

## Diminishing the Difference

### Questions to Consider

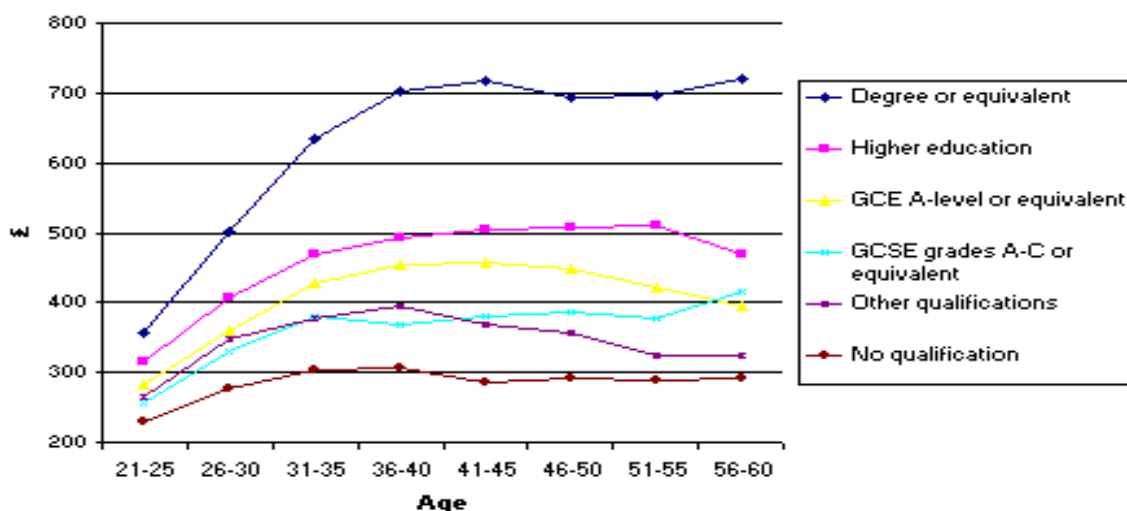
1. Why do disadvantaged children underperform in UK and East Sussex schools?
2. What outcomes should we expect?
3. What works – research and practice?
4. How do the best schools diminish the difference?
5. Changing the culture – Key Messages
6. What can we do differently in East Sussex?
7. The role of Governors

### Background Information

#### **a. The Issue**

- The problem of white “working class” underachievement is not specific to boys; while girls generally do better than boys; poor, white, British girls are still amongst the lowest performing groups nationally.
- The achievement gap between white British children eligible for free school meals and their better-off white British peers has barely changed over the last 11 years.
- White British students with lower socio-economic status spend fewer evenings per week completing homework than peers from other ethnic backgrounds.
- White British students who are eligible for free school meals have a higher rate of absence from school than other major ethnic groups. In East Sussex the FSM absence rate is 3 times that of children not eligible for FSM.
- Children from higher-income families hear about 30 million more words during their first three years of life than children from lower-income families – but back-and-forth conversation matters even more.
- Children eligible for FSM are more than twice as likely to be identified by schools as having SEN relating to behavioural, social, emotional issues (ADHD etc) and, therefore, not be accessing the full curriculum.
- Maternal aspirations matter – 81% of high income mothers say they hope their 9 year old will go to university compared with 37% of low income mothers.
- Poorer children who perform well at KS1 are much more likely than better off children to have fallen behind by the age of 11.
- In East Sussex primary aged children eligible for FSM are nearly 6 times as likely to be excluded as those who are not and at secondary age they are 3.5 times as likely to be excluded.
- Belief in the value of education, your own ability and the extent to which you can control events that affect your life are linked to socio-economic background and have a profound effect on performance.
- Cognitive ability, and intelligence is not fixed. The brain is mouldable by experience and responds to social attitudes and expectations – yet some schools still set targets based on prior attainment.
- **Education matters:-**

**Figure 1. Weekly earnings of full-time employees by highest educational qualification and age**



## **b) Good practice and good outcomes**

In many East Sussex schools, disadvantaged children achieve good outcomes. Some of these schools will be at Area Forums to share good practice with governors and talk about what makes a difference in their school

In 2011, The Sutton Trust carried out extensive research into what approaches have the greatest impact for the least cost. A summary of their findings is attached

### **Successful approaches - according to Ofsted:-**

- Pupil Premium funding ring-fenced to spend on target group
- Maintained genuinely high expectations – reach age related expectations not just make progress from starting points
- Thoroughly analysed which pupils were under-achieving against ARE not “hidden” targets
- Used evidence to allocate funding to big-impact strategies
- High quality teaching, not interventions to compensate for poor teaching
- Used achievement data to check interventions effective and made adjustments where necessary
- Highly trained support staff
- Senior leader with oversight of how Pupil Premium funding is being spent
- Teachers know which pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and are able to demonstrate impact
- Governors are involved and knowledgeable.

### **c) Less Successful approaches – according to Ofsted**

- Lack of clarity about intended impact of Pupil Premium spending
- Funding spent on teaching assistants, without deciding what they will achieve
- Poor monitoring of impact
- No clear audit trail of where Pupil Premium money was spent
- Setting based upon prior attainment
- Expectations based upon prior attainment and progress rather than getting good outcomes
- Pupil Premium spending not part of school development plan
- Lack of challenge in comparators used to measure performance, thus lowering expectations
- Pastoral support not focused on desired outcomes and aspirations of Pupil Premium pupils
- Governors not involved in decisions about the Pupil Premium spending.

### **d) Questions for Governors to ask**

- How well do our disadvantaged children do in comparison with those in our school who are not disadvantaged – and in comparison with disadvantaged children nationally?
- Are the expectations, and targets set, for disadvantaged children as consistently high as those for children who are not disadvantaged
- How is the performance of different groups of pupils tracked to make sure any issues are identified early?
- How is the Pupil Premium Grant spent and how do we know it is having an impact on the outcomes achieved by disadvantaged children?
- Is the statutory information about the use of the Pupil Premium Grant on our website, up to date and easily accessible?

### **Additional Information:**

- A. Survey of Pupil Premium required information on East Sussex school websites – carried out in August 2018 by the SLES administration team.
- B. Results for Disadvantaged Students in East Sussex
- C. What Works for Pupil Premium students : The Sutton Trust
- D. Extract from The Key: Pupil Premium Link Governor
- E. East Sussex Pupil Premium Reviews: Newsletter May 2018