



## Narrowing the Attainment Gap

### SUMMARY

- 1.1 Attainment gaps between pupils from deprived backgrounds and their more affluent peers persist through all stages of education, including entry into higher education. The highest early achievers from deprived backgrounds are overtaken by lower achieving children from advantaged backgrounds by age seven.
- 1.2 The gap widens further during secondary education and persists into higher education. The likelihood of a pupil eligible for FSM achieving five or more GCSEs at A\*-C including English and mathematics is less than one third of a non-FSM pupil
- 1.3 A pupil from a non-deprived background is more than twice as likely to go on to study at university as their deprived peer.

### RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To ensure that officers from the School Improvement Team focus their work with schools and governors on using the Pupil Premium effectively in order to narrow the attainment gap.
- 2.2 To organise and launch a project involving joint working between secondary and primary schools.
- 2.3 To ensure that no Derby schools are recommended for a Pupil Premium review following their inspections by Ofsted.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **Key stage one (pupils aged seven):** When compared with pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, a greater proportion of pupils who were not eligible for free school meals achieved the expected level in all subjects in 2013. In reading, Derby's attainment points gap has widened since 2012 by 2% to a 14 percentage points gap (nationally the gap has narrowed by 2% to 12 percentage points gap). In writing – Derby's attainment points gap has widened since 2012 by 3% to a 16 percentage points gap (nationally the gap has narrowed by 1% to a 15 percentage points gap). In mathematics - Derby's attainment points gap has widened since 2012 by 5% to a 13 percentage points gap (nationally the gap has narrowed by 2% to a 9

percentage points gap).

- 3.2 **Key Stage Two (pupils aged eleven):** Pupils not eligible for free school meals continue to perform better than those eligible for free school meals. Derby's FSM/non-FSM attainment gap has widened from 20% in 2012 to 23% in 2013. This gap is wider than LA statistical comparators (21%), East Midlands (22%) and national (19%).
- 3.3 **GCSE** (*validated data for 2013 is not currently available*): GCSE attainment was lower for pupils who were known to be eligible for free school meals than pupils who were not eligible for FSM. Derby's FSM/non-FSM attainment gap has narrowed since 2011 (31% gap in 2010, 33% in 2011 and 29% in 2012).

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 **Pupil Premium** was introduced in April 2011; the pupil premium is allocated to children who are looked after by the local authority, those who have been eligible for FSM at any point in the last six years (also known as Ever 6 FSM) and for children whose parents are currently serving in the armed forces. The level of premium for 2013-14 is £900 per primary pupil, rising to £1300 per pupil for 2014-15. Secondary FSM 'Ever 6' attracts a premium of £900 rising to £935 in 2014-15.

From April 2014 children who are looked after will attract a higher rate of funding than children from low-income families - the 'pupil premium plus', which will be £1,900 per pupil for 2014-15. This is to reflect the unique challenges they face at school where they often struggle to keep up with their peers at both primary and secondary level.

It is for schools to decide how the pupil premium allocated to their school is spent. Schools will be held accountable for their use of the additional funding to support pupils from low-income families and the impact this has on educational attainment. School performance tables now include a 'Narrowing the Gap' measure showing how disadvantaged children perform in each school. Since September 2012, schools have had to publish online details of their pupil premium allocation and their plans to spend it in the current year.

- 4.2 **Pupil premium eligibility criteria for Children Looked After (CLA)**

Children looked after by the local authority qualify for pupil premium from the Reception year through to year 11 and when a child becomes looked after continuously for six months during the financial year.

All maintained schools and academies are required to have a designated teacher who is a source of expertise about the barriers to teaching and learning which prevent looked after children achieving their potential. The designated teacher also plays an important role as the main link with the local authority which looks after the child. They have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to promote his or her educational achievement. It will be for the school to decide how best to use the premium to meet the educational needs of the child.

#### 4.3 Ofsted and pupil premium

The most recent school inspection handbook produced by Ofsted states that its inspectors pay particular attention to how schools are using the pupil premium. In September 2012 Ofsted published the results of a survey it carried out to identify how schools were using this money to raise achievement and improve outcomes for pupils. Recommendations for schools from the survey include:

- School leaders, including governing bodies, should ensure that pupil premium funding is not simply absorbed into mainstream budgets but instead is carefully targeted at the designated children. They should be able to identify clearly how the money is being spent.
- School leaders, including governing bodies, should evaluate their pupil premium spending, avoid spending it on activities that have little impact on achievement for their disadvantaged pupils, and spend it in ways known to be most effective.
- Schools should continue to seek ways to encourage parents and carers to apply for free school meals where pride, stigma or changing circumstances act as barriers to its take-up

4.4 Ofsted now have a sharper focus to the performance and progress of pupil premium pupils in their inspections. It is unlikely that a school will be judged 'outstanding' if its disadvantaged pupils are not making good progress. Schools that are judged not to be using their pupil premium effectively will be expected to commission an external pupil premium review, led by a system-leader, in order to improve provision for their disadvantaged pupils. At this stage, no Derby schools have been recommended for a review of Pupil Premium following inspection.

#### OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

This report has been approved by the following officers:

<b>Legal officer</b>	N/A
<b>Financial officer</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources officer</b>	N/A
<b>Service Director(s)</b>	Lynda Poole, Director Learning and Inclusion
<b>Other(s)</b>	N/A

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<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial and Value for Money**

- 1.1 The national focus on LAs' role in school improvement carries implications for the resource needed by LAs to deliver that role.

**Legal**

- 2.1 None

**Personnel**

- 3.1 Advice in line with relevant policies, employment legislation and good practice would be given on any personnel implications arising from the need to make the improvement in schools.

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 The council's interest in equalities can be best delivered in this case through the recommendations

**Health and Safety**

- 5.1 None

**Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.1 None

**Asset Management**

- 7.1 None

**Risk Management**

- 8.1 School performance in relation to the attainment of different groups of pupils can be volatile, for example in the context of turnover of key posts. Risk management is the responsibility of Derby's School Improvement team; it is vital that the team has full and updated narrowing the gap data on all DCC schools and academies.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 9.1 Achieving their learning potential

Good quality services that meet local needs