

On school trips pupils stated that they usually bring in their own packed lunches from home **'just in case you don't like something in the bag'**. Pupils are able to choose which sandwich they have in their school packed lunch but stated that they often have other items that they do not like. Pupils also said that the carton of juice that they get with their school packed lunch is not sufficient and that they would like to have an additional drink.

Some children were fond of the school meals and said that they are **'sometimes really nice. Depends what there is'**. However a larger number of pupils said that they did not like the school lunches and that **'it just doesn't taste nice'**. One pupil said **'I switched to packed lunches. I don't really like the dinners'**. Many of the children talked about the inclusion of vegetables within school dinner. Children have a perception that additional vegetables are added in to their food with one pupil remarking that the **'mash has carrots in it'**, another reported that the **'dinner nannies put vegetables in the crust of the pizza'** and that there are **'green beans and cauliflower in the mash'**. 35% of students across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage Two have packed lunches rather than school lunches.

Children talked about the range of options available at lunch time and said that they **'sometimes don't get the food that you want'**. Another remarked that **'If you're the last there's hardly anything for you to pick'**. Pupils in Key Stage Two reported that the salad bar is popular with students in Key Stage One and that sometimes there is not as much for them to choose from.

In some upper Key Stage 2 classes pupils said that a teacher goes around the classrooms to collect dinner money from those students who have not handed it in at the office. A very small number of students in these classes have the perception that they can tell who was eligible for Free School meals as **'you wouldn't see them pay'**.

Pupils are not able to attend Breakfast Club every day. Some pupils in Year Five and Year Six are invited to attend on Monday and Friday, and pupils in Year Three and Year Four are invited to attend on Wednesday and Thursday. There is currently no Breakfast Club provision for pupils in Key Stage 1. A small number of staff and a small number of parents stated that they would like to see increased breakfast club provision. One parent stated that increased breakfast club provision would help them to find employment.

The school used to receive fruit from the local Tesco to give to Key Stage Two pupils at break time. Tesco has ended this provision and pupils in Key Stage Two do not have access to food



at break time. Some pupils said that they are allowed to take items out of their packed lunch to eat at break time.

Some classes do not have a collection of cups that pupils can use to get a drink of water throughout the day. One pupil said that **'if we don't bring our own water bottle we can't get a drink'**.

Actions

- Ensure that all classes have cups available so that pupils without water bottles are able to have a drink. Some schools provide water bottles for all pupils and don't allow them to go home consider if this could be implemented at Pentland.
- Consider if it is possible to expand upon the current Breakfast Club provision so that more pupils from Key Stage 2 and pupils from Key Stage 1 and Reception are able to attend. Kellogg's, Warburtons and Greggs offer support for schools in establishing and developing Breakfast Clubs.
- Consider if it is possible for the school council to work alongside the kitchen staff to promote school meals. The School Council could also address the misconceptions that students have about the content of school lunches.
- Try to encourage more pupils to have a school packed lunch on trips, rather than bringing in their own from home. The School Council could conduct their own research to find out what students would like in their packed lunches and what would increase the take up of packed lunches.
- Investigate if other local businesses could support the provision of free fruit at break time for pupils in Key Stage Two. The school council could be involved with this.

Homework

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

What works?

The school runs a homework club for pupils in Key Stage Two. It is held during lunchtime and pupils spoke positively about being able to complete their research and DB Primary homework using the computers. Students think that it is good because **‘you can research facts if you don’t have the internet at home’**.

When homework is set in Cosy Corner additional resources are sent home to support both parents and children, for example numicon to support maths homework.

In Nursery there is a board on display which lists ideas for activities that parents can do at home with their children. The suggestions on the board were about learning nursery rhymes and singing songs and did not require any resources or cost any money.



Areas to Explore

Pentland sets a range of different topic based homework tasks. The tasks are laid out in a grid and are worth a varying number of points. Pupils in Key Stage Two must complete enough tasks to earn 20 points over a half term and pupils in Key Stage One must complete enough tasks to earn 12 points over a half term. Pupils think that **'the ones that need more points take longer to do and need more work'**. Some of the activities that require more resources are worth more points than those that do not require additional resources.

Pentland Primary School Year 5/6 – Phenomenal Pharaohs

1 point	2 points	3points	4 points
1: Complete DB Primary task 1.	2: Complete DB Primary task 2.	3: Complete DB Primary task 3.	4: Complete DB Primary task 4.
5:	6: Create a fact file about the River Nile and compare it to other famous rivers. 	7: Find out what happened to Egypt after the death of Cleopatra VII, the last pharaoh. Record your findings in a way of your choice. 	8: Make a flatbread and dips or salad and bring it in for your classmates and teachers to try! 
9: Find out who or what 'Ka' was.	10:	11:	12: Create your own piece of Egyptian jewellery. It can be 2D or 3D. 
13: Draw a picture of your favourite Egyptian God. 	14: Write and perform your very own Egyptian song. 	15: Use the words Ancient Egypt to create an acrostic poem.	16:
17: Find out why animals were so important to the Egyptians. Write down 3 facts you have discovered.	18: Find out about the afterlife and create a scroll to show the journey to the afterlife.	19: Make a model pyramid using recycled materials or building blocks. Bring it in to display in school. 	20: Use hieroglyphics to write a message to a friend or family member. Can they crack your Egyptian code?

You will be able to earn extra points by completing weekly Maths tasks from your teacher.





Some of the activities set for topic homework require additional resources. Students in some classes were able to make a puppet at home as part of their homework, one student remarked **'I didn't have enough money to buy the stuff to make a puppet'**. In another class a pupil said that **'I really wanted to make a volcano but I didn't have any of the materials'**. During the Scrumdillious topic pupils could bake at home and then bring in the food that they had made to share with the class, one child said **'I wanted to cook something and bring it in but I didn't have any cake batter'**. Pupils are not currently able to complete any of these activities in school at homework club.

Children said that some of the tasks set for homework require them to use a printer. They said **'It asks sometimes to print off we don't have much ink some of us don't have printers'**. Children said that they could print off their work during homework club but that there was a limit on how much they could print and that sometimes it wasn't enough to complete their homework.

If children have not accrued enough points on their homework by the end of the half term they are not allowed to participate in the homework reward until they have completed their missed homework. Pupils stated that they are aware of who has not completed homework in their class as a list of students is read aloud identifying that they are not able to participate in the homework treat.

Actions

- When setting project based or model making homework ensure that the same resources are provided to all pupils. Parents could be invited in to school for an afternoon to use school resources to complete project work such as making models or baking cakes. Families could therefore still work together to create projects but all pupils would have access to the same resources. Alternatively a central store of resources could be collected in school which pupils and parents could anonymously access to take resources home from to complete projects.



Resources

We explored whether pupils needed additional resources to fully take part in the school day.

What works?

All of the resources that students need in class such as pencils, rulers and rubbers are provided by the school and available on pupil desks.

When pupils have made models in school resources have been collected centrally and distributed amongst all students regardless of whether or not they had brought in resources from home. Children stated that when they made volcanoes in class they **'shared the stuff we brought in'** and that they **'just picked any newspaper and bottle'** and that they could not identify who had brought in which resources.

The school has a fantastic range of cooking equipment which pupils use during cooking sessions, which happen both in class and extra-curricular provision.

Areas to explore

In some Key Stage Two classes pupils bring in pencil cases. They are not allowed to be used during lessons but pupils stated that they are permitted during Golden Time on Friday afternoon.

At the end of the school year pupils are allowed to bring in their toys from home for toy day. One pupil said that they **'try and bring in things other people will like'**. Some students said that they worried about which toy to bring in because other children **'might not like the toys. They might not want to play with you'**. One pupil said **'I just don't know what to bring half of my toys are from the past they're a bit kiddish'**.

Children were asked to bring in a book from home on World Book Day. One child remarked **'I don't have books at home'**. If children had not brought in a book from home they were able to choose a book from the school library.

Actions

- Consider if it is necessary for pupils to bring in toys from home at the end of term. Could toys already available in school be used as an alternative? The school has lots



of toys and games that pupils enjoy playing with and would not require pupils to bring in items from home

- Discourage pupils from bringing in and using pencil cases during Golden Time.



School Leadership and Work of the Governing Body

We explored with 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 also noted the general awareness of these issues amongst staff members.

What works?

Senior leaders stated that they have attended training on the most effective way to close the attainment gap.

The Senior Leadership Team and Governors regularly monitor the effectiveness of Pupil Premium spending. The school uses evidence from the Sutton Trust as well as Ofsted good practice reports to decide how Pupil Premium should be allocated. The school also works alongside with Transforming Tees High Achievement for All in order to support and promote the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

The Pupil Premium statement shows that Pupil Premium is spent on two nurture bases, home school workers, booster teachers and Teaching Assistants to deliver interventions. As well as curriculum enhancement such as subsidising trips, Phunky Foods and breakfast club.

The attainment gap is regularly discussed in school. Staff were unanimous in their responses that it is discussed every half term. In 2016 non- Pupil Premium students had an average scaled score across all subjects of 102.4 compared to an average score of 100.9 for those pupils eligible for Pupil Premium. The gap was slightly wider between those pupils eligible for Free School Meals and those pupils who are not eligible for Free School Meals.

Governors who responded to the questionnaire showed an in-depth understanding of the in-school attainment gap. It is discussed every term at full governing body meetings. Governors are aware of how the attainment of Pupil Premium students at Pentland compares to pupils nationally and how much progress they have made from their starting points.

Alongside attainment data the senior leadership team looks at attendance and punctuality data of pupil premium students in order to decide how best to allocate Pupil Premium spending.



There is a designated governor who is responsible for Pupil Premium spend.

An abundance of data is available on the school website which describes the current in school attainment gap.

Areas to explore

Staff have not undertaken any training on the impact of poverty. Staff already have a very good understanding on the links between poverty and educational attainment but would benefit from some training which explains the wider consequences of poverty.

The school is not currently a member of the Living Wage Foundation.

Actions

- Consider becoming a member of the Living Wage Foundation.
<http://www.livingwage.org.uk/>
- When developing the next CPD programme consider including some training on the wider impact of poverty on children and families.



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?

Feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive and many parents find that staff at the school are very approachable. One parent said that it is **'generally lovely school, very caring and helpful'**. Another parent commented that **'It's a really good school. Lovely staff who can be approached to speak to regarding any problems in confidence'**. A further parent remarked that **'Mrs. Ducker and her colleagues believe in this school and all its pupils. Doors are always open if I have a problem'**.

Home school workers and teaching staff are out on duty every morning before school so that they are available for parents to speak to.

Parents stated that Pentland **'hardly ever'** asks for money.

Some parents are aware that there is support available. A parent said that **'letters do say children will not be penalised if school trips cannot be paid for by parents for any reason'**.

Parents of pupils in Cosy Corner and the Key Stage 2 Nurture unit also regularly invited in to school to take part in activities with children. Parents are able to see what their children do during lessons in the Nurture units and it helps to establish relationships between families and teachers. Teachers stated then when parents have spent time in Nurture they are more willing to approach the school for help and support.

More than half of the staff who responded to the survey and all of the governors stated that they have noticed an increase in poverty within Pentland. Governors reported that the school has noticed an increase in the number of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium each year. Staff stated that they have noticed an increase in the number of families living in privately owned properties and they have had an increased number of families facing eviction. This shows that they have an awareness of the situation that families within the local area face.

Pentland regularly invites parents in to school to take part in a range of activities. They run a reading Café on a weekly basis where parents can take part in activities with their children and free food and refreshments are provided. Parents can also attend cookery club and choir with their children. The school is trying hard to establish links with parents.

Pentland Reading Café....

This has been set up by the staff after school in order to give parents and children opportunity to enjoy reading in a more relaxed setting. Teachers will model some phonic teaching and are there to work with parents to help their children.

Drinks and some food are available. The food is being cooked by Pentland children in Funky food sessions; whilst it is not the main event, the children are rightly proud of their produce!

Feedback has, in the main, been hugely positive. Parents appreciate staff staying back to offer this time. One parent commented on how nice it was to watch a teacher model reading a story with their child as it gave them ideas about how to ask good questions.

Nursey has a lovely 'Wow moments' board where parents can share with the school the achievements of their children from home.



Home School Workers run parenting classes using resources from Family Links. Parents are able to get support on a range of key issues and build supportive relationships with the school and other parents who may be facing the same difficulties.



Areas to explore

Many parents are not aware that there is support available for financial issues such as support with the cost of trips, and it is not always on trip or other extra-curricular letters.

Some parents stated that they would not feel comfortable approaching the school about financial issues. One remarked that they **'would rather ask family'** and others commented that they would just go without in order to pay for school trips rather than approach the school.

Some parents also think that they don't get enough notice about events and activities in school. One parent stated that they were only given two days' notice for a non-uniform day for Children in Need. Letters were sent home about a library visit on Monday. The visit was scheduled to take place on Thursday and while the visit was free pupils were allowed to take money to purchase a book from the author and some parents stated that this was not enough notice. Parents talked about being paid both weekly and monthly and the impact that a short notice period has upon family budgeting.

Actions

- Compose a calendar of events that can be shared with parents at the beginning of each half term which notifies them about events and activities that will be occurring, particularly those events and activities that will incur a charge.
- Use the well-established text system and newsletters to make parents aware that financial support is available.



Transport

We sought to understand how children get to and from school and how they access provision outside of school.

What works?

Most pupils walk or get the car to school. The school has participated in initiatives to encourage pupils to walk to school.

Some pupils travel to school on their bikes and scooters and they are able to store them in a designated bike area at school.

When pupils have attended sporting events outside of school, such as football at the Sports Dome and netball at a local college the school has organised an paid for transport.

The school runs Bikeability for pupils in Key Stage Two. Everyone is able to take part and can borrow bikes if they do not have their own.

Areas to explore

N/A

Actions

N/A



Tutor Groups

We explored the types of discussions that took place informally within tutor groups.

What works?

Pupils said that during tutor time they talk about the golden rules and what has been discussed during school council meetings.

Pupils in some classes said that they use Circle Time to talk about their worried as well as their likes and dislikes. In some classes pupils said that during Circle Time their teacher sometimes gives them 'would you rather questions?' which they like to discuss with their friends.

In some classes' teachers have adopted a consistent approach to the celebration of birthdays. In Reception pupils said that they all got a birthday card and a note pad off their teacher. In the support base a cake is provided by the teacher for all pupils on their birthday. Pupils talked about a teacher who always gives students a smelly sticker on their birthday and other classes where a birthday hat is worn when it is a pupil's birthday.

Areas to explore

Children are allowed to bring in items from home to show their class. Pupils think that they can only bring in things if they are from a holiday. During the course of the discussions one pupil said **'if it's from Spain bring it in but if it's from Tesco they [teachers] won't be interested'**. Another pupil said **'I got jealous because my friend brought something from Cape Verde because I never went anywhere on holiday'**.

In some classes pupils stated that during circle time they have been asked to share what they did at the weekend, what they have done during the summer holidays and what they got for Christmas. Children said that they noticed that these conversations made some of their peers embarrassed or uncomfortable **'because they might not have done anything over the weekend and lots of other people have done other things'**.

Many students bring in cakes from home when it is their birthday. Children discussed purchasing additional cakes to bring in to school and that some people do not bring in cakes because **'they might only have one after school or at a party'** and that **'not everybody [brings in cake] because it might be too much money'**.



Actions

- Discuss with staff if a whole school approach could be established for the celebration of birthdays such as a birthday hat or the singing of Happy Birthday in assembly. If a whole school approach is adopted parents could be discouraged from bringing in cakes from home.
- As a staff team compose a set of questions which can be used to prompt circle time discussions but which do not highlight financial inequalities between children and families. Instead of asking 'What did you do at the weekend?' teachers could ask 'who did you spend time with?' There is already some excellent practice in this area from some teachers at Pentland that could be shared with the rest of the staff.
- If children bring in items of interest from home or from their holidays encourage teachers to discuss this with pupils on a one to one basis rather than sharing it with the whole class.

Uniform

We sought to understand the way in which school uniform is supplied and how much it costs.

What works?

Many parents stated that they find the cost of school uniform at Pentland reasonable. Students are not required to have uniform with the school logo on and as a result many parents are able to purchase cheap uniforms from a range of local supermarkets. Pupils also think that **'it doesn't matter about badges'**.

The school does have spare uniform which they distribute to families who need it. Home School workers and teachers give it to pupils and families if they think that they would benefit from it. The spare uniform and lost property is also laundered and made available to parents at school fairs and events. Staff stated that the take up of spare uniform is often very low.



Children who are eligible for Free School Meals are given a free jumper and a book bag when they start school in Reception.



Staff reported that the school has purchased swimming clothing in order for children to participate in swimming lessons. All children are able to take part in swimming lessons.



The leadership at Pentland opted not to allow pupils to dress up for World Book Day this year. They considered alternative ways to celebrate World Book Day, including visiting a library and sharing books in order to mark the day with events that have a greater focus on reading.

Areas to explore

Some parents stated that they utilise Facebook independently of the school in order to swap uniform. Not all parents are aware of how to access this service.

Children wear red jumpers up to Year Four. Pupils in Year Five and Year Six wear blue jumpers.

Pupils are able to get their initials embroidered on to jumpers. This can prevent jumpers from being passed on.

Pupils in Year 5 reported that there is some name calling amongst pupils about the branding of trainers and P.E bags. Children said that they have heard students say **'Nike's better than Adidas'** and **'they basically say my trainers are better than yours'**. This was not an issue with any other year groups.

Children said that if you forget your P.E kit you **'get a spare one or can't do it'**. They also said that the **'same people always forget kit'**. Across the school there seemed to be an inconsistent approach to the issue of forgotten P.E kit, some pupils were still able to participate in other classes pupils said that there wasn't any spare P.E. kit in a suitable size so they were unable to participate. Pupils stated that the spare P.E kit is **'thrown in'**, **'stuffed in'** and **'doesn't get washed'**. Staff stated that they would lend a pupil spare P.E kit if a pupil forgot to bring in their own.

Children in Year Five and Year 6 reported that a small number of pupils do bring their mobile phones in to school. Pupils were clear that if they bring their mobile phone in to school it must be handed in at the office, but that this does not always happen and sometimes pupils keep their phones in their lockers. Children said that some students do **'randomly just get it [phone] out of their locker and shows off with it'** and that they have heard remarks such as **'I've got an iphone 7 you've got an iphone 4 that's the 'crappest' phone ever'** and that **'iphone is better than Samsung'**. Pupils also said that some students show their phones to the dance teacher at after school club who allows the students to keep their phones out during the session.

Actions

- Approach the current supplier of school uniform to discuss the necessity of initialling on school jumpers. It prevents uniform from being passed on when the child has out-grown it.



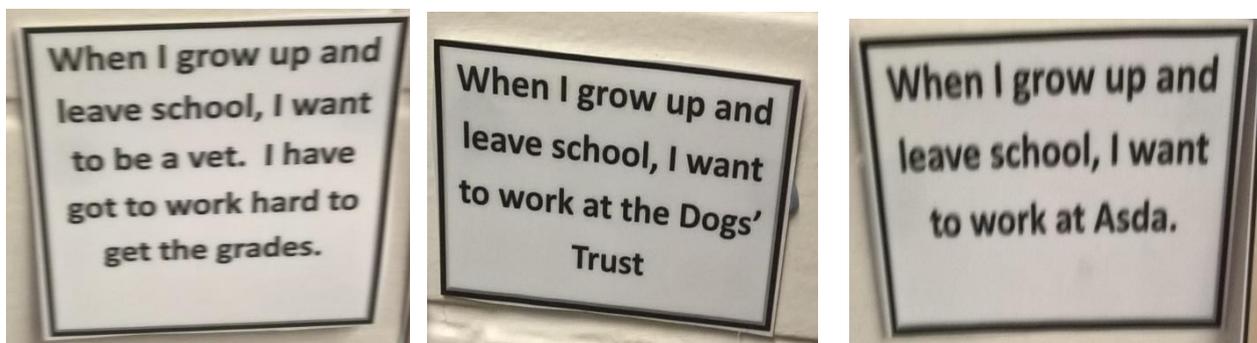
- Consider if an area in school can be established where parents can drop off and pick up spare uniform as it is required. Many parents are already doing this informally in the playground and using online forums. A small clothes rail could be placed in an area that parents can access so that a Uniform Drop Box can be set up. Further information about Uniform Drop Boxes can be found by contacting Charlene Patterson at <https://en-gb.facebook.com/Uniformdropbox/>
- Work with students in Year Five on the issue of branded trainers and phones. Stories such as The Emperor's New Clothes and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat are useful starting points.
- Discuss with the School Council if there are alternative ways to work with charities that do not require students to come in to school in non-uniform. The focus could be around raising awareness of charities and the issues that they tackle rather than raising money. You could also explore bag packs, or writing letters to local businesses rather than asking the students families for money.
- Consider how spare P.E. kit is stored and distributed so that those pupils who do forget their P.E. kit are able to borrow it and do not have to miss out on P.E. lessons.
- Discuss further with students, staff and parents if the change in colour of uniform in upper Key Stage Two is necessary, exploring the cost impact on the poorest families.
- Speak to all external providers to ensure that they do not allow students to use their phones during the sessions. Some schools have included this in a code of conduct for external providers.

Other

Any issues that arose beyond those subjects discussed above.

What's working?

Pupils have a wide range of career ambitions including zoologist, footballer, nurse, police, fashion designer and teacher. Pupils said that they have talked about their career ambitions with teachers in school. The school has produced some lovely display which highlight the range of career ambitions that pupils at Pentland have and show that discussion about how pupils might realise their career ambitions have taken place.



The school has collected donations for a local foodbank by asking students to bring in items of food as part of their Harvest Festival. Home School Workers support families in applying to the local foodbank if they require this support.





The school made toy parcels at Christmas which were distributed to families in need. Parents talked about this positively.

Areas to explore

When asked if they would approach the school for financial help and support pupils said that they **'would feel a bit embarrassed'** and that they would think **'how do I say this'**. Another pupil said that they **'would have a knot in my stomach'**.

Pupils perceptions of poverty are limited and some of their responses were guesswork such as **'people don't fully wear their hair up'** or **'the way they come in to school- sometimes upset'**.

Actions

- Whenever any activities or events are discussed in school always remind pupils that financial support is available. This message was well received by pupils in Year 6 when discussing the Carlton trip. Look at ways of disseminating this to all pupils within the school so that pupils feel more comfortable discussing financial concerns with staff.
- Consider having some further PSHE lessons or assemblies on poverty in UK context. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/21834480> is a good starting point.



Social and Emotional Wellbeing

We explored how the school supports the development of pupil's social skills and emotional wellbeing and what impact that the strategies that the school have used has had from the perspective of students.

What works?

The school has invested in two Nurture units to support children with their social and emotional needs. The Nurture units are funded from Pupil Premium money.

In Key Stage One the nurture unit is called Cosy Corner. The specialised staff who work in Cosy Corner work alongside staff in the Early Years to identify those pupils who may benefit from additional support when they enter Year One. Some children work in Cosy Corner in the morning where they receive support with maths and English incorporated alongside a focus on the development of social skills. In the afternoon a different group of children attend Cosy Corner where the focus is less on academic skills and more on socialisation. Occasionally a place will be reserved for children for both the morning and afternoon in case they need time away from the mainstream classroom. The number of pupils in Cosy Corner is capped at six so that pupils can work within a smaller group with more adult support. Staff try to work with pupils in Cosy Corner for a full academic year, if spaces are needed pupils may be phased back in to their mainstream lessons a little bit earlier, but they always spend at least two terms in Cosy Corner. Staff in Cosy Corner stated that they have more referrals than spaces.

The Key Stage Two nurture unit is similar to Cosy Corner. Some pupils attend in the morning, some attend in the afternoon and a small number attend all day. Pupils in Key Stage Two do not usually stay in Nurture for a full year and there is more flexibility about when they will gradually return back to their classes. The class size in Key Stage Two are also slightly larger than Cosy Corner with no more than ten pupils in each lesson. Pupils in Nurture continue to develop their academic skills whilst also benefiting from smaller class teaching which focuses on supporting pupils with social and emotional needs. The teacher within Nurture stated that it is really important that every child has a chance to speak to their teacher about anything that is worrying them every day, and that they specifically make time within the day for those conversations to take place. One pupil said Nurture is **'a nice peaceful place, we're all a family in there'** and that it **'helps me a lot'**.

The academic progress of children who attended the nurture bases is carefully monitored alongside their progress with social and emotional skills. The school uses the Boxhall profile

to monitor the impact that the Nurture bases are having on children's social and emotional wellbeing.

Pupils at Pentland appreciate the fact they have the same teacher for two years. Pupils said that **'they [the teacher] know you already. If you've had problems in the past they know about them already and how to help you and what you need to hear'** and that **'you know their expectations'**.

Pupils think that staff are good at identifying if there is something troubling them. One child said that the teacher **'sees your sad smile'**.

Children at Pentland have opportunities to discuss their opinions both through the School Council and PSHE lessons. Children in Key Stage Two enjoy PSHE lessons, they said that **'there's no right or wrong answer. What you think it's never wrong because it's your opinion'**. PSHE lessons are beneficial as children are able to share their own ideas and thoughts.

Pupils also spoke positively about Circle Time. One pupil said **'It helps you. It's really good, it really fun to do it'** and another said **'everyone calms down'**. One child remarked **'we all get to talk and get to know each other better'**. Children in many classes said that circle time is used to discuss things that are worrying them, as well as sharing with their class and their teacher what they like and what they don't like.



Pupils said the teachers make time to talk to them if they do not want to discuss things during circle time or when the rest of the class is present. Pupils said they would approach their teacher at break or lunch time if they had something that they wanted to talk them



about without the rest of their peers being present. A pupil said that staff **'make sure that its dinner time or playtime when everyone is out of the class'** and that they **'roll down blinds, close windows and doors'** so that no one else can hear.

Pupils feel safe in school and think that if you shared a problem or a worry with a teacher **'they would sort it out for you'**.

Areas to explore

A small number of pupils in Year Six stated that they regularly miss P.E because they are working in SATs boosters. One pupil said that they missed attending P.E lessons because **'I let all my anger out in P.E'**.

Circle time is not used regularly in all classes. Some children in lower Key Stage Two stated that they have not done circle time in their class since the start of the academic year and that there is no designated time within the school day to talk about their feelings.

A large number of students said that they wouldn't tell a teacher if they were worried about things from outside of school. Pupils gave a number of reasons for this including **'some people don't like talking about their emotions'**. A common theme amongst pupils was that **'a teacher might have to tell someone'** and that **'they'll spread it around the staff room'**. Some pupils said that **'it would seem like you are telling tales'**. Another pupil remarked that if something happened at home **'it's not the schools fault it your parents fault'** and **'it's not the school's business'**.

Some children in Key Stage Two said that they find it embarrassing when their scores in tests are read aloud in front of the class.

There is a perception among students that in Cosy Corner **'you don't do work you just play'** and that **'it's easy'**. Pupils said that children go to Cosy Corner **'when they're not that good at work. They don't know what we're talking about'**.

Pupils in Year Six, Year Five and Year Four talked about feeling worried about Key Stage Two SATs. One child said **'my mind is blank as soon as I hear the word test my mind just empties'**.

Children in Year Six also talked about the amount of homework they had over half term. One pupil said **'I felt stressed at home because of school homework'** and another said it **'felt like I had mounds of homework I know we haven't got a lot of time till SATs'**. Pupils also said **'we need a week off'**.

Although Pupils think that teachers are good at noticing if they are feeling unhappy some children said that **'some kids hide it they force a smile out'** and that **'usually they'll [teachers] spot it if they're not in a rush to teach but if they're in a rush they don't really notice people who are upset'**.



Actions

- Monitor when SATs booster classes take place to ensure that the same students are not regularly missing the same lessons.
- Consider if it is possible to include a time in the morning for all pupils to let teacher know how they are feeling. This could be a display in the classroom where pupils move their name to indicate how they are feeling, it could be linked to colours as has already been used in Nurture. Some schools have an opportunity for all students to regularly speak to a teacher or TA during registration time to discuss both positive things and worries.
- Share test results with pupils individually rather than in front of the class.
- Encourage circle time to be used in all classes on a regular basis so that some children are not missing out on the opportunity to discuss their feelings.

