



**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
8 MARCH 2017**

SUBJECT: PUPIL EQUITY FUND

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of additional financial resources being disbursed to Moray schools as part of the Scottish Government's Pupil Equity Fund (PEF).
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III C (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee considers and notes the Moray position with regards to the Pupil Equity Fund.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In February 2015, the First Minister launched the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) with a clear objective of focussing efforts on narrowing the poverty related attainment gap which has blighted Scottish education for generations.
- 3.2 When the SAC was introduced in 2015 a small number of local authorities (initially seven, then increasing to nine) were designated as "challenge authorities" and were given additional resources to support raising attainment. Thereafter, more schools nationally were designated as "challenge schools" and also received additional resources to combat the poverty related attainment gap. Moray was neither a challenge authority, nor did it have any challenge schools. Moray benefitted from the "universal" offer of support which was 45 days of "Attainment Advisor" time, provided to support schools and local authorities in their attainment raising endeavours. Moray has had a very positive experience as a result of input from its Attainment Advisor who has visited almost all schools in Moray over the past year.
- 3.3 The PEF is the next stage of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Nationally, £120 million has been provided to help raise attainment with a focus on

supporting young people who face barriers to their learning due to the impact of poverty. The funding is available for financial year 2017/18 and is expected to be available for the next three years. The distribution is based on free school meal registration. The amount allocated to Moray is £1,270,800.

- 3.4 This money is to be allocated to Head Teachers in addition to existing resources. Head Teachers should work in partnership with each other and the local authority to consider the best use of the funding, taking account of the statutory duties of the local authority to deliver educational improvements and secure best value and their role as employer.
- 3.5 The PEF should articulate with current arrangements, for school improvement planning and reporting on standards and quality. Head Teachers must involve parents and young people in the planning process.
- 3.6 The funding must be used for activities and interventions which support children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. Funding is primarily aimed at young people in receipt of free school meals. Head Teachers should exercise their professional judgement to bring additional children and young people into targeted interventions as appropriate.
- 3.7 The funding should be focussed on activities and interventions which will lead to improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and should take account of research and evidence of what works best to close the attainment gap.
- 3.8 Head Teachers will be required to display a sound contextual awareness of their school communities and awareness of the “gap” which exists in their own schools and should, from the outset, have plans in place to evaluate the impact of the work they will undertake with their additional funding. School Improvement Planning Guidance and Advice has been reviewed to take account of this.
- 3.9 Training events, organised by Education Scotland, have been held in Aberdeen and Inverness for Head Teachers to learn more about the PEF. The Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) will meet with Moray Head Teachers on 9 March 2017 to further discuss how best the additional resource can be used and he will also put plans in place to monitor the use of the additional resource and to evaluate its impact on raising attainment and closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- 3.10 Schools will have to demonstrate actions, progress and impact in reducing the identified gaps in schools. A report will have to be submitted to the Scottish Government annually to provide evidence that the poverty and attainment gaps identified are being closed. This will add to the workload of the central team and add an additional area of challenge.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2015 - 2017**

This paper links to the priority of “Ambitious and Confident Children and Young People” as referred to in both Moray 2026 and the Council’s Corporate Plan. It also links closely with our requirement achieve Best Value.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

The Scottish Attainment Challenge is linked to the National Improvement Framework as outlined in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

(c) **Financial Implications**

Moray schools will receive an additional £1,270,800 in the financial year 2017/18 above their Develoved School Management (DSM) allocation.

(d) **Risk Implications**

This is a significant additional resource and schools will require support to ensure best use of this resource. This may put additional strain on central resources, including procurement and HR services. There are inherent risks in adding an additional area of scrutiny for the Quality Improvement Officer team as time will be diverted from other quality assurance visits/time.

(e) **Staffing Implications**

Schools may choose to use the money to increase their staffing complement at a time when the service is already struggling to fill certain vacancies.

(f) **Property**

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) **Equalities**

The PEF is designed to combat poverty related inequities which affect the attainment and wider educational and social outcomes for many children and young people.

(h) **Consultations**

Senior Officers in Education and Social Care, Lindsey Stanley, Business Support Manager, Paul Watson, Senior Education Adviser, Quality Improvement Officers, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, Legal Services Manager (Litigation and Licensing) and Don Toonen, Equal Opportunities Officer, have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the Moray position with regards to the Pupil Equity Fund.**

Author of Report: Laurence Findlay, Corporate Director (Education and Social Care)

Background Papers:

Ref: