

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

**LEARNING AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE
25 OCTOBER 2023**

**SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
22 NOVEMBER 2023**

PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING UPDATE 2023

**Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)
(Report No. 23/281)**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress made in Perth and Kinross to close the poverty-related attainment gap through the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). It outlines the range of PEF measures implemented to improve performance and monitor progress of improvements. It meets the requirements to report on the expenditure and impact of PEF.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Learning and Families Committee:

- Considers the contents of this report.

It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Performance Committee:

- Scrutinises and comments as appropriate on this report.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Appendices

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The PEF forms part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) programme which was launched in February 2015 and is currently in its seventh year. PEF is allocated by the Scottish Government to schools and is specifically targeted at closing the poverty-related attainment gap. A total of £130m has been committed to this funding as part of the national SAC programme for academic session 2023-2024.
- 4.2 In session 2022-2023, £200m of targeted funding was invested to help close the poverty related attainment gap, including the £130m allocated to PEF. This marked the first year of investment in an expanded £1b Attainment

Scotland Fund, which will be provided over the current parliamentary term (2021-2026), after an investment of over £750m in the previous parliamentary term (2016-2021).

- 4.3 Every education authority in Scotland has received PEF and 97% of Scottish schools have been awarded funding this session. PEF is allocated to schools on the basis of the estimated number of registered free school meals in P1 to S3, with £1225 allocated per pupil.
- 4.4 In Perth and Kinross, Headteachers have full access to PEF and meet regularly with their Finance Officer to review spending. Although funding is allocated on the basis of eligibility described above, Headteachers are expected to use their discretion in making decisions about which children and young people would benefit most from any particular intervention or approach, whilst keeping a clear focus on delivering equity. Headteachers work in partnership with other schools and their local authority whilst planning improvements and associated investment.
- 4.5 There is a continued expectation that funding will focus particularly on literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, and support the school's priorities in raising attainment. All schools develop a School Improvement Plan (SIP), outlining their PEF priorities, and setting out both the universal and targeted approaches that will be adopted to achieve the expected outcomes.

2022/23 Allocation in Perth and Kinross

- 4.6 In academic session 2022/2023, Perth and Kinross schools were allocated £1,873,930 of funding. This was then allocated to 68 of the 70 primary schools (2 primary schools did not meet the Scottish Government eligibility criteria in terms of their pupil body), all 11 secondary schools and 1 special school.
- 4.7 During financial year 2022/23, a total of £1,734,018 was spent (92.5% of allocation). A carry forward of £139,912 was taken into the financial year of 2023/24. At the end of the school year in June 2023, 99.6% of the 2022/23 PEF allocation had been spent.

Guidance and Planning

- 4.8 Revised Local PEF Guidance was issued to all Perth and Kinross schools in June 2023. This aligned closely with the Scottish Government's changes in the allocation of SAC funding as reflected in the paper [Scottish Attainment Challenge: framework for recovery and accelerating progress](#) published in March 2022. A key change is that PEF allocations to schools are now fixed until March 2026.

Interventions

- 4.9 Schools concentrated on a range of approaches to enhance the universal provision and targeted interventions for children and young people, to support their reconnection with learning in school and address any gaps.
- 4.10 Over the course of academic session 2022/23, an Interventions Mapping Tool has been developed which will provide schools with information and guidance on research-based interventions to address particular gaps or areas of need.
- 4.11 In academic session 2022/23, PEF plans focused particularly on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, and this will continue to be the focus for academic session 2023/24.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Impact

- 4.12 PEF is allocated directly to primary, secondary and special schools within Perth and Kinross and the local authority is required to monitor and evaluate its use, including reporting to the Scottish Government. Individual schools reported on the impact of PEF interventions within their annual Standard and Quality Reports for 2022-2023.
- 4.13 During the course of academic session 2022/23, the Raising Attainment Board challenged schools to focus more sharply on the stretch aims detailed in the Raising Attainment Strategy. The Board also monitored the impact of PEF expenditure and the impact of the identified interventions to close the poverty related gap.
- 4.14 Education Services staff provide support and challenge to schools in relation to raising attainment and closing the poverty related gap as part of their regular quality improvement work. Education Scotland's Attainment Advisor also works with identified primary schools and secondary schools to analyse data and identify appropriate strategies for closing the poverty related gap in more detail.
- 4.15 Progress is being made across Perth and Kinross in closing the poverty-related attainment gap with improvement demonstrated in Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy in P1, P4, P7 and in S3.
- 4.16 Detailed analysis of plans and interventions has identified the approaches which are having the most impact in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, enabling them to be scaled up and rolled out across Perth and Kinross schools.
- 4.17 This evidence-based approach has enabled the development of an Interventions Mapping Tool which will support schools to identify the most appropriate intervention to address identified gaps, based on research and evidence available from other settings.

4.18 Every school PEF plan for academic session 2023/24 has been reviewed and analysed by the Education Scotland Attainment Advisor. Detailed feedback has been provided and has been revisited during the Term 1 school improvement visits to all schools.

Next Steps in Supporting Schools

4.19 To ensure that the use of PEF continues to be monitored and evaluated, Education Services staff will ensure that there is:

- Continued promotion of, and support to schools in the delivery of, evidence-based interventions to target aspects of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, building upon the growing local evidence base.
- Effective deployment of Scottish Government Strategic Equity Funding in Perth and Kinross to rigorously map, challenge and support school PEF, building upon existing structures and approaches.
- Regular reporting and analysis of progress to the Raising Attainment Board.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Academic session 2022/2023 has seen improved levels of spending, supported by rigorous processes, to ensure that PEF is being spent in the same academic year and is being appropriately targeted to ensure its maximum impact for children and young people facing disadvantage.

Author

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Approved

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ANNEX

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/None
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	None
Corporate Plan	None
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (ii).

Corporate Plan

1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (ii).

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority area:

- Learning and Achievement

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 These are reported within the body of the report and in Appendix 1.

Workforce

2.2 N/A

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

The proposals have been considered under the Act; however, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only and the Committee are not being requested to approve, adopt or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

Sustainability

3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- In the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets.
- In the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaption programmes.
- In a way that it considers most sustainable.

3.3.1 N/A

Legal and Governance

3.4 N/A

3.5 N/A

Risk

3.6 N/A

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 Service Managers and Quality Improvement Officers within Education and Children's Services were consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

4.2 The Education Scotland Attainment Advisor was consulted in the preparation of this report.

5. Communication

5.1 N/A

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

3. APPENDICES

3.1 Appendix 1 - Pupil Equity Fund Report 2022 - 2023