



Ed. Turners

Guiding Smarter Education Thinking

Maximising the Impact of the Pupil Premium Grant

This document is designed to support senior leaders and governors in reflecting critically on the *real* impact of their Pupil Premium Grant (PPG). The questions move beyond compliance and attainment data, encouraging strategic, ethical and evidence-informed discussion about disadvantaged pupils' lived experiences and outcomes.

Reflective Questions for Senior Leaders

1. How well do we truly understand the lived experiences of our Pupil Premium pupils, and how systematically do we use safeguarding, wellbeing and attendance data alongside attainment data to inform PPG decisions?
2. To what extent does our Pupil Premium strategy prioritise emotional safety, regulation and readiness to learn, rather than assuming pupils are able to benefit equally from academic interventions?
3. How confident are we that our PPG spending addresses the *root barriers* to learning (e.g. trauma, instability, unmet mental health needs), not just the academic symptoms?
4. Where impact is limited, are we honest with ourselves about the limits of school-based intervention, and do we adjust expectations and strategies accordingly rather than layering additional interventions?
5. How effectively do we evaluate PPG impact beyond progress measures, for example, through reductions in safeguarding concerns, improved attendance, behaviour, emotional wellbeing, or pupil voice?
6. How well aligned is our PPG strategy with whole-school approaches to inclusion, nurture, behaviour and mental health, rather than operating as a bolt-on or parallel system?
7. In what ways do we ensure that high-quality teaching is genuinely high quality for disadvantaged pupils - including curriculum access, language development, feedback and relationships - not just in theory but in practice?
8. How transparent and honest are we with governors, inspectors and ourselves about what PPG *can* and *cannot* achieve in the absence of effective multi-agency and family support?
9. How do we engage families of Pupil Premium pupils in ways that acknowledge trust, fear, and past experiences of education systems, rather than assuming disengagement is a lack of interest?
10. If the attainment gap remains despite significant effort and expenditure, how do we use that evidence to advocate, locally and nationally, for wider systemic change rather than internalising failure as a school?

These questions are intended to support courageous conversations, strategic review, and morally grounded leadership in the use of Pupil Premium funding.