



Poverty Proofing the School Day

Background to Poverty Proofing the School Day

Poverty Proofing the School Day began in 2011 when Children North East sought to better understand what child poverty looks and feels like from a child and young person's perspective. With funding from the Webb Memorial Trust they distributed 1,348 disposable cameras across the North East and asked children and young people to tell them what poverty looked like where they live.

The feedback they gave showed that discrimination in schools was one of the biggest issues they faced. Children North East in partnership with the North East Child Poverty Commission started to develop a way to 'Poverty Proof the School Day' by spending time speaking to students about their experience of schools. Following the pilot year we developed a toolkit to reduce the stigma and discrimination children and young people experiencing poverty face in schools; as well as to remove barriers to learning to support schools to reduce their attainment gap.

What is Poverty Proofing the School Day?

- A cost-effective **audit** that will identify the barriers to learning that children and/or young people from families suffering the effects of poverty face in *your* school
- A unique opportunity to **gather the voice of every child** in your school in order to understand their experience of school and explore **solutions** unique to your setting
- An inclusive, supportive, non-judgemental process that results in a **written report** and **action plan**
- **Training** for governors and teachers on poverty and its impact on education
- A follow-up **review** leading to **accreditation**

Impact of Poverty Proofing the School Day

The evaluation of poverty proofing, carried out by researchers at Newcastle University in February 2016, available on line at www.povertyproofing.co.uk outlines the following:

1. This is a high impact programme, which has revealed a huge array of generic issues that are routinely, if unintentionally, stigmatising children living in poverty and contributing to the increasing cost of the school day.
2. There are numerous benefits for the school as a result of going through this process, including a shift in whole school ethos and culture and the opportunity to make changes in response to the action plan, with maximum impact on pupils.
3. The audit provides a constructive opportunity to review pupil premium spending and through this and other actions, reduce the cost of the school day for pupils in real terms.

Key impact measures were highlighted within the evaluation as follows:

- Improved Pupil Attendance
- Improved Attainment
- Improved take up of FSM
- Increase in pupils on FSM attending school trips and extra-curricular activities
- Removing the ceiling on attainment in the curriculum

Alongside the evaluation there is a short **video of headteachers** talking of their experience of poverty proofing both within the North East and through some of our delivery partners. This can be found on the home page of our website www.povertyproofing.co.uk.

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