

Request for funding from Schools Forum

Working Group: Disadvantage: Poverty Proofing the School Day

Membership: Nicolas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust; Huntington Secondary School; All Saints Secondary School; Excel Learning Trust; South York Multi Academy Trust; City of York Council; Huntington Research School

Aims and objectives of Group

- To respond to the persistent disadvantage gap in the city by understanding more about what it means to be experiencing poverty and attending school in York.
- To support schools in York to work towards ensuring that no activity or planned activity in school should identify, exclude, treat differently, or make assumptions about those with less financial resource.
- To enact, within the education sector, the recommendation of the York Poverty Truth Commission to listen to, understand and respond to the voices of those who have lived experiences of poverty when reviewing and designing services in the city.

Proposed support and providers

Through their work in other local areas, Children North East (CNE) have established a model that supports a locality to be able to develop local capacity and expertise in the process allowing for greater longevity to the approach Poverty Proofing© the School Day - Children North East .

This initial pilot model is to develop a 'York Hub with CNE' (a group of local leaders who are trained and have capacity to facilitate the audits) which will be for an initial pilot of 6 schools.

- Huntington Research School acts as lead partner in York in partnership with City of York Council. As an organisation with a central mission of breaking the relationship between income and educational outcomes.
- Administration and project management of the programme at Huntington Research School, in collaboration with the Poverty Proofing Working Group and City of York Council including school recruitment and selection; audit team recruitment and leadership; contract management; organising and hosting training delivery; audit coordination; evaluation management
- A local team is convened, consisting of members of the Research School core team, the Poverty Proofing Working Group representatives (including City of York Council school facing teams) and invites extended to each of the multi academy trusts to have members of their teams as part of a local auditing team. Clear expectations of partners delivery commitment would be set at this point but would include the expectation that every trained auditor would support at least one school audit each.

Activity

During the pilot phase, six schools in York – selected through a transparent selection process agreed by the working group – would take part in a Poverty Proofing audit. The audit would be

conducted by members of the team trained (above) and where appropriate use pupils from the school as peer researchers. Following the audit, the team write a report with clear, actionable recommendations and support the school to understand the contents of the report.

Part of the selection process for schools would be a commitment to delivering change on the back of the report with accountability to YSAB or Schools Forum on progress made over time. The Working Group has established through its networks that there are at least 6 schools in York who would be willing and able to engage with this process.

Following this pilot and subject to the outcomes of the evaluation, the model could be scaled further within the city.

Evaluation and impact

- From the learning we have so far, this approach challenges schools' preconceptions about their provision; empowers pupils and families to have their voices heard; and leads directly to changes which help schools be more deliberately inclusive of those experiencing poverty. The approach is not 'quick and easy' but it has the power to transform equal access to educational experiences.
- There are a number of schools and Trusts within York who have already taken part in a Poverty Proofing the School Day audit. From the conversations that the Working Group has had with leaders from these organisations, there is a unanimous agreement that this is a positive, constructive and impactful approach to follow.
- Although schools report the positivity of Poverty Proofing, to have greater confidence around the process and to fully understand the important process and impact considerations, the working group agree that a York wide model should be independently evaluated. This would give the local area a more robust understanding of the approach and make future decision making more evidence informed. Therefore, independent evaluation of the pilot will be undertaken by the Institute of Social Justice, York St John University. We estimate this to cost between £4,000 - £5,000. **CNE have accessed funding to meet £2,000 of this cost** to learn about the effectiveness of this 'Hub Model' as they also recognise the importance of independent evaluation of the approach.

A sustainable locality model as opposed to individual commissioning by schools

It is possible for schools to commission Children North East to deliver this process for them on an individual basis however there are multiple benefits to taking a York based approach to this:

- It demonstrates strategic and city-wide commitment to addressing the long-term disadvantage gap
- The peer and social element of schools 'doing this together' is an evidence-informed way to enact change more effectively
- The city-wide approach has meant that other partners are keen to collaborate with us on the project with York CVS and York St John University already active participants in the working group
- Linked to the above, it is likely that the series of audits will identify themes across schools that can be more effectively responded to across York rather than by any one individual school

- The development of the audit team made from a range of organisations will bring additional skills, knowledge and expertise across the city which can influence thinking, provision and practice without the need for audits in all schools
- Depending on the outcome of the evaluation, the development of a local team means there is local capacity to deliver future audits beyond this pilot

Costs, options and total request

- Children North East have successfully bid for some funding to support the development of a York Hub. This means that they can **subsidise some of the upfront costs of training and development up to £4500** as well as contributing to the evaluation costs (£2000) of the York model. **However, this funding is time limited, and we do not move forward with committing to this proposal by the summer then this subsidy will no longer be available to York.**
- Costs associated with audits vary depending on the size of the school. Because during the process, auditors and/or peer researchers talk to every single pupil larger schools take longer and therefore the amount of auditor time required is higher. At this point we have not recruited schools so do not know the size of the schools who will be involved. Therefore, we can only provide a 'range' for costs from a model that works with 6 of the smallest schools to one that works with 6 of the largest. In reality, it is likely that the pilot will work with a mix of different size schools and therefore the total amount required will fall somewhere within this range.
- There are two versions of the model: a 'full' audit and an 'abridged' audit. The full audit reviews 14 thematic areas and speaks to every single child in school. The abridged audit reviews 6 thematic areas and uses a focus group approach to speaking to pupils (and therefore does not speak to every pupil). The full audit is more robust and ensures that every possible voice is heard within the process. The abridged version is more feasible to deliver, comes with reduced costs associated with it but does not meet the aim of hearing *every child's* voice in the process.

Full audits costs

Fixed costs (regardless of school sizes): £13,060

Specific school costs (all small schools) £12,375

Specific school costs (all large schools) £19,125

Total costs from £25,435 to £32,185

These costs include £6500 of subsidy from Children North East

Abridged audit costs

Fixed costs (regardless of school sizes): £12,610

Specific school costs (all small schools) £5625

Specific school costs (all large schools) £7875

Total costs from £18235 to £20,485

These costs include £5250 of subsidy from Children North East

Decision: Schools Forum is asked to consider fully funding this pilot of the Poverty Proofing the School Day in York for either the full audit or abridged audit option