

Pupil Premium Review

Minsthorpe Community College Academy

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Review completed by:

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Context

Minsthorpe is an 11-18 College with currently 1506 students on roll of which 228 are in post- 16. It serves the communities of South Elmsall, South Kirkby and Upton with students now attending from areas further afield in South and West Yorkshire.

Of the total cohort, 20% of students are resident in the bottom 10% of most deprived households in Wakefield District.

The College deprivation figure (ROL) is 0.25 compared to 0.20 nationally. 1.5% of students were NEET in September 2016 and the current figure is 1.2%. Those students eligible for Pupil Premium funding stands at 36% (Nat 28.9%). In Y7 and Y8 the proportion is even higher at 38%. The College is almost exclusively white British although currently caters for growing numbers of EAL young people. The proportion of students who are EAL is 2.3%. The proportion of students with SEN support is well above average at 18.1% (Nat 11%), with those with an EHC plan being at national average at 1.6% (Nat 1.7%). The College currently has 36% of the total cohort who are deemed to be Disadvantaged. In 2016-17 the College received £414,250 in Pupil Premium funding. In 2016 13.8% of students were PA. Current figure for Autumn- spring 2017 is 19.4%. The Autumn term 2016 figure was 24.9% due to three student bereavements.

The review was commissioned by the Principal in order to seek external evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of strategic plans and actions taken by leaders and managers in diminishing the difference in outcomes for Disadvantaged students compared with all students nationally.

Evaluative Summary

This report acknowledges the progress the College has made and is intended to enable the school to identify areas where actions can be more impactful, rapid and effective.

Since the last external Disadvantaged review in 2015 the college has focused its efforts in further reducing the gaps in achievement of disadvantaged students. There has been a 66% improvement on reducing gaps in performance of disadvantaged students since 2015. There is sound evidence of progress in outcomes for disadvantaged students over three years and since 2015. The college is predicting the gap will reduce further however uncertainties in the GCSE thresholds for English and Maths makes accurate predictions difficult.

The focus of senior leaders has resulted in measurable improvement in attendance over time. OA is on an improving trend 93.4 – 94 % 2013- 2016. Attendance rates have dropped this year due to

unforeseen incidents. The PP gap against national although higher than national has reduced from last year. Absence remains stubbornly high and the college are resolute in their efforts to revise and revisit practice in order to reduce absence rapidly

There is a sharp and forensic focus on a whole college approach and strategy for Pupil premium this has led to an increased focus at all levels, including governance, on Pupil Premium. The College can demonstrate incremental improvements in progress and attendance over time and self-review documentation reflect priorities accurately.

Senior leaders are reflective and considered in their approach and strategies relating to achievement of disadvantaged students. Much work has been done to ensure rigorous systems and processes are in place that ensures disadvantaged students are regularly monitored and their progress closely tracked. The college can demonstrate higher expectation for staff and students and identify areas of good practice.

Strengths

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There has been a 66% improvement on reducing gaps in performance of disadvantaged students since 2015. There is sound evidence of progress in outcomes for disadvantaged students over three year and since 2015. The focus of senior leaders has resulted in measurable improvement in attendance over time.

Senior leaders are reflective and considered in their approach and strategies relating to achievement of disadvantaged students. Much work has been done to ensure rigorous systems and processes are in place that ensure disadvantaged students are regularly monitored and their progress closely tracked.

All staff came well prepared and keen to engage in professional discussion and accepting of challenge. Staff are clearly committed to moving this agenda forward as part of a whole college strategy.

Senior leaders describe the breadth of actions and interventions undertaken. There is clear evidence of impact arising from the implementation of strategic plans. However, in some cases actions and impact measures are too dispersed and would benefit from being subsumed into a single strategic plan.

The College has accurately recognised gaps in the performance for key groups of students including PP and disadvantaged. A cohesive and clearly defined strategy for Pupil Premium students in KS 4 especially with Y11 brings together key aspects of the College strategy. This is developing at Key Stage 3.

Leaders and managers have undertaken a significant amount of work to improve outcomes for PP and disadvantaged students. There is a clarity of roles and responsibilities for leaders and managers at all levels with regard to implementing the whole college strategy and middle leaders articulate clearly the actions they are taking. However, leaders are less confident in articulating the intended outcomes arising from actions.

Strategic leadership is drawing on the skills and expertise of staff to move the College forward. Leaders gather a wide range of evidence including data which is shared with teams across the

College. Sharper and more concise presentation of comparative data would further strengthen the evidence of impact.

There is an intense focus on Y11. There are also pockets of good practice in key areas and targeted interventions which are showing impact, such as work of EWO, Shine, the nurture group, alternative provision, destinations, Guidance Adviser, marking and feedback, aspects of teaching in Hums, Technology and Languages. Senior leaders have evaluated effectively the breadth and appropriateness of interventions funded by Pupil Premium.

Systems for holding staff to account are transparent and robust monitoring systems are extensive and are in place through line management meetings, including progress meetings and inclusion meetings. Teachers are being asked about the learning and progress of targeted groups.

Students are positive about the College; they feel safe and well supported. Students enjoy coming to College.

There are a good range of enrichment opportunities through extracurricular activities.

Support for Achievement Mentors target individual students with Personal, social, emotional development needs and provide bespoke support according to need.

Destination data: shows that 85.9% of Pupil Premium students have the offer of a college place and 2.5% have apprenticeships in the current Y11.

Governors

Governors receive timely and detailed information about Pupil Premium spending.

Staff and governors are aware of their statutory duties and responsibilities regarding disadvantaged students and are fully committed to meeting the needs of all students. There is a clear commitment and drive to secure improvement by senior and middle leaders.

Activities are monitored and reviewed by governors against strategic plans. It is clearly a priority for the College but lacked confidence in articulating the impact of current Pupil Premium funding.

Areas for improvement

There is still work to do in terms of consistency in expectation and focus on key groups beyond Y11.

There is not yet a wholly cohesive / consistent approach to raising standards for PP and disadvantaged students across all year groups and in all subjects. As a result actions are not yet necessarily translating into improved outcomes for students.

The College collects a wide range of data, however the use of data needs further refinement so that forensic (not more) information is clearly presented and used as part of summary evaluation e.g. prior attainment / SEND / gender, consequently there needs to be greater clarity of strategy regarding identification of key groups.

Governors are less confident in articulating improvement achieved in supporting PP and disadvantaged and explaining the impact of interventions.

The review team held a number of meetings with key personnel during the review. The following gives a summary of the meetings with some recommendations arising from observations.

Leadership and Management

- It is evident that the College has moved forward from a low baseline in 2015. The College has made progress in diminishing the difference in outcomes for disadvantaged students. Current assessment data is showing improving outcomes for Pupil Premium and disadvantaged students. The College has reduced the number of days lost to learning and attendance of key groups is improving.
- Senior leaders are confident in highlighting the progress made and the impact of interventions.
- Senior leaders are able to identify and explain incremental improvement arising from whole College and departmental self-evaluation. However, they are less confident in identifying less effective strategies and interventions.
- Leaders and managers undertake a range of meetings to monitor progress and implementation of the strategic plan and it is clear that middle leaders know current improvement priorities in terms of actions and interventions. Kim McGowan is the lynch pin between with management and strategic analysis of data.
- CTLs articulated confidently the strategies on place for a group of targeted students in Y11.
- There is a cohesive and proactive approach to literacy across the College. Staff have received training on developing students' writing skills, producing pieces of extended writing.
- Opportunities for enrichment activities are varied and many, for example students in music learning how to play a musical instrument.
- Programmes are in place for a visit by students from the University of York to work with most able students. There is also a nurture programme, the Shine programme, to support and challenge more able disadvantaged students.
- There are a good range of opportunities for engagement and widening participation.
- College takes feedback from students on additional opportunities to raise aspiration.
- There is no formal process for feeding back to parents on wider engagement opportunities.

However

- Although CTLs were able to articulate their analysis and understanding of the performance of different groups across year groups they were unable to give their analysis of different groups in terms of different prior attaining bands for their subjects.
- CTLs focus on progress data but need to act upon student attendance at lessons in their subject by providing a structured catch up programme. Consequently, CTLs have limited view of students who have poor attendance and are disadvantaged.
- CTLs are less confident in identifying strategies and interventions that are clearly working and have greater emphasis on working with Y11 & Y10 students. To maximise progress, the same focus is needed in all year groups.
- The work of SFAs is having impact as a result of working with small groups of targeted students. However, whilst the ability of staff to provide evidence of impact was variable, a positive example in mathematics indicated that an intervention group supported by the HLTA, made +0.14 progress since Y10 as a result of effective support.
- Effective work is being undertaken in order to address persistent absence. However there is limited focus on analysing attendance data and mapping this against student progress. Staff clearly recognise that poor attendance is a barrier to learning and progress.

Recommendations arising from meetings with leaders and managers

Senior leaders may wish to;

- Consider long term sustainability of strategic plans and actions.
- Highlighting opportunities for marginal gains as a result of adjusting aspects of the strategic plan highlighting clear criteria linked to measurable improvement.
- Ensure parents and carers are fully informed about intervention and support with students.
- Bring together the range of different information on Pupil Premium under a single a single data set producing a holistic view of the impact of the whole College strategy for Pupil Premium. This work may include plotting common themes and issues across identified student groups and subjects in order to develop an evidence base to inform student level interventions across subjects and year groups.
- Ensure there is a much sharper focus on attendance, linking absence to lost learning. There is still a role in raising the profile of attendance at College even further at all levels
- Ensure tracking and monitoring at KS3 fully mirror interventions and support at KS4, so that there is the same degree of analysis and attention on Year groups 7-10 with identified and specific actions for all Pupil Premium students. This needs to be core provision rather than add on with 'equity not equality'.
- Actions of senior leaders are focused systems for measuring and tracking, it would be better to focus on implementing a single central plan that sits behind SDP and links PP to key aspects of the SDP single strategic plan. This plan could then better evidence impact and inform next steps as part of the spending plan.
- Bring together the range of different information on Pupil Premium under a single data set producing a holistic view of the impact of the whole College strategy for Pupil Premium.

Learning Walk

Learning walks revealed students engaged and on task. Staff and student relationships were good, as a result positive relationships in lessons ensure a good climate for learning;

- The Assistant Principal (Quality and Impact) is clear about the priorities for the College including more consistent marking and feedback and more differentiation in lesson planning.
- Students demonstrate a love of learning and resilience when work is difficult. Monitoring processes are in place at all levels Teachers are monitored by their appraiser and Curriculum Team Leader and then SLT.
- Strengths include Teacher confidence and subject expertise; some targeted questioning for key groups.
- Informative and helpful marking and feedback was observed including effective use of peer assessment whereby students provide feedback on each other's work. However weaknesses observed included some passive learning; low level challenge in a mathematics lesson; no identification of additional and different by some teachers and in too many lessons the absence of stretch and challenge for different groups.

Work scrutiny

- In the books shared marking was in line with whole College marking policy as outlined in Monitoring template in place for SLT
- The template does not reference attendance or homework
- Identification of impact arising from teachers checking back was observed however there is not an explicit link to pupil progress towards targets.
- There is some variability in the quality of marking and feedback in subjects and across subjects.

Summary of Student work sample

- Quality of teaching & learning and impact on securing progress over time for PP students
- the quality of marking is variable and some inconsistent feedback

Recommendations arising from work scrutiny

The College should consider further strategies included in the whole College literacy marking policy to better support Pupil Premium students.

Work scrutiny could focus on single students at risk which is shared at Curriculum Area level so that consistency is monitored and challenged

Expectations regarding presentation could be made more explicit in the whole College Assessment and Feedback Policy.

Student Voice - Meeting with students

- Students were extremely positive in their views about the College and how their needs are met.
- Students say that teachers encourage students to work hard and do well'.
- Students say that they are supported in most lessons to catch up when they have been absent from College.
- Students would be happy to take visitors around College to any part of the College. Students say that the College is safe environment and they are kept safe.
- Students say that relationships are good between students.
- There is an active student council. There are student mentors.
- College Action Team come up with ideas and suggestions e.g. charity events on Red Nose Day.
- Bullying is not a concern. Students say that the College tackles bullying quickly and effectively when incidents occur.
- Good behaviour is rewarded and recognised. Students are clear about rules and expectations of behaviour. There is an appropriately staged discipline process. New behaviour policy is working well.
- Students say that in the majority of lessons students behave well. Students are sometimes asked about teaching they have in lessons. Students know where to go to and who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Students say that there is always someone available to talk to if they need help or assistance.
- Students know their targets for end of year. They have them on the front of books. Targets are in planners Data is collected and reports help students to understand the progress they are making however more detailed discussions could be planned and held for the more vulnerable students as part of learning conversations.

- Students know their current attendance. Students are encouraged to go to interventions but not necessarily directed. Consequently, some students make little effort to catch up on work after a period of absence.
- Students say that they are encouraged to behave well but there is some silly behaviour in lessons. Behaviour in lessons is good but can vary due to some disruption by a small number of students. Some teachers are inconsistent in managing behaviours
- There are seating plans which identify key groups evident in lessons visited.
- Students say that they like and enjoy College and feel safe in all a
- Students are proud of their College and would recommend the college to others.
Even better if
- Movement around the College can be a challenge; stair cases and spaces around College can be a busy.
- Student voice extends to vulnerable groups so that a wider client voice is represented

Attendance

- There has been an in year reduction in Persistent Absence; action taken to reintegrate PA students back into College has improved, with some evidence of impact on key groups.
- The impact of Pupil Premium strategy on attendance is positive. Impact on PP for attendance: From Autumn 1 attendance of Disadvantaged students has improved.
- Middle leaders have little awareness of poor attendance as a barrier to learning;
- Senior leaders should look into to ensuring that all identified students will have a learning plan to support reintegration

Recommendations for Attendance

- The College may wish to consider different strategies to help students reintegrate – look at phased reintegration, conversations with parents, letters to parents are about absence and could be more appropriately worded and refer to work missed
- Plans are in place for some Pupil Premium students but a Minsthorpe risk register with key groups identified with current tracking data would streamline present data sets in order to monitor progress and ensure interventions are in place and swift action is taken. As a result there would be a more joined up and strategic approach to the identification, intervention and action taken by leaders and managers at all levels to overcome barriers to learning for disadvantaged and vulnerable learners.
- A student 'risk register' would ensure capacity can be rationalised and thus staff can work smarter focusing resources more strategically according to need
- The roles and responsibilities for vulnerable students at risk of poor attendance and high exclusions needs to be streamlined and linked even more closely with teaching staff.
- A graduated approach for interventions which include a more focused learning conversation with parents and carers.

Governance

- Governors articulate the overarching priorities of the Pupil Premium action plan sets out key priorities and actions. The plan is reviewed twice a year by governors.
- The action plan is linked to whole College strategic plan through in year data tracking
- College focus this year is on Y11. Governors expect to see a reduction in gaps and disadvantaged students 'catching up'. Governors unable to give figures or proportions for demonstrating improvement.
- Attendance data is shared with Governors re-disadvantaged students. Governors expect attendance will have improved 'but not for all'.
- Focus is very much on Y11 rather than earlier intervention and broader focus.
- Governors receive a wealth of information about student learning and progress. Governors must be able to extrapolate from the information the patterns and trends and evidence of impact and improvement. Having a more strategic view.
- Biggest challenges are 'across the board', addressing gaps in Y10 and Y11 but little reference is made to addressing gaps at KS3.
- However, governors lack confidence in identifying the key challenges and presenting evidence of impact. Consequently, the understanding of progress the college is making in addressing gaps as presented plans appear separate and disparate.

Recommendations for Governors

- Governors have a prompt sheet with key data and summary of progress and impact during the year.
- Various strategic action plans are aligned into a single strategic plan.
- Conducting student voice with disadvantaged students to seek their views on the effectiveness and impact of Pupil Premium funding on their learning and engagement.

Overall recommendations and next steps for senior leaders

The Principal and senior leaders may wish to;

- Review existing processes and procedures so that they can facilitate working smarter rather than harder in order to maximise impact
- Ensure greater clarity about resource and information management in order to fully evidence impact – what information is gathered and is its use fit for purpose?
- Streamline senior and middle leadership roles and responsibilities with regard to the strategic management of Pupil Premium in order to reinforce lines of accountability.

Next steps for senior leaders

- Produce a front piece narrative for each subject SCIF file to draw together the key strands of analysis e.g. More able disadvantaged / HAPs who are Disadvantaged. Include attendance data on the section 6 data sheet for Y10 and Y11.

- Produce shorter and more concise evaluative summary [one side] in the QASAR for each subject

- Single side summary presenting ONLY evidence of impact e.g. PP action plan incorporated into the SDP

- Refine and review information and data. Risk register and single data sheets and an integrated data sheet for Key Performance Indicators. Produce summary documents for data which include prior attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour information e.g. The section 6 data sheet for Y10 and Y11

- Press pause, review and refine the range of actions and interventions in place to clarify what is working and what isn't. Refine the effectiveness of monitoring activities to be integrated more closely linked to key priorities.