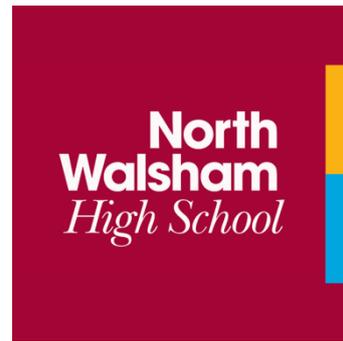


PP@NWHS



Introduction

Welcome to the very first **PP@NWHS** blog! Its purpose is very simple – to keep you up to date with the latest strategies we have put in place using our Pupil Premium funding. Full details on the Pupil Premium (PP), along with our school strategy for 2018/19, which outlines how we intend to use the funding, can be found on our website – www.nwhs.uk.

A new blog will be added to the website regularly and sent home as a newsletter so that all of our parents, carers and stakeholders can see what we are doing for our amazing students here at North Walsham. We will also keep you updated via our Twitter account. You can follow us by searching for @NWHS.

We also welcome any feedback or suggestions for how we could use our funding even more effectively – please email Chris Hinton at hintonc@nwhs.uk or call the school reception. We hope you enjoy reading what we've been up to in September!

What's been happening this month?

So much has already happened since we returned to school on 4th September! Let's begin with our GCSE results. The number of Pupil Premium-eligible students achieving 4+ in English and Maths rose by 14% on 2017 and by 13% for those achieving 5+ in both subjects, surpassing National PP averages and closing the gap on National Other students. It's clear that supportive strategies like Period 6 and extra intervention in English and Maths really helped our disadvantaged students. We still have a long way to go towards eradicating the attainment gap, but we are delighted that so many of our Year 11s benefitted from the approaches we put in place.

Looking ahead to this academic year, on 4th September all staff took part in a hugely informative professional development session outlining the Pupil Premium and discussing the barriers to learning for our disadvantaged students. We are very fortunate to have several colleagues who live in North Walsham and understand the local area very well. We talked about the unique challenges faced by our community and by our disadvantaged learners. The discussions included the following issues:

- *As a community, North Walsham is quite isolated because of its rural location. How do we ensure our disadvantaged learners have a broad experience of the world*

beyond their home town? How do we raise the aspirations of students who have so far not had opportunities to look beyond the local area?

- *A number of our parents and carers from impoverished backgrounds are working incredibly hard to support their families. How can we better support those parents (and their children) who work very long hours?*
- *A minority of families have had negative experiences of education, which is then filtered down to their children. How can we as a school community both increase parental engagement and provide more positive educational experiences for our students?*

Staff showed real passion when discussing these issues and came up with a number of strategies that we will look to implement this year. It was pleasing to see so many colleagues having conversations about barriers to learning and how we can use the Pupil Premium funding to level the playing field for our disadvantaged learners.

With the first phase of the school year now in full flow, we have re-launched our successful Period 6 programme. These teacher-led sessions give our GCSE students an extra opportunity to revise key subjects every week in a purposeful learning environment. We use our Pupil Premium funding to staff the sessions and provide transport where necessary.

The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award programme is back in full flow already, with the vast majority of our Year 9s taking part and exploring the great outdoors! Year 9 is a priority for us because our in-school data shows that behaviour in this cohort has dipped compared to other year groups. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation suggests that outdoor adventure activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh can play a significant part in raising self-esteem and improving GCSE outcomes for disadvantaged learners, so we are absolutely delighted that so many of our students are participating.

What's coming up?

We have just enrolled 12 of our Year 9 and Year 10 students onto the Brilliant Club programme. This scheme aims to give students (and especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds) the chance to experience university life. Our students will visit the University of Cambridge in November before beginning a dissertation-style project and receiving one-to-one support from a university scholar. They will also take part in a graduation ceremony in February. We are hugely excited to be involved and have already signed up for the Year 7 and 8 programme in the summer term so that we can offer this opportunity to as many students as possible. This is all part of our aim to raise the aspirations of our students across the school.

Please remember to check out the Pupil Premium section of the school's website for full details on eligibility criteria and a link to the application form for Free School Meals. Even if you do not wish for your child to receive a meal, a successful application will still mean that the school receives extra funding which can be used to support your child and others. Please don't hesitate to contact the school if you would like further information.