



Birchwood High School

Disadvantaged Groups Report for the Academic Year 2015-16

Interim review Report – February 2017

A Background and Context:

Birchwood High School is proud of its comprehensive ethos. We enrol 240 students each year from the local area of Bishop's Stortford and the surrounding villages regardless of ability or socio-economic background. Around 16% of our intake are Disadvantaged Groups students (see figure 1 below) which is lower than the national average of 28.5% but this figure does represent 192 students. The percentage of Disadvantaged Groups (DA) students does vary from year-to-year as does the percentage of SEND students. The school also tracks the academic progress of students who are both DA and SEND as a result

Figure 1	DA	SEND	DA/SEND
Year 7	13%	35%	5%
Year 8	15%	29%	6%
Year 9	14%	22%	4%
Year 10	16%	19%	5%
Year 11	19%	26%	8%
Year 12	2%	4%	0%
Year 13	1%	5%	0%
Average 11-16	16%	27%	6%

National research shows that students from disadvantaged backgrounds do less well in terms of examination success, going to university or obtaining full-time employment than their non-disadvantaged counterparts. Therefore, there is a moral imperative in seeking to provide additional support and resources to help 'narrow the gap'.

Disadvantaged Groups (DA) is a funding initiative introduced by the Government in 2011 to ensure that schools receive additional funding for students from more deprived backgrounds.

Disadvantaged Groups is a generic term for the following five types of children:

1. Free School Meals (FSM) - Students eligible for free school meals because they live in households claiming certain benefits
2. Ever6 - Students who have been eligible for FSM at some point in the last six years
3. Children Looked After (CLA) - Children who have been in Local Authority care for one day or more
4. Children who have been adopted from care
5. Children whose parents(s) are in the services (known as Ever4).

B Summary of Academic Outcomes:

In 2016, GCSE and A-Level Results showed a closing of the gap in terms of attainment and progress targets that were originally set in 2015. The new DA metrics highlighted in the new Progress 8 measures were not set as school targets but these will be commented on later in this section.

Attainment: The overall trend is that the attainment gap for disadvantaged students has improved. The 5+A*-C English & Maths attainment measure for disadvantaged students rose from 23% in 2015 (12% below the national average for disadvantaged students of 35% 5A*-C EM) to 30% in 2016. Forecasts for 2017 indicate that 40% of DA students will achieve 5+ A*-C EM.

Progress: GCSE outcomes for 2016 for disadvantaged students achieving expected 3+ levels of progress was 60% in English and 58% in Maths. The percentage of DA students achieving four levels of progress

in English was 19% and for Maths, 26%. The gap between progress for English and Maths is shown below in figure 2:

Figure 2 GCSE Performance 2015 v 2016 for DA students

DA Students	%5A*-C EM	3L Progress English	4L Progress English	3L Progress Maths	4L Progress Maths	%A*-C Science
2015 (16% of main cohort)	23%	50%	16%	50%	16%	44%
2016 (20% of main cohort)	34%	60%	19%	58%	26%	56%
National	36%*	74%**	34%**	72%**	35%**	69%***
Difference	-2%	-14%	-15%	-14%	-9%	-13%
Gap closing?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

National average %5A-C EM A-C Pass rate

**National 'other' or non-disadvantaged %3 or 4 levels of progress from KS2 to GCSE

***National 2 or more A*-C passes in Science

2016 DfE Performance Measures in relation to Progress 8

The government introduced a new performance measure for this cohort of students. Progress 8 measures GCSE grades against forecast target grades in a broad range of 8 subject areas. This is a better measure of all-round achievement rather than the focus on just 5 or more A*-C grades including English and Maths which does not measure progress but pure attainment.

In relation to this new metric, students are analysed in terms of being high / medium or low ability. This was an unusual cohort in that there were 8 students who did not sit all of their GCSE exams for a number of genuine reasons including ill-health and EHCP review leading to a change in provision (see Figure 3)

Figure 3

%Students who were P8 compliant = 92%	Number of students	P8 residual	Context	Revised P8 residual without outlying students	Comment
High Ability DA	8	-1.48	2 students did not sit GCSEs due to medical / significant reasons	-0.6	Whilst this figure is still high (Sig-), this represents 6 students out of 220.
Medium Ability DA	27	-0.55	6 students did not sit GCSEs due to medical / significant reasons	-0.23	This figure is higher than National Av but is not Sig-
Low Ability DA	6	-0.21	All 6 students sat exams	-0.21	

Whilst the school is disappointed with the P8 data for DA students, the curriculum was agreed 3 years before and was only 92% P8 compliant. This, combined with this unusually high number of outlying students, caused this issue rather than poor provision and weak teaching. This is confirmed with all future year groups where the gaps are closing quickly, P8 compliancy is much better (98-100%) and there are only 1 or 2 outlying students with significant health and attendance concerns (see figure 4)

Figure 4 GCSE Forecasts for DA students for 2017

%Students who are P8 compliant = 98%	Number of students	Context
High Ability DA	13	1 Student educated out of school under County provisions
Medium Ability DA	18	1 Student educated out of school under County provisions
Low Ability DA	1	
No KS2 data	1	

With regards to other Year Groups, figure 4 shows that the gap between DA and non-DA continues to close (see figure 5)

Figure 5 Year 9	Grade Point Average	
	Target	Forecast
All	5.24	5.23
DAdv	4.70	4.73
High	6.56	6.32
Middle	4.60	4.71
Low	2.68	3.14

Threshold 5+	English Tgt	English FG	Maths Tgt	Maths FG
All	67%	63%	70%	68%
DAdv	67%	61%	55%	55%
High	100%	100%	100%	99%
Middle	53%	46%	58%	54%
Low	0%	0%	0%	0%

Year 10	Attainment 8	
	Target	Forecast
All	52.7	52.4
DAdv	47.5	48.6
High	66.1	63.6
Middle	45.7	46.1
Low	31.4	34.5

Threshold 5+	English Tgt	English FG	Maths Tgt	Maths FG
All	70%	74%	67%	61%
DAdv	53%	58%	47%	43%
High	100%	99%	99%	95%
Middle	57%	66%	51%	43%
Low	4%	4%	0%	0%

A-Level Bursary Student performance

In 2016, there were 7 bursary students in Year 13. Five took A-levels and two took BTEC Level 3. Two students achieved three A Levels and four students achieved two A Levels or equivalent BTEC. All 7 students passed all courses and have gone on to University or employment. There are no NEETs.

The 16-19 Inspection Dashboard shows that Disadvantaged Sixth Form students achieved well in 2016 compared to their non-disadvantaged peers in applied L3 courses (+0.09) and AS level (+0.12) whereas at A-Level the VA score was -0.39 but this represented 4 students.

The school is currently focussing on forecast grades for current disadvantaged students in Year 13 in order to provide intervention to those requiring it.

Children Looked After (CLA)

For the GCSE results in 2016 there were two CLA students who arrived at the beginning of Year 11. For data protection reasons, the student's performance will not be described in this public document.

C Evaluating the quality of educational provision for Disadvantaged Students

In order to improve the academic progress of DA students at Birchwood we monitor progress in a number of ways:

1. Academic attainment and progress of DA students compared to non-DA students at both GCSE and A-Level.
2. Academic attainment and progress of DA students with SEND compared to non-DA students at both GCSE and A-Level.
3. Measures taken to improve the quality of teaching for DA students inside the classroom.
4. Measures taken to improve the quality of teaching for DA students outside the classroom including additional provision in terms of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits, uniform and essential equipment. The school also monitors and evaluates the level of expenditure for each of these strategies to ensure financial effectiveness and efficiency

Measures taken to improve the Quality of Teaching for DA students inside the classroom

It is the school's belief that disadvantaged students gain most from a co-ordinated approach of classroom and non-classroom support.

In order to help classroom teachers identify and personalise for DA students, the school provides them with Classroom Information Sheets (CIS). The CIS list includes contextual information on each child (see figure 5 below).

Figure 5

Full Name	Gender	Reg	Class	Teacher	AGT	BME	SEN	Disadv.	Context	Reading Age	KS2 Levels	KS2 TAs	KS3 Progress	Most Recent
										Sep 15	En	Ma	En	Ma

Teaching disadvantaged students in a classroom context needs to be done sensitively around supporting them in terms of academic ability. Additional equipment such as stationery, calculators and resource

booklets are provided. Lesson Observations, Work Sampling and Learning Walks by senior staff specifically focus on the progress of DA students in order to feedback to the subject teacher and Head of Faculty.

Form Tutors are also aware of who in their form is a disadvantaged student. Form Tutors form positive working relationships with all parents through meetings (Parental Engagement Days) and email / telephone. Form Tutors stay with their form as they progress through the school and are able to work with families in terms of changes of circumstance or concerns across the curriculum. Form tutors are supported effectively by Heads of Year who are able to oversee DA attendance / behaviour and attitudes to learning.

E Measures taken to improve the Quality of Teaching for DA students outside the classroom

The school employs a number of measures to help disadvantaged students outside the classroom, from extra revision classes to one-to-one support including bespoke information and guidance (IAG). Figure 6 below summarises the main strategies, the cost of provision and evaluation comments:

Figure 6

Support and intervention	Cost	Success criteria	Impact High / Medium / Low
Student Support Officer	£18,500	We have appointed a Student Support Officer (SSO) to help improve students' ability to prepare for day-to-day schooling and provide support in terms of IAG. The SSO saw 74 Year 11 students last year including the 44 DA students	High
One to One Tuition (Maths and English)	£62,600	The 1:1 English Tutor saw 20 students, eight of whom were DA students. One student met their GCSE target and the remaining seven students were one grade below their target grade. The 1:1 Maths Tutor saw 26 students, nine of whom were DA students. Three students achieved a C+ grade with one student meeting their target and one other exceeding their target. The other seven were one grade below target Overall attainment and progress of these DA students should also be linked to their classroom teacher's performance	Medium
Attendance & Welfare Support	£17,500	Attendance support came from our Attendance Officer, Heads of Year, Form Tutors and administration staff. DA students with Persistent Absence reduced from 9.2% to 6.3% (National Average 10.9%)	High
Targeted intervention	£5,000	Aim is to improve levels, grades and attendance. Funding was given to English, Maths and Science to support Saturday and holiday revision for GCCE students. Attendance was high with DA students targeted. There was an element of conflict over scheduling with some students feeling they should be attending more than one revision session at the same time.	Medium
Pathway 2	£24,000	Improved English levels - Additional lessons from specialist teachers for those with KS2 level 3 English. There were nine students in Year 8 and 14 in Year 7. These students made three sub-levels of progress on average. All bar three students moved on to Level 4 in Year 8.	High
Music fees	£2,000	Some DA students who wanted to learn a musical instrument were funded to have on-site peripatetic music lessons with Herts Music Service. This benefitted six Year 11 students, four of whom achieved a A*-C pass in Music.	High
Student basic	£5,000	Flexible funding to allow key personnel to allocate additional funding	Medium

needs funding		to ensure students do not feel disadvantaged with regard to other students.	
Aspects	£5,725	Families and students receive support and are able to attend school / achieve better. This funding provided a range of services including 1:1 counselling and support for families outside school.	Medium
Empowerment Coaching	£20,200	This programme is designed to enable students to engage better with their learning as they are better equipped emotionally to do so. Six Year 11 students were involved with four DA students. Student interviews showed that the students concerned felt more empowered and less anxious. This was an expensive programme, however, and we will look to rationalise	High
Revision Cracked	£1,500	This programme allows students to achieve better in exams, feel more confident in their ability to prepare for them. All 44 DA students in Year 11 engaged with this programme and qualitative feedback was very positive.	High
Student Counselling	£8,000	Individual support for students in terms of well-being, family support and general guidance. It has been difficult to quantify impact but the attendance and attainment of those involved improved in 65% of cases, and did not deteriorate in the other 35% of cases.	Medium
Resilience coaching	£3,000	Peer and adult relationships self-esteem is designed to improve resilience in learning and greater levels of self-motivation. Four Year 11 students were involved – three of whom were DA, with all three completing the coaching course.	High
Drama therapy	£4,000	This course aims to improve peer and adult relationships, self-esteem improve as does engagement with learning. 5 students in Year 11 participated one of whom was DA.	Medium
Online tutoring	£30,000	We subscribe to an external on-line provider for this. six students had on-line tutoring in English (one DA student): One DA student had on-line tutoring in Maths: three students had on-line tutoring in Science (two DA students). Of the four DA students, they all achieved a grade lower than their target grade. They also had 1:1 support but had a number of complex issues around their attendance and health.	Medium
Educational visits	£16,850	Students access out of classroom opportunities From qualitative interviews the feedback obtained was that this initiative was positively received.	Medium
Breakfast club	£3,400	The café is open from 8.00 am and using discrete biometric payment students' health, concentration and behaviour improve. Good value for money (VFM) and positive impact on learning and attendance.	High

Qualitative Reviews of Disadvantaged Groups Students and recommendations for 2016 /17:

Heads of Year and Senior Staff have conducted interviews with all 193 DA students at Birchwood High School this year to work alongside the account of costs and VFM reviews. These findings have been included in the comments in figure 6 above. Overall, the students spoke very positively about the extra support they were receiving in the classroom and beyond. Through these discussions, Heads of Year (HoYs) have identified the following recommendations for 2016/17:

- Punctuality: this was an issue for certain DA students – teachers to be made aware in September.
- Continue to focus on in-class support versus external provision. Students spoke about the increasing support they were receiving from their classroom teacher and how some external academic services were not as effective. Some also preferred small group intervention instead of 1:1. Rationalisation of some external intervention programmes to be considered in order to provide greater focus and support within the classroom, involving general and bespoke continued professional development (CPD) for teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) around personalisation
- Intervention meetings following interims to continue with explicit focus on DA progress

- Further CPD for teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) to facilitate the sharing of best practice
- To track the progress of students with DA and SEN more rigorously.
- Developing their confidence and managing distractions – some students felt that low self-confidence did affect their progress and those who had received empowerment or resilience coaching spoke very positively.
- Free equipment – it was agreed that this was still an issue for some students – HoY Office will look to give out complete pencil cases
- Supporting day trips were viewed very positively and the %DA students going on these had increased from 72% to 92%. At the start of the year a letter for FSM parents to sign giving consent to day trips or an opt out set up so they are automatically put through for those trips.
- In depth analysis of GCSE exam results for 2016 to examine which strategies are more effective
- Further qualitative interviews with DA students by Pastoral Leaders and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to evaluate provision and ascertain gaps.

Destination Data for Year 11 Disadvantaged Students

All our disadvantaged students were successful in securing places in our Sixth Form / FE College or Modern Apprenticeships. The Student Support Officer worked with each student to ensure they had effective IAG advice and helped them with visits and applications.

Birchwood Sixth Form	11
Alternative Sixth Form	1
FE College	28
Modern Apprenticeships	4

Funding for Disadvantaged Groups 2015/16 FSM and Ever6 students attract additional funding of £935 for the school and Ever4 students attract funding of £300 with CLAs and Adopted Children £1,900. Expenditure for the academic year 2015-16 was as follows:

Number of Students and Disadvantaged Groups Grant (DAG) funding Received for 2015-16	
Total number of students on roll aged 11-16 (January 2015)	1170
Total number of FSM and Ever 6 students eligible for DAG (January 2015) *	186
% of cohort eligible for DAG	15.90%
Total amount of DAG received 2015-16	£186,484
DAG unspent in previous years brought forward	£6,847
Total DAG grant received	£193,333
Total expenditure 2015-16	£227,271
Balance to carry forward to 2016-17 (note: the school budget supported this overspend)	(£33,938)
<i>*Note – additional looked after children and service children are included in the funding cohort but the numbers are not included here</i>	

Projected Spend for 2016-17

As a result of the information contained in this report and the previous year's expenditure, the school has identified the following projected spend for 2016-17:

Number of Students and Disadvantaged Groups Grant (DAG) Funding to be Received 2016-17	
Total number of students on roll aged 11-16 (January 2016)	1164
Total number of FSM and Ever 6 students eligible for DAG (January 2016) *	194

% of cohort eligible for DAG	16.67%
Total amount of DAG to be received 2016-17	££182,325
DAG unspent in previous years brought forward	£0
Total DAG grant received	£182,325
Total expenditure 2016-17	£235,725
Balance to carry forward to 2017-18 (deficit supported by school budget)	(£53,400)
*Note – additional looked after children and service children are include in the funding cohort but the numbers are not included here	

Support and intervention	Cost	Success criteria
Student Support Officer	£19,000	Improve students' ability to prepare for day to day schooling and ultimately their achievement including IAG and Destination Support
One to One tuition (maths and English)	£66,500	Improved levels / grades in English and Maths working closely alongside students' teachers
Attendance & Welfare Support	£23,500	Attendance of DA student cohort improves and the number of PA students in that cohort reduces.
Targeted intervention	£5,000	Aim is to improve levels, grades, attendance. Funding given to English, Maths and Science to Support Saturday and holiday revision for GCCE students. £2000 per core faculty
Pathway 2	£24,500	Improved English levels for those students in Year 7 and 8 who did not meet end of Key Stage 2 expectations – additional and specialist teaching provided
Music fees	£2,000	Students have the opportunity to acquire new skills
Student basic needs funding	£5,000	Students do not feel disadvantaged with regard to other students
Aspects	£5,725	Families, students receive Support and are able to attend school / achieve better
Empowerment coaching	£20,000	Students engage better with their learning, their peers and adults as they are better equipped emotionally to do so
Revision cracked	£1,500	Students achieve better in exams, feel more confident in their ability to prepare for them
Student counselling	£8,000	Individual Support for students in terms of well-being, family Support and general guidance
Resilience coaching	£2,000	Students can cope better with problems, negative experiences and are in a better state emotionally to access education.
Drama therapy	£4,000	Peer and adult relationships, self-esteem improve as does engagement with learning.
Online tutoring	£30,000	Attainment in Maths, English or Science improves with additional tutoring and for some students enables them to continue learning at home.
Educational visits	£15,000	Students access out of classroom opportunities
Breakfast club	£4,000	Students' health, concentration and behaviour improve.