

Answer to S6T-00784

Decisions on how to use Pupil Equity Funding are taken by headteachers in an empowered education system. We trust schools and headteachers to know their pupils best, and to take decisions that are in the best interests of children and young people.

The majority of the £634 million in PEF distributed to schools is invested in approaches to improving literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing through the recruitment of additional teaching and support staff, family link workers and partnerships with third sector organisations.

Where there are projects involving Police Scotland in place, schools find these to be of great benefit. They are highly engaged in proactive and preventative work in communities with families – working alongside Social Work and third sector organisations. They are not "policing" in school.

To be clear, the £2 million described is only a very small portion – just 0.3% – of the Pupil Equity Funding that has been distributed to schools across the 32 councils since 2017/18.

BACKGROUND NOTE FOR S6T-00784

Supplementary questions, answers and further lines to take.

Known supplementary questions

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Potential supplementary questions

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Further lines to take:

On 29 March this year I announced more than half a billion pounds (£520m) in Pupil Equity Funding allocations to empower our head teachers over a record 4 years to help close the attainment gap.

- Tackling the poverty-related attainment gap and giving every young person the chance to fulfil their full potential remains our priority, and we are investing an increased £1 billion through schools and local authorities over the course of this Parliament to support this ambition.
- Our allocation of more than £520 million of PEF for the next four years will give headteachers the confidence and security they need to plan long term.

Schools know their learners best. Headteachers are responsible for using Pupil Equity Funding to enhance, scale and introduce new approaches to tackling the poverty-related attainment gap within the school or in partnership with local services and communities.

- One school in Glasgow, for example, reports that PEF-funded work with Police Scotland has contributed to increased participation and engagement of young people.
- Campus officers provide a consistent and positive interaction between young people, the police and the community.
- This helps promote the wellbeing and reputation of young people within the community.
- The use of Campus Officers is part of a range of strategies and programmes which schools can and do use to improve relationships and behaviour.
- These include good behaviour management and behaviour support teams; solution orientated approaches and restorative approaches; nurture approaches and programmes to help develop social, emotional and behavioural skills.
- Restorative approaches include targeted support to enhance student wellbeing, literacy and numeracy which are targeted at students at risk of repeated exclusion.
- We would expect schools to rely on approaches like those set out in our school ethos and culture guidance to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.

Improving Relationships and Behaviour

What is being done to support pupils in improving relationships and behaviour?

- I want all children and young people to get the support that they need to reach their full learning potential and teachers and support staff play a crucial role.
- of our children, young people and staff at school is paramount.
- We, and partners across the education sector, advocate an approach for schools and local authorities to work with pupils on the underlying reasons behind inappropriate behaviour.
- We want all pupils to respect their peers and staff and are supporting a number of programmes to promote positive relationships and tackle indiscipline, abuse and violence.
- This includes good behaviour management, restorative approaches and programmes to help develop social, emotional and behavioural skills.

Campus officers provide a consistent and positive interaction between young people, the police and the community, as part of this strategic approach.

- This helps promote the wellbeing and reputation of young people within the community.
- The use of Campus Officers is part of a range of strategies and programmes which schools can and do use to improve relationships and behaviour.
- These include good behaviour management and behaviour support teams; solution orientated approaches and restorative approaches; nurture approaches and programmes to help develop social, emotional and behavioural skills.
- Restorative approaches include targeted support to enhance student wellbeing, literacy and numeracy which are targeted at students at risk of repeated exclusion.
- At the heart of a Nurture approach is a focus on wellbeing and relationships and a drive to support the growth and development of children and young people.
- The National Improvement Hub provides all of our practitioners, parents and young people themselves with specific good practice models to review.

What is being done to tackle violence and the use of weapons in schools?

- Incidents relating to violence and weapons in our schools are thankfully rare.
- There is no place for weapons in our schools and we will continue to provide targeted education programmes for our young people on the risks.
- We have invested over £23 million in violence prevention since 2008 including investment in programmes being delivered in schools.

- This includes over £16 million to the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit, and more than £4 million to No Knives, Better Lives.
- This funding includes delivery of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Programme which is engaged with all 32 Local Authorities across Scotland.
- MVP is a peer mentoring programme giving young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes that underpin gender based violence.
- The Scottish Violence Reduction Unit have expanded their reach to other areas across Scotland including Glasgow, Dundee, Edinburgh and Ayrshire.
- They are delivering a place-based approach in North West Glasgow to specifically target deprived communities where violence exists, helping build connections and offer support to individuals and families.
- The adult Navigators service, run by Medics Against Violence, now operates in eight A&E departments across Scotland.
- This service reaches out to people facing severe and multiple disadvantage, helping them receive a person centred approach to access the support they need.
- It addresses the multiple complex issues that often accompany chaotic violent lifestyles, including substance use, alcohol dependency and poor mental health
- We are piloting a Youth Navigator service in the children's hospital Emergency departments at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, St Johns Livingston and Glasgow.
- As part of our approach, tackling knife crime is paramount, our No Knives Better Lives youth engagement programme aims to prevent the incidence of violence and knife carrying amongst young people and provides resources and support to local partners.
- We currently have around 800 Police Scotland Youth Volunteers working with the Police, breaking down barriers and developing relationships through volunteering within their local communities.
- Schools also have access to community-based officers who engage with and support students and staff as part of the community policing service.
- This offers positive interaction between young people, the police and the community.
- Violence reduction stakeholders are aware of the increased violence in the East End of Glasgow and are working with young people and communities to offer support and to highlight the routes out of violence and gang activity.
- A document has been developed to be issued to schools to help assess the prevalence of violence within local schools.
- This 'triage approach' will allow schools to better understand the support they require and who they should make contact with to access this.

We want to develop positive and inclusive learning environments where all our children and young people benefit fully from Curriculum for Excellence.

- There are a range of strategies and programmes which schools can and do use to improve relationships and behaviour and prevent the need for exclusion.
- These include good behaviour management and behaviour support teams; solution oriented, restorative and nurture approaches and programmes to help develop social, emotional and behavioural skills.

- Restorative approaches include targeted support to enhance student wellbeing, literacy and numeracy which are targeted at students at risk of repeated exclusion.
- At the heart of a Nurture approach is a focus on wellbeing and relationships and a drive to support the growth and development of children and young people.
- The National Improvement Hub provides all of our practitioners, parents and young people themselves with specific good practice models to review.

Developing a positive whole-school ethos and culture – Relationships, Learning and Behaviour

- Policy guidance in response to the Behaviour in Scottish schools research, published December 2017.
- The Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS) have identified the next steps to support local authorities, establishments, practitioners and partners
- This is to further improve the ethos and culture, and relationships and behaviour in Scottish schools.
- This is central to the successful delivery of Curriculum for Excellence, implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child and the aspirations of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the National Improvement Framework.

Liberal Democrat Quotes on empowerment

Willie Rennie – Scottish Liberal Democrat Conference – 31 October 2022

[QUOTE]: “So we are going to reach out across Scotland to offer every young person an education system that is the best again...At its heart we will put teachers in charge”

[QUOTE]: “I want teachers to be at the centre of how we make Scottish education the best again.”

Background

The Scottish Sun has received Freedom of Information figures from the charity Aberlour, which claim that over the last 4 years, nearly £2 million of Pupil Equity Funding has been used to pay for police officers in schools. This is over the five local authorities of Fife, Glasgow, North Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian. This £2m investment since 2017/18 represents only 0.8% of the total PEF allocated to those 5 local authorities between 2017/18 and 2021/22. The breakdown of this is at Annex B.

We do not collect detailed spend information from schools on the use of PEF, so cannot confirm the accuracy of the specific figures.

It is this work by Aberlour and the reporting in the Sun that will have prompted Mr Rennie's question.

School engagement with Police Scotland

Schools across Scotland generally have good relationships with Police Scotland and it is acknowledged that police officers have a role to play in helping to support collaborative working to tackle the poverty related attainment gap. An example of this is when a community planning approach to tackling school attendance/lateness includes a range of partners including Police Scotland. This emphasises the collective and collaborative approach required to support children, young people and their families.

There is long standing partnership work with Police Scotland across Scottish education, which enables young people and staff to benefit from the community knowledge and skills of specialist officers who have a wealth of information about wider impacts on the lives of young people. Where they are in place, schools find these officers of great benefit. They are highly engaged in proactive and preventative work in communities with families – working alongside Social Work and third sector organisations – and are very much part of pupil support structures using GIRFEC principles and involved in multi-agency meetings. They are not "policing" in school.

Education Scotland is aware that a small number of schools in a few local authorities use PEF to provide additional levels of support to young people through partnership with Police Scotland through service level agreements which enable recruitment of additional resource to the school. Where this initiative exists these officers are recruited as members of the school community to support learning and wellbeing of young people and their families. This is not an authority wide programme but rather based on the needs and individual contexts of each of the schools involved. The role is not a standard police officer role but an additional support role for the school and community. Job titles reflect this e.g. Positive Learning and Community Officer, Campus Officer.

Campus Officers are uniquely able to provide relevant inputs into personal and social education (PSE), health and wellbeing courses and personal support to develop young people's understanding of a range of issues that were pertinent to their HWB and making informed and appropriate decisions both in school and in the wider community.

Where schools work with Police Scotland, they are able to help children and young people develop positive relationships with the police. They are able to see the police as human beings rather than as a badge, in the child or young person's space of education: a space where children and young people feel safe.

- Campus officers provide a consistent and positive interaction between young people, the police and the community as part of strategic, community based approaches to supporting children and young people.
- The officers are funded through education (including PEF) budgets as they are providing dedicated, specialist support and liaison to pupils, schools and the wider community. They are removed from other police duties for the days they are contracted to the school.
- Recruitment of such officers supported by PEF are Headteacher decisions, rather than local authority wide agreements, and the types of partnership are agreed to best support the specific school communities.
- These officers add value to the school's universal supports, providing sessions/ training for staff and also for children and young people on particular aspects of the curriculum, including drugs and alcohol.
- They engage in preventative work, supporting children and young people who are disengaging from education and providing alternative aspects to their timetable. This tends to be small group work or individual work.
- They provide advice and guidance: for example if there were any aspects of case work which had legal considerations, the campus police can be effective supports in considering the implications of particular situations.
- They do this through becoming involved in school life (involved in aspects of the health and wellbeing curriculum), tend to be around at breaks, lunchtimes, etc., to speak to children and young people on a more informal basis, participate in "team around the child" (TAC) meetings, and offer small group work.
- They tend to be in uniform to ensure that pupils, parents and staff can identify them. This provides transparency of who is working in the school and supporting the school community. The uniform is typically informal (e.g. trousers/shirt/badge).

These inputs consistently received positive feedback from staff and learners as the young people usually find them to be very relevant to their own lives. They work with targeted groups of individuals to provide them with a range of bespoke programmes that added to the existing school curriculum. This would usually be linked to topics such as knife crime, sectarianism etc.,. These programmes were quite often run in partnership with other external providers with the CPO acting as coordinator for the programme and school link. They use their wide range of skills to support the delivery of wider achievement awards such as DoE for hard to reach/disengaged young people in order to support alternative curriculum pathways for these

youngsters. They are very good at developing one to one relationships with some young people experiencing really challenging circumstances and often act as mentors to try and ensure that the youngsters made appropriate decisions and kept themselves on the right track to ensure that they would achieve their potential while in school.

Looking beyond engagement only at a school level, operational decisions, including officer deployment, are a matter for the Chief Constable. However, the 2012 Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act requires Police Scotland to involve local authorities in the setting of priorities and objectives for the policing of its area, including the submission of a local policing plan and to take into account any feedback received.

Police Scotland and local authorities are also statutory participants in community planning and must work together with community planning partners and consult with local communities, to identify priority local outcomes. These are set out in a local outcomes improvement plan (LOIP) for each local authority area, specifying the improvements sought and timeframe for delivery.

Each local authority has chosen and established individual scrutiny arrangements to align with their own local requirements, and governance and accountability structures. Examples of these arrangements include dedicated police and fire oversight committees, local scrutiny streamed principally through local community planning arrangements and scrutiny through a committee with a wider scrutiny role.

This type of partnership working – at local authority and school level – is what we are actively encouraging in the SAC Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress. In that document, we are clear that schools alone will not close the poverty related attainment gap and that the investment in the Scottish Attainment Challenge should be considered leverage for schools and LA education services to engage wider services to contribute to the mission of the SAC programme.

Finally, these approaches are in keeping with the Scottish Government's [Developing a positive whole school ethos and culture: relationships, learning and behaviour](#) guidance.

We have seen positive examples of schools working with Police. Eastbank Academy in **Glasgow** has worked with a variety of partners since the introduction of PEF. The school reports that this has had a positive impact on attainment, achievement and well-being as evidenced by a variety of data held in the school. The school reports that a PEF-funded partnership with Police Scotland has contributed to increased participation and engagement of identified young people. This particular example has been included in Education Scotland's [Pupil Equity Funding: looking inwards, outwards, forwards – sharing effective practice to maximise support for learners and practitioners](#) publication.

In schools in **Fife** which have implemented this approach using some PEF spend. Police Scotland staff are involved in a range of activities such as:

- Bespoke and individualised relationships programmes
- School holiday programmes targeted at supporting vulnerable and at risk children identified by the school and Police Scotland
- Anti-violence programmes
- Transition programmes

Schools report the impact as:

- Improved attendance
- Early intervention, supporting children and families to avoid/limit criminal behaviours
- Improved community relations

Further examples are set out at Annex B below.

[REDACTED]

Annex A: breakdown of PEF allocations in the 5 local authorities highlighted by Aberlour and the Scottish Sun

Local authority	Total PEF allocations 2017/18 – 2021/22
Fife	£51.4m
Glasgow	£113.5m
North Ayrshire	£22.7m
South Lanarkshire	£40.7m
West Lothian	£26.4m
Total	£254.7m
Total reportedly spent on work with Police Scotland	£2m = 0.8% of the total allocations for those 5 LAs and 0.3% of the .

Annex B: specific examples of schools working with Police Scotland

School A – Midlothian

Through self-evaluation the school identified a lack of shared information across agencies which could positively assist with educational outcomes, the need to strengthen family partnerships and find ways of reducing a high level of exclusions.

A Positive Learning and Community Officer was recruited from J Division Police Scotland to promote positive pupil learning behaviour and community learning in the school and community by providing support for pupils and parent/carers, recommending and implementing strategies, and co-ordinating contributions from internal and external specialists which lead to increased positive destinations. The officer provides direct support within class, the Learning Hub or elsewhere in the community for pupils at risk of, or returning from, exclusion. This includes other community difficulties which may impact on young people's education.

Information about what is happening in the community is regularly shared with school pastoral care staff. The officer is part of a wider support team which includes the Youth Community Officer and the Community Action Team. The school is monitoring the impact of this intervention through monitoring of the reduction in exclusions will be reduced and increased engagement of students with community projects. The intervention has allowed the school to develop good relationships within the communities it serves and work collaboratively together with Police Scotland. It has allowed a better relationship between the YP in the catchment and Police Scotland. The school views the recruited officer very much as part of the staff team and values their contribution to the welfare of the pupils.

School B – South Lanarkshire

Partnership with a **PEF-funded campus officer** has supported young people, particularly in the BGE, to settle back into face to face learning and to take responsibility for their actions in school, online and within the community. Contributions to the PSHE curriculum have been well-judged and informative.

The campus officer is a strong link between the school, its families and other community groups. For example, the campus officer supported young people to lead an anti-litter campaign working alongside a local group “Community Litter Pickers”. This is supporting a strong sense of community responsibility and involvement in our young people. Letters and tweets from the school community have commended this initiative.

Reduced community complaints and litter workload of janitorial staff within the school building through increased focus on litter linked to environmental matters and building on the school’s “There is no Planet B” initiative. The campus officer supported an online safety initiative with pupils in new S1 to ensure knowledge and skills developed to keep self-safe and act responsibly. Observations and focus groups indicate improved relationships and communication with families. There has been an improved profile of the school within the local residents due to the speedy contact from the campus officer.

The school sees the campus officer as a strong support which helps to promote a welcoming learning environment and meet behavioural additional support needs to enable all young people to access learning. Positive impact of their campus officer has allowed better relationships between home and school, improved communication and helped some key interventions to be effective for individuals.

There are plans to extend the use of the campus officer as a key partner in supporting the engagement of those most at risk, in improving community relationships and in supporting families. The campus officer has helped the school strengthen community links through promoting positive relationships and with their Family Liaison Officer has improved family relationships and reduced complaints.

School C – South Lanarkshire

To support the social and emotional barriers that young people face, and which have been exacerbated by Covid 19, and in order to be able to access learning, the school’s PEF plan focusses primarily on increasing in-school partner supports. Through employing non-teaching staff, the school is able to support young people

and their families in a variety of flexible ways, through group work, one to one and family intervention. Employing a **campus officer** allows the school to support young people to make positive decisions about their behaviour in school and out in the community. There has been an increase in anti-social behaviour in the community due to the pandemic and closure of many supports and clubs for young people. In particular there is a reported increase in gang type behaviour which impacts greatly on the most vulnerable young males in our community. The school is using a Campus Officer to promote positive relationships with the police, build self-confidence to walk away from such peer pressure and share intelligence to enable early intervention supports young people remaining in school and prioritising their learning.

Challenge Authority examples

We also know that at a local authority level, some of the previous Challenge Authorities, where:

North Ayrshire run a Mentors in Violence programme where 20 staff have taken part in a 2-day training course across the three schools including one campus police officer. North Ayrshire also appointed a Police community wellbeing lead. Feedback from schools has been largely positive and two schools are on the first year of delivering mentor training and mentors are delivering lessons to pupils.

and

North Lanarkshire also worked with Police Partnership Officers – this partnership arrangement with Police Scotland ran until the end of March 2022. This facilitated 8 police officers working with 12 secondary schools.