

What is the PDG?

The PDG is a grant that provides extra funding from the Welsh Government. *“To overcome the additional barriers poorer pupils face that prevents them from achieving their full potential.”*(Welsh Gov, no date)

The PDG was implemented in Wales in 2012, it was set up to enable learners that are eligible for free school meals and looked after children between the ages of 5 and 15 to access extra opportunities and improve outcomes via the grant.

“This may include exceptionally able pupils who, because of their family background are not achieving their full personal potential, even though they appear to be holding their own in comparison to their peers.”(Welsh Gov, 2013)

The Pupil development grant is another area of the grant which is provided to support children of families who are considered deprived. The development grant issues money to families that qualify to help fund things such as school uniform, extra curricular activity equipment and other essentials. This is a sum of 125 pounds given during 3 slots between reception and year 10 of comprehensive school. The Pupil Deprivation Grant is a sum of money given to schools to allocate within their setting to areas which they feel will benefit from this support and need improvement or financial aid. Each school receives a different amount of money depending on how many children they have that access free school meals.

“By age 16, children from better off families are more than twice as likely to achieve five good GCSE’s than those from disadvantaged homes.”(Welsh Gov, 2013)

Pupil Deprivation Grant

How is the grant used?

The first setting I will discuss is Setting A, which is a special school. The school's grant is approximately 40,000 pounds. This setting prioritized the use of the grant towards one main area which was communication throughout the school. From this the plan shows that different areas would have money spent to advance different important and relevant factors to achieve this. These plans consisted of relevant staff training, different communication aids used that would be used for the school such as sign language. Some of the funds would be spent on bought-in interventions which require training or regular updating and refreshers. For this reason the school selected a few staff members to take an external intense training course and return as an internal trainer to be able to maintain this for the foreseeable future. *According to (Ministry of Education, 2015) “When communication is effective, both the student and the teacher benefit. Communication makes learning easier, helps students achieve goals, increases opportunities for expanded learning, strengthens the connection between student and teacher, and creates an overall positive experience”*

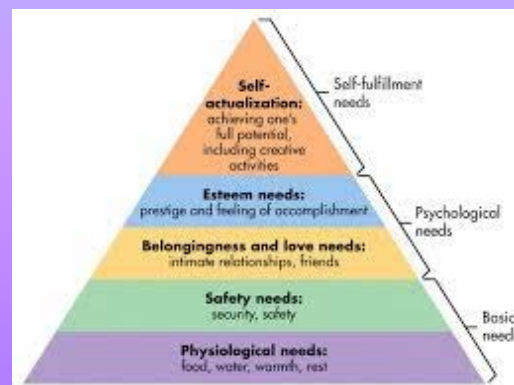
Some of the funding was accessed to provide staff and resources to offer training to parents and carers. To share the importance of a total communication friendly school, and encourage everyone to be on board and sharing good practice. Monitoring the impact of the training and strategies used. Also funding to purchase programmes to monitor and assess the progress and further ideas to advance the process. Monitoring the impact of the training and strategies used. Using specific language bought approaches and making resources and implementing as a whole school and raise the awareness of importance of these. The setting also planned to have access to a speech and language team to provide further support and maintain a consistent approach throughout the school. Estyn encourages a whole school approach to tackling disadvantaged pupils, in an article of theirs it says *“The influence and reach of poverty extends beyond the impact of income alone. It can play a role in learner confidence, aspiration and future employability.”*(Estyn, no date.)

A mainstream setting local to the previous school receives approximately 20,000 more from the grant than School A. However this setting has almost double the amount of pupils to the first school.

This placement has allocated their funds to different areas of improvement rather than focusing on one main area as the previous. This could be as they may have different programmes and interventions they are using as a mainstream school in comparison with the setting mentioned before.

The areas they have covered do include speech and language although briefly. This school has also allocated funds to staff training but isn't as specific in their description as to what areas the training will focus on. This setting also says they will use the grant to employ extra staff to support where needed. However the Welsh Government says *“In particular it seems obvious that employing classroom assistants will add value to what is delivered in the classroom. In fact this is not necessarily the case. Research has shown that the more support the pupil receive from a teaching assistant the less progress the child made.”*(Welsh Gov, 2013). This could also be due to the fact that the pupils that need extra help are supported but the ones that are able to do the work but have potential to be given more complicated tasks are not given that opportunity even with the extra support staff.

“All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, and no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.”(Unicef, no date)



(McLeod, S., 2020)

Maslows Hierarchy of needs.

Maslow, a theorist that created the hierarchy of needs says people require each 'need' to be met before they can move up the hierarchy. The bottom is Physiological, this includes basic needs food water warmth etc, this is relevant in schools with regard to access to lunch, correct room temperature, access to a drink. These are things that are provided through intervention such as free school meals and funded by things such as the PDG. This shows that the basic needs are met by things such as this grant. The next level is safety, feeling as though they belong, self esteem, respect from others, knowledge and understanding and finally self actualization. Through different interventions and programmes that schools are able to provide individual children through funding such as the PDG, the pupils have access to more support and ways to reach their maximum potential, which as Maslow says is not possible if their basic needs are unmet.

The World Bank, an organization that promotes social inclusion, says *“The process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society and the process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of those disadvantaged to take part in society.”*(World Bank, no date)

The PDG allows schools to support students in having access to a wide range of activities and extra support in things that they may not have been able to access without this intervention. Things such as after school clubs, music lessons etc that schools provide can all be used by the grant to enable individuals access to social inclusion and experiences that they too should be entitled to.

Positives of the PDG

- Effective feedback on learning
- Peer tutoring
- early intervention

Negatives of the PDG

- Employing extra teaching assistants
- Ability grouping
- Reducing the size of primary classes
- Teacher performance related pay

References

Estyn . (no date). *Our Priorities*. Available: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/about-us/our-priorities>. Last accessed 22/8/2020.

Estyn . (2014). Tackling deprivation and raising standards . *Promoting good practice in tackling poverty and disadvantage* . . (1)

McLeod.S. (2020). *Maslow's Heirachy of needs*. Available: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>. Last accessed 22/8/2020.

Ministry of Education . (2015). *Importance of communication in the classroom* . Available: <https://www.education.gov.gy/web/index.php/teachers/tips-for-teaching/item/1570-importance-of-communicating-in-the-classroom>. Last accessed 22/8/2020.

Pye.J. (2017). Key Findings. *Evaluation of the Pupil Deprivation Grant*.

Public Health England. (2014). The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment. *Pupil health and wellbeing* . .

Unicef. (no date). *The convention on the rights of the child*. Available: <https://www.unicef.org/sop/convention-rights-child-child-friendly-version>. Last accessed 22/8/2020.

Welsh Gov. (2015). *Education of disadvantaged children* . Available: <https://gov.wales/education-of-disadvantaged-children>. Last accessed 22/8/2020.

Welsh Gov. (2013). *What really works?*. Available: www.cymru.gov.uk. Last accessed 22/8/2020.

Welsh Gov. (no date). *Pupil Development Grant*. Available: <https://gov.wales/pupil-development-grant-access>. Last accessed 22/8/2020.

World Bank. (no date). *Social Inclusion* . Available: <https://www.worldbank.org/>. Last accessed 22/8/2020.