



# Great Torrington Bluecoat C of E Primary School



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Dear Parents and Carers

Following our last visioning day, during which differences of opinion amongst participants regarding the use of some Pupil Premium funding to subsidise engagement of eligible children in enrichment and extension activities which might otherwise be funded by parents was raised, we sent out a questionnaire to ascertain the views of the whole school community on this aspect of our current allocation of Pupil Premium funds.

Outcomes of this questionnaire are presented on the attached document and will be discussed by Governors alongside our adopted principles for the use of Pupil Premium funding (see Bluecoat Pupil Premium Statement) before the next allocation of Pupil Premium funds is finalised. Please note that the areas listed form only part of the supported provision for Pupil Premium pupils.

The school currently provides universal access to main stream interventions, homework club and booster classes for Upper KS2 pupils where applicable. Educational visits are also partially subsidised by the school for all pupils, often with the generous support of the FoTB without which we would be unable to provide the rich curriculum provision for all our pupils which is currently available. Subsidies for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding do not affect the overall cost of educational visits to the rest of the cohort.

The full breakdown of our use of Pupil Premium funds and our 'Bluecoat Pupil Premium Statement' are available on our school website at: [www.bluecoat-primary.org/inclusion/pupil-premium](http://www.bluecoat-primary.org/inclusion/pupil-premium).

Please also find attached outcomes of our questionnaire regarding use of ParentMail and PMX and responses to frequently asked questions regarding both Pupil Premium and ParentMail. I hope these are helpful. If you have further comments to make, or require individual support with regard to any of the issues raised, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire and sharing your views.

Regards

Angela Fleming  
Headteacher



**Pupil Premium Questionnaire – Outcomes**

Support through extension activity / additional area of enrichment	We had a total of 81 responses ✓ Agree	Comments included:  I am not aware of how Pupil Premium works. <i>(See FAQ 1 below)</i>  Yes – all of the above. Maybe learn an instrument / sport if gifted.
Homework Club	42	Why should some children be favoured just because their families are not as well off as others? <i>(See FAQ 3 below)</i>  If families need help to enable their child to have the best school experience perhaps some after school experience could be included such as music or sports classes that need funding  Would like to see this funding used for activities that are wholly inclusive of everyone. <i>(See FAQ 3 below)</i>
Additional Interventions	41	Just to ensure that <u>all</u> pupils who are entitled to pupil premium funding benefit from it – not just a few (who may on occasion take advantage!).  Basic school equipment (pens/pencils for h'work) uniform. If pupils on PP do not have correct school uniform (due to finance) then it should be provided – then <u>no</u> excuse!
Booster Classes	51	Pupil Premium to be used for all children for homework club and booster classes then all children have the opportunity of extra support if needed. <i>(See FAQ 3 below)</i>
School Day Trips	50	NO I DO NOT. I think that parents that are fortunate enough not to have to claim benefits are being discriminated against.  I think it is up to the school as I know they get many cuts from government or not enough funding for the kids so use it as you see fit.  State Education should be free to all. All these activities are beneficial to a child's growth so therefore schools should offer equality to all.
Residentials	41	The only comment I wish to make is that there appears to be some families receiving this help who are in a position to pay the full amount. <i>(See FAQ 4 below)</i>  There are lots of children who are not eligible for Pupil Premium who just miss out and their parents do not have a high income and struggle to fund all the extras. It is a bad system that doesn't highlight <u>all</u> children that need help. I think this especially shows up when

## Pupil Premium Questionnaire – Outcomes

<p>Other suggestions from parents for use of Pupil Premium funding</p>	<p>Swimming School Uniform After school sports clubs Music provision 1:1 support workers</p>	<p>thinking about paying for expensive residentials ... just because you don't qualify for Pupil Premium doesn't mean you are well off! <i>(See FAQ 6 below)</i></p> <p>Pupil Premium is to boost progress which I believe the above ticked do (Interventions, booster classes, school day trips) Homework, and therefore homework club, has not been seen as effective in promoting pupil achievement in studies. Physical exercise is however linked to improved results. Why not fund more physically active opportunities such as swimming sessions, even if parents are to take them as an extra curricula activity rather than within school? There are not enough physically active clubs for all children. The ones we could have access to are all full. Activity is linked to progress – more clubs for all children please! <i>(See FAQ 5 below)</i></p> <p>There are families I am sure that whilst they aren't eligible for Pupil Premium are unable to send their child/children on particular residential trips due to the cost. I feel it is unfair to offer a discount to children for residential trips, the price should be the same across the board.</p> <p>It is difficult when it comes to using it for trips as working parents don't necessarily have more money (sometimes less) than those who don't work.</p> <p>I believe on expensive trips such as residentials this should be limited as it is difficult for all families to pay. Perhaps the same consideration should be given to families of twins to reduce the costs.</p> <p>The money should be spent on the children entitled to it for whatever activity required to encourage them.</p>
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# Pupil Premium

## Frequently Asked Questions



### Q 1: What is Pupil Premium?

A: Pupil Premium funding is money given to schools to address inequalities and improve educational provision for disadvantaged pupils in order to close the gap between their achievements and that of their peers.

### Q 2: Who receives Pupil Premium?

A: In the 2014 to 2015 financial year, schools receive the following funding for each child registered as eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years:

\*£1,300 for pupils in Reception to Year 6

\*£935 for pupils in Year 7 to Year 11

Schools also receive £1,900 for pupils who are in Local Authority Care or have left Local Authority Care due to adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residency order. If a pupil has been registered as eligible for free school meals and has also left local-authority care for any of the reasons above, they attract the £1,900 rate.

### Q 3: Why can't Pupil Premium be spent on all children?

A: The government believes that allocation of pupil premium funding, which is additional to main school funding, is the best way to address the current underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most. The pupil premium was introduced in April 2011 and is allocated to schools to work with pupils who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever 6 FSM'). Schools also receive funding for children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months, and children of service personnel.

### Q 4: Why are some children still eligible for pupil premium even though their parents are now earning a good wage?

A: The reason for this is due to decisions that have been made by the Department of Education regarding how they allocate the funding to schools. The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and is allocated to schools to work with pupils who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever 6 FSM'). Schools also receive funding for children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months, and children of Service personnel. Once a child has been registered then the funding continues no matter whether the financial situation of the parents or guardians changes.

## Pupil Premium Questionnaire – Outcomes

### **Q 5: Can Pupil Premium Funding be used alongside School Sports funding to improve access to Sport and Physical Education for eligible pupils?**

A: Yes it can, but only if the school believes it will tackle disadvantage and close the attainment gap between eligible pupils and their peers. Sports funding for large schools is currently proportionally considerably less than that allocated for small schools which is challenging for Bluecoat School as we are a large primary with diverse physical education needs. However, we are actively working on extending our sports provision in the next financial year through use of additional resources to increase access for all children.

### **Q 6: Can the school choose to spend Pupil Premium on pupils who are not eligible but would benefit from the additional support**

A: Pupil Premium must be shown to improve provision for pupils eligible for this funding. At Bluecoat, however, we recognise that this must be done within the context of improving provision and accessibility for all. Our school Pupil Premium Statement therefore includes the following paragraph: *The purpose of Pupil Premium funding is to address inequalities and improve educational provision for disadvantaged pupils in order to close the gap between their achievements and that of their peers. We believe this should be done inclusively with specific interventions and support delivered within the context of enhancements to our universal provision. Interventions we put in place to support disadvantaged or vulnerable pupils are ultimately aimed at ensuring all pupils are empowered to access and benefit equally from universal provision and make the most of all the opportunities on offer.*

### **Q 7: Would the school still put trips on if parents were not willing to contribute to the cost?**

A: Ofsted states that: “Within successful Primary Schools, curriculums are enriched by first-hand experiences, including visits locally and further afield, contributions from adults with knowledge and skills that could enhance pupils’ learning, and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities.” (Ofsted, ‘The curriculum in successful primary schools’ 553. 2002)’. Unfortunately, school budgets do not fully reflect this and contributions from parents are a necessary requirement for regular school trips and educational visits to take place.

At Bluecoat Primary School we look to the future and aim to prepare our children to be resilient, reflective learners able to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world. We strive to create future leaders and global citizens who are equipped with a broad knowledge base, critical thinking skills, respect for others, self-belief, empathy and integrity. In order to achieve this we are committed to ensuring that our pupils learn as much as they can locally, nationally and internationally about the world in which they live. We contribute a proportion of the school budget to subsidise first-hand experiences and educational visits, this proportion is reviewed annually. We would, however, certainly be unable to continue our current, very rich provision without parental contributions and support from the FoTB.

### **Q 8: How do I apply for Pupil Premium funding for my child?**

A: Parents must apply for free school meals via the County Council or their child’s school; this is a quick and simple process. For more information telephone 0345 155 1019 to speak directly to a representative from Devon County Council; Pupils do not have to take up their entitlement to a free meal but Local Authorities and schools recommend that they do. The government is made aware of each pupil claiming FSMs each term via the school census so they have up-to-date information on those eligible.

If you have any further questions or queries about pupil premium funding please do not hesitate to contact the school. We will always be happy to help.

**ParentMail Questionnaire - Outcomes**

Service	Agree	Disagree	N/A	Comments include:
ParentMail	65	14	2	<p>Brilliant – love it!</p> <p>I would rather receive a letter hard copy.</p> <p>A mixed service – Do one or the other!! (See FAQ1 below)</p> <p>If a letter needs returning it is more helpful to have a paper copy.</p> <p>As a working mum we totally rely on parent-mail – need all letters via ParentMail.</p> <p>Yes the system is working correctly. However, as working parents it is very difficult to access emails and so school letters sent using this method – very frustrating!</p> <p>Not always able to access website “timely”. Not user friendly and difficult to navigate.</p> <p>Sometimes I try opening a letter and it crashes my computer.</p> <p>It does not seem compatible with my phone. (See FAQ 3 below)</p> <p>Working fine now – sorted!</p> <p>I would rather receive updates on the class whiteboards.</p> <p>Sometimes I can get in, sometimes I can’t / Sometimes my password works, sometimes it doesn’t.</p> <p>Letters - Yes. Payments - No.</p> <p>I have been receiving letters alright but have been unable to download forms or pay.</p>
ParentMail PMX	65	11	5	<p>Its fine but I’m not sure where to check my balance or credit (See PMX Q5 below)</p> <p>I would like the option of ordering 1 or 2 lunches a week and paying by cash into the office. I do not want to have to order 10 meals per child up front. (See PMX Q3 below)</p> <p>Why can we not order more than 1 week’s meals at a time? It would be much more convenient to order 4 weeks at a time.</p> <p>Why are jackets and baguettes not available each day?</p> <p>Some issues ... can take a while but usually works fine – just takes longer than putting money in an envelope!!</p>

**ParentMail Questionnaire - Outcomes**

				<p>If I don't access website before Weds I'm unable to book/order my daughter's meals – this in turn creates an additional workload for admin staff who then have to order it for me.</p> <p>It can be difficult ordering meals in advance but we understand the necessity of it.</p> <p>I would like to know how many outstanding lunches I have.</p> <p>It does not state child's name at the top of the form so with 2 or more children it gets confusing.</p> <p>Because of diet issues I need to know which form is for what child. (See PMX Q7 below)</p> <p>Very frustrating – supposed to work on smartphones. I have an 'apple' phone and the app opens but instantly closes again. I am unable to log into the dinner menu unless I log onto a PC which is what I do but find it extremely annoying. (See FAQ 3 below)</p> <p>I do prefer to pay in person.</p> <p>None of my cards work but my husband's does so he sorts it!</p>
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# PARENTMAIL / PMX

## Frequently Asked Questions



## ParentMail

### **Q 1: Why do I still get some letters hard copy?**

A: We are hoping to send all letters out on ParentMail once they are consistently reaching all parents. However, we have found that if a reply slip is needed many parents find it easier to have a hard copy rather than having to print out the letter. For the time being we will therefore also send out hard copies where applicable.

### **Q 2: I receive some letters by ParentMail but not all how do I know if I have missed one?**

A: If you log onto to your ParentMail 2 account you can see all letters that have been sent to you.

### **Q 3: Why isn't the system compatible with my phone?**

A: This is an issue with the ParentMail system and we are working with them to get this resolved.

### **Q 4: What should I do if I am having difficulty with ParentMail?**

A: You can contact ParentMail direct on 0844 356 000 or you can speak to the admin team in school who are always happy to help.

## PMX

**Q 1: I can only get to a computer at the weekend – can the choices be put up a week in advance.**

A: This is something we have reviewed and for meals Week beginning 9/2/15 we will start to put them up on the Friday, giving the weekend and the week until Thursday to order.

**Q 2: Why can't ordering and paying be on the same site?**

A: This is an issue with the ParentMail system and something that at the moment can't be resolved. However, from September ParentMail have promised that the PMX system will have a payment facility as well.

**Q 3: Why can't I pay for 1 meal at a time per child and not have to pay for meals in advance?**

A: We have requested payments in blocks to reduce the number of times parents have to access ParentMail to make a transaction and to reduce administration costs.

**Q 4: Why can't I order and pay for the month in advance?**

A: Payment for meals can technically be made a month in advance but it is not yet possible to order meals that far in advance. Although it may be beneficial for administration purposes we are concerned about the practical implications as pupils often forget what has been ordered for them. We are currently working on a solution to this.

**Q 5: How can I check my balance?**

A: Unfortunately the only way of checking balances is by contacting the admin team. Many people write on their calendar when they made a payment and when meals are taken to keep a tally. We have passed this concern on to PMX and hope it will be resolved when PMX have a payment facility from September.

**Q 6: Why are Jackets and Baguettes not available each day?**

A: The Foods Standards Agency has recently issued very strict guidelines for schools to adhere to regarding what food can be served to children to ensure they receive a balance and nutritious diet over the course of the week. Unfortunately this now prohibits us providing Jackets and Baguettes daily.

**Q 7: I can't always see which of my children I am paying for. How can I check?**

A: We have informed ParentMail of this issue and they are looking into it. The only solution at present is to log onto a computer, you should then be able to see the names with the menus. Once you are aware of which order the menu comes in for which child you should then be able to use your phone.

**Q 8: What should I do if I am having difficulty with ParentMail PMX?**

A: You can contact ParentMail direct on 0844 356 000 or you can speak to the admin team in school who are always very happy to help.