

Pupil Development Grant (PDG)

What is the PDG?

- ✧ While making a commitment to the UNCRC in 2004, the WG agreed to a core aims, that all children are not disadvantaged by poverty (Donaldson, 2015).
- ✧ Introduced in 2012 by the Welsh Government (WG, 2019) [2]
- ✧ Previously known as Pupil Deprivation Grant until 2017 (WG, 2019) [2]
- ✧ Support provided to those eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM); if parents claim Universal Credit and do not have an annualised net income of £7,400, child tax credit with an annual income of no more than £16,190, and income support (WG, 2019) [3]
- ✧ Support is also provided for individuals looked after by the authority; Looked After Children (LAC)
- ✧ Extra funding is aimed to help individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome any additional barriers that stop them from achieving their full potential (WG, 2015)
- ✧ In 2015 funding was separated for LAC and eFSM pupils into two different grants, both offering £1150 per individual per year for those in years 1-11, but both grant funding is allocated differently (WG, 2019) [2]
- ✧ The PDG for LACs allocations are made to the regional consortia instead of schools with aims of facilitating more strategic approaches to uses of funding across all regions (WG, 2019) [2]
- ✧ The Early Years PDG was introduced in 2015 to extend funding to 3-5 year olds, and allocates £700 in funding per individual per year (NAW, 2018)

Criticisms

- ★ PDG was originally arranged to narrow a large and long-standing attainment gap (WG, 2017) which as narrowed in recent years, but still exists at:
 - ♦ 20.4% in Foundation Phase,
 - ♦ 15.4% at the end of KS2
 - ♦ 19.9% at the end of KS3 (WG, 2019) [1]
- ★ The PDG has become more concentrated on well-being. This has caused ambiguity in schools in whether the grant should be used to help all FSM learners or only those with low attainment (WG, 2017)
- ★ Some schools with higher attainment use the funding to support More Talented and Able (MAT) pupils, but schools mainly concentrate on lower-attaining individuals (WG, 2017)

- ★ While recognising that the WG uses FSM eligibility as a proxy for deprivation (NAW, 2018) it's important to recognise that pupils who are not eFSM can still be disadvantaged. An evaluation of the PDG carried out in 2017 found that practitioners felt that the eFSM indicator does not capture all children of disadvantage (WG, 2017):
 - those without similar opportunities to their peers,
 - who found learning difficult,
 - those just above the poverty line and
 - individuals impacted by shorter term circumstances, such as family breakdown or bereavement were also disadvantaged (WG, 2017)
- ★ It also found that some schools top up the funding; Secondaries added £44,356 on average from their own budgets or the school's effectiveness grant (WG, 2017) highlighting issues with amounts of funding.

Theories

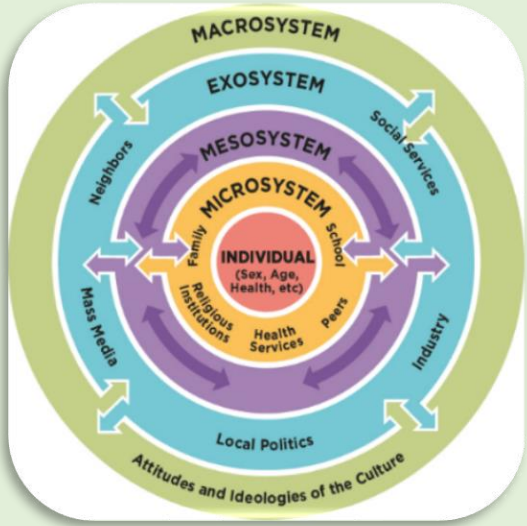
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- ✧ The way individuals respond to learning is dominated by which need is their priority, at any given time (Bates, 2019)
- ✧ Free School Meals help children who may not have access to nutritional meals at home, by providing them for free at school

(McLeod, 2020)



Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Model of Development



(NAP, 2016)

Levitas' Three Social Discourses

- Social Intergrationalist Discourse (SID) focuses on how employment and entrance into the labour market is key to eradicating social exclusion (Levitas, 2005), this is relevant still as non eFSM individuals are twice as likely to achieve at least 5 GCSE's above C grade (SMCPC, 2014)
- Moral Underclass Discourse (MUD) focuses on individual delinquency and lapses in morality, therefore places blame on individuals for how their own behaviour affects their exclusion from society (Levitas, 2005)
- Lower attainment is linked with an increased likelihood of engagement in criminal activity (Feinsten et al, 2008)
- There is an economic strategy which recognises the role of the educational system in giving individuals the required knowledge, skills and confidence needed to enter the labour market, along with high level education and training for employment (WG, 2010)
- Redistributional Discourse (RED) focuses on how the redistribution of wealth in society can help eradicate poverty. PDG is an example of this, in how wealth is distributed to schools to aid individuals disadvantaged by poverty.



(EuroStat, 2019)

School Comparison

- ❖ School A and B are both mainstream secondary schools in Wales, UK, in different environments:
 - ↳ School A being in a rural (village) environment and
 - ↳ School B in an urban (town) environment
- ❖ School A supports a more diverse range of ages - 11-19, compared with 11-16 there are higher levels of eFSM pupils in School B:
 - ↳ Difference of 9.05%, with 20.2% at School B, which was above the national average of 17.1% (Estyn, 2017) [2]
 - ↳ 11.15% at school A (Estyn 2017) [1]
- ❖ EFSM learners in both primary and secondary schools in Wales are more likely to be absent persistently, and without authority; secondary age individuals are 4 times more likely (WG, 2014) [2]:
 - ↳ Both schools have an attendance officer, and both state that officers work closely with parents, Heads of Pupil Progress, and engagement workers but School B also assign attendance monitoring and tracking duties to Teaching Assistants (TAs) (School B, 2020)
- ❖ Health and well-being are important factors in enabling successful learning, and are recognised as key elements to one of four purposes of the curriculum –'healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society' (WG, 2020)
 - ↳ School A has Nurture Group and base which provides emotional support for pupils who have suffered trauma and have high levels of anxiety, with 40% of those attending eFSM (Estyn, 2019)
- ❖ EFSM learners are also more likely to experience behavioural difficulties (DCFS, 2009)
 - ↳ School A has an inclusion team called Cyfle that focuses on behavioural support, uses restorative practice, mentoring, and offers incentives and courses. 60% of those accessing are eFSM (ERW, 2019)
 - ↳ School B seems to combine the pastoral and behavioural support in having an 'Emotional Behaviour Hub', specifically offering on site access to specialist support provision and pastoral support to vulnerable pupils (School B, 2020)
- ❖ Successful schools plan interventions that 'focus on improving attainment of individuals from deprived backgrounds' (WG, 2015), and both schools provide interventions but:
 - ↳ School A states 20% of pupils in KS3 attend literacy and numeracy intervention such as Fresh Start, are eFSM (ERW, 2019)
 - ↳ School B provides interventions during KS3, but also during KS4, where additional support is made available depending on individual need (School B, 2020)
- ❖ The 2015 Guidance also states for schools to be successful they monitor progress of those targeted, and evaluate effectiveness (WG 2015):
 - ↳ Both schools have tracking systems designed to identify needs, track and monitor progress of eFSM, and to monitor the impact of the interventions (School B, 2020), but School A has a designated Targeted Improvement Group Coordinator who provide mentoring to encourage progress (ERW, 2019)
- ❖ Disadvantaged pupils, when compared to their peers, receive little or sometimes no support at home for their learning (Goodman, 2010)
 - ↳ School B offers enhanced library provision to aid with this during lunch times and after school (School B, 2020)
- ❖ School B also offers parental support through a Learning Coach, who provides support for families when needed, with help from external agencies if needed (School B, 2020)

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