

# TLAT's Strategy for Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Pupils 2017-18

'I was a disadvantaged child, yet I had the advantage of being in the company of great teachers.'

A.P.J Abdul Kalam, 11<sup>th</sup> President of India

TLAT has very high expectations of its socially disadvantaged pupils. We are firmly committed to raising the achievement of all disadvantaged children at each stage of their education in all of our schools. We believe in equity and excellence and therefore do not accept that any child is destined to underachieve by virtue of their social circumstances. The Trust regards raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils as being at the very core of its moral purpose. Every person employed by TLAT has a part to play in helping disadvantaged children to achieve educational excellence, and each of us acknowledges that we are accountable for the impact of our efforts to improve outcomes and diminish gaps in achievement.

An important aspect of the Trust's efforts to raise achievement will be to ensure that Pupil Premium funding is spent in ways that have the maximum possible impact on pupil progress and learning. The Pupil Premium is additional funding from central government which is allocated to schools for the intended purpose of supporting them in their efforts to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, the overall aim being to diminish gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children both within school and nationally.

The Trust's strategic work on raising the achievement of disadvantaged children - at Strategic Leadership Team and individual school leadership level - is underpinned by the seven building blocks of success identified by the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER), *Supporting the Attainment of Disadvantaged Pupils: Articulating success and good practice*, (November 2015):

- Promoting an ethos of attainment for all pupils, rather than stereotyping disadvantaged pupils as a group with less potential to succeed;
- Having an individualised approach to addressing barriers to learning and emotional support, at an early stage, rather than providing access to generic support and focusing on pupils nearing their end-of-key-stage assessments;
- Focussing on high quality teaching first rather than on bolt-on strategies and activities outside school hours;
- Focussing on outcomes for individual pupils rather than on providing strategies;

- Deploying the best staff to support disadvantaged pupils; develop skills and roles of teachers and teaching assistants rather than using additional staff who do not know the pupils well;
- Making decisions based on data and respond to evidence, using frequent, rather than one-off assessment and decision points;
- Having clear, responsive leadership: setting ever higher aspirations and devolving responsibility for raising attainment to all staff, rather than accepting low aspirations and variable performance.

The Trust will rigorously review the learning and achievement of disadvantaged children in its schools, forensically analysing their progress and attainment. The Trust recognises that disadvantaged children do not form a homogenous group, and it will consequently raise questions about the achievement of disadvantaged pupils who are more able and/or SEND. It will also focus on the progress of pupils who have the longest history of continuous eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) as we know from research that the longer pupils have been eligible for FSM the more likely they are to underachieve.

The Trust acknowledges that effective governance is a crucial component of raising achievement and that it has a responsibility to ensure that any individuals involved in governance are properly equipped to ask searching questions about the performance of pupils who attract the Pupil Premium. Those involved in governance both at Board and LAB level need to be fully aware of the moral imperative of this aspect of their work. The Trust will carry out a mid-year and end-of-year review of the impact of this Strategy and report its findings to the Board.

The Trust believes that school leaders are best placed to make decisions about how Pupil Premium money is spent in their respective schools. However, schools will be held to account by the Trust's Board and the Local Area Boards for the impact of their spending. School leaders will need to be able to describe the barriers to learning which they have identified and explain why particular strategies have been chosen to address them. They will be required to report on the impact of their chosen strategies and the lessons learnt. To this end, each TLAT school will be required to have its school strategy for raising the achievement of disadvantaged children on its website by 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The Trust recommends that TLAT schools use the Teaching Schools Council template which is available online via the link below:

<http://tscouncil.org.uk/resources/guide-to-effective-pupil-premium/>

The Trust will facilitate school-to-school learning through its leadership and governance networks so that schools can learn about what works (and what doesn't) through discussion with other schools within the Trust and the wider KTSA family. TLAT school leaders are also encouraged to make use of the Sutton Trust's Families of Schools database in order to identify schools with similar demographic contexts to their own:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/families-of-schools-database>

The Trust expects school leaders to make very well informed decisions when it comes to spending pupil premium funding. It expects school leaders to be familiar with research findings such as those summarised in the Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit and Early Years Toolkit:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/early-years-toolkit>

The Trust expects its schools to rigorously audit, monitor and evaluate the impact of any strategies paid for out of Pupil Premium Grant funding. Where strategies are not proving effective, it is anticipated that they will be appropriately modified or discontinued.

## **Academy 11**

Academy 11 is TLAT's virtual school for disadvantaged pupils. Every child in a TLAT school who attracts pupil premium or pupil premium plus funding is included in the Academy 11 data. Since its inception in September 2016, it has been overseen by Andy Brumby, TLAT's Director of Achievement, and has rapidly become an integral aspect of the Trust's Raising Achievement Strategy. The purpose of Academy 11 is to provide Trust and school leaders with new and exciting ways of working together - in a spirit of collective responsibility - to analyse and improve the performance of disadvantaged children as a group across the Trust as a whole. We believe that these children should do just as well as their non-disadvantaged peers and our ambition is for Academy 11 to be up there with the best performing schools in the Trust and in nation as a whole. We consider this to be a realistic and achievable goal.

## **What is the vision in terms of key stakeholders?**

- Every child has the advantage of a great teacher in a great school
- Every child is engaged in an exciting and dynamic curriculum that is relevant and challenging
- Every child has the opportunity to participate in stimulating extra-curricular learning activities that broaden their experiences and raise their expectations.
- Every child's attendance will be at least in line with the national average for all children, and where it dips rapid action will be taken to address this situation
- Every child makes expected or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics and is consequently well prepared for the next stage in their education
- Every child is optimistic and enthusiastic about their learning and their future
- Every parent or carer is supported by the school to be actively engaged in their child's learning and development

- Every classroom teacher and every member of support staff knows the disadvantaged children in their classes and work together to help these pupils overcome their individual barriers to learning. They will recognise the importance of quality first teaching for these pupils, and where necessary offer and monitor additional support in whatever form it is required
- Every middle leader is accomplished at identifying barriers to learning for disadvantaged children within their subjects or age ranges, using a range of data to rapidly pinpoint areas requiring additional support or intervention
- Every school senior leader is *relentlessly* focused on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in their school
- Every school systematically evaluates its provision to ensure that it is fit for purpose and based on evidenced best practice
- Every member of the Trust's extended strategic leadership team is a champion for disadvantaged pupils in their work with individual schools and when facilitating sharing of best practice across schools
- Every Trustee and governor understands the moral imperative that underpins this Strategy and works collaboratively and strategically to ensure that the vision described above becomes a reality

#### **What is already in place within the Trust?**

- Director of Achievement with a specific remit to improve outcomes for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium
- TLAT Scorecard which tracks progress for all pupils and pupil premium pupils so that the schools and Trustees can determine strengths, areas for development and key actions to raise achievement
- Academy 11, TLAT's virtual school for disadvantaged children which offers new ways of looking at the data for disadvantaged children across the Trust
- Mid-year review of the impact of the Trust's efforts to raise achievement across its schools (January 18)
- Regular Pupil Premium Lead meetings (termly) through KTSA
- Raising Achievement newsletter which provides updates and disseminates good practice – 'Advantage TLAT' (termly)
- Governor training which is specifically targeted at raising the achievement of disadvantaged children
- School strategies which show what schools are doing to raise the achievement of disadvantaged children on school websites by end of September 2017.
- Achievement Group meetings which provide training, updates and opportunities for discussion linked to pupil premium (monthly); i.e. discussion of key messages from Professor Stephen Gorard at November meeting
- KTSA school improvement meetings which focus on most recent research on evidence-based best practice (for example, Professor Gorard)

- Schools provided with tools and templates which enable them to implement, report on and evaluate what they are doing with the pupil premium grant; i.e. TSC template for Pupil Premium Strategy

### **What impact is this having?**

- The performance of disadvantaged children is improving across the Trust. Stand out results include: 84.6% of disadvantaged passed the phonics screening test in Year 1; 73.8% achieved EXP+ in Reading at end of KS1; 75.4% achieved EXP+ in Reading at end of KS2; 54% attained EXP+ in RWM combined (compared to 38% in 2016) - source Core Stats.
- Our focus (through Future Leaders Programme etc) on more able disadvantaged pupils is starting to make a difference; i.e. 5% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the Higher Standard in RWM combined (compared to 0% in 2016)
- TLAT's work on raising achievement is increasingly acknowledged for its excellence and innovation at regional level; i.e. Director of Achievement invited to speak to RSC SW's team about TLAT's work on Pupil Premium
- TLAT contributes significantly to the raising achievement aspects of the KTSA School Improvement package through its leadership of School Improvement sessions, PP Leads meetings, Teach-meets etc.
- The level of awareness, discussion and focus on disadvantaged children has continued to improve at all levels; i.e. Future Leaders programme focused on addressing a wide range of barriers to learning including lack of cultural capital and low level of parental engagement
- There is a strong and growing sense of collective responsibility both within schools and across the Trust

### **What new initiatives are currently planned to improve outcomes for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium?**

- This year the Trust will undertake a mid-year review of the impact of its efforts to raise the achievement of disadvantaged children. This review will take place in the week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 and will be led by the Director of Achievement.
- The Trust will publish the research findings from the Future Leaders Programme on its website
- The Trust will scrutinise the learning and progress of disadvantaged boys as a priority since they were outperformed by other groups of pupils within the Trust including disadvantaged girls in summer 2017. It will seek to learn lessons from those schools where boys bucked the trend and performed well.
- The Trust will trial a Trust-wide initiative known as the Learning Lake Project designed to raise the aspirations of Year 6 boys.
- The Trust will begin to scrutinise the learning and progress of disadvantaged children who have the longest history of continuous FSM eligibility (3 years+) as suggested by Professor Stephen Gorard who spoke to the Trust's school leaders in November 2017

- The Trust will ensure that its NQTs and ITT students (through KTSA) are well informed about potential barriers to learning for disadvantaged children and strategies that can be deployed to address them.
- Raising achievement regional network: the Director of Achievement will meet with colleagues from other MATs across the south-west to share good practice and discuss innovation and research.
- The Trust will promote action research linked to metacognition and other evidence-based approaches through its networks and in-school activity; i.e. P4C trial at Foxhole LA