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What support works? Inquiry into attainment and achievement of school children experiencing poverty



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Education and Skills Committee

To consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.



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Introduction

1. The Education and Skills Committee ("the Committee") undertook an inquiry into the impact of poverty on attainment and achievement of school-aged children and young people. This work is in the context of reports that poverty is an increasing problem for families in Scotland. The Committee was interested in finding out about the ways poverty impacts on children in school education and the ways in which our schools and other services mitigate this impact.

How we took evidence on this inquiry

2. In all its work, the Committee is keen to ensure that it hears from a wide range of people and organisations. This inquiry was no different and the Committee heard from; young people, parents, teachers and school staff, Community Learning and Development ("CLD") professionals, a wide range of individuals working and volunteering in the third sector, representative organisations, and local and national government.
3. The Committee took evidence in a number of different ways. The Committee sought written views from a number of stakeholders at the outset of its inquiry and also issued an open call for views from young people, parents/carers, school staff (including teachers), and other professionals who work in our communities.
4. In the open call for views, the Committee asked about people's and organisations' experience of what support is available to children and young people experiencing poverty, what has worked well, the impact of this support, any barriers to success and what else could be done to help. The Committee agreed that individuals' responses could be published anonymously if requested.
5. The Committee received a high number of responses. A list of the responders are included in the [Annexe](#) to this report and [all of the submissions are published and available online](#).
6. The Committee took formal evidence at the Scottish Parliament over five meetings in April and May 2018. More details of the formal evidence sessions are included in the [Annexe](#).
7. In addition, the Committee arranged a number of informal meetings and events to hear directly from people on the front line. On the mornings of 25 April, 2 May and 9 May, the Committee held breakfast meetings with parents, young people, front-line staff and volunteers mainly from the organisations who gave evidence. Members of the Committee also held a discussion group with a number of CLD professionals on Monday 30 April 2018.
8. Members of the Committee visited Queen Anne High School, Dunfermline, on 1 May. During the visit, the Committee also met with staff from St Serf's Primary School, High Valleyfield.
9. On 16 May, the Committee held an evening meeting at the Muirhouse Millennium Centre, Edinburgh. The event was attended by around 50 people, including young

people, parents, teachers, CLD professionals, academics and professionals from the third sector.

Community meeting on 16 May 2018 at the Muirhouse Millennium Centre.



Source: Alistair Stoddart 2018

10. Links to Official Reports of the formal meetings and write-ups of the other visits and events highlighted above [are published and available on the Committee's website.](#)

11. The Committee has heard from hundreds of people during this inquiry. The experiences and evidence shared is the basis for the Committee's findings. The Committee thanks everyone who contributed to its work.

Membership

12. Gordon MacDonald MSP replaced Ruth Maguire MSP as a member of the Committee on 24 May 2018. This was after the Committee concluded its evidence gathering on this inquiry but before it had agreed this report on 27 June 2018.

Summary of recommendations

13. All of the Committee's recommendations in this report are reproduced below.

Impact of attainment

The poverty-related attainment gap

14. The Committee acknowledges that there are strengths and weaknesses in the different measures of deprivation usedⁱ. There are likely to be imperfections in any such measurement. The Committee welcomes the work highlighted by Education Scotland to refine measures of deprivation, particularly in rural areas and asks to be kept informed of the progress on that work. The Committee also acknowledges that the Scottish Government is open to dialogue on this matter.
15. Given the reliance on two indicators of deprivation as the basis for the allocation of substantial amounts of targeted Scottish Government funding, both of which may under-report rural poverty, the Committee considers it is preferable under the current system of funding that swift progress is made towards developing more sophisticated indicators.
16. The Committee notes that the creation of a "bespoke" measure of deprivation is identified in the Scottish Government's education research strategy. The Committee seeks an update from the Scottish Government on the progress of this work.
17. In the meantime, the impact of using the current indicators as a basis for funding allocation should be explored further. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government assess the extent to which individuals and areas are disadvantaged by using SIMD and free school meals registration as indicators of deprivation. This includes exploring the extent of the "urban bias" highlighted in evidence from the Northern Alliance.

How does poverty impact on children and their education?

18. The Committee is deeply concerned that the incidence of child poverty is increasing. The Committee was appalled by some of the evidence it heard, including the amount of evidence received about children in Scotland going to school hungry.

ⁱ The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and free school meal registrations are two measures used currently.

19. The Committee notes that certain trends in policy, such as the increased use of digital platforms can have a disproportionate negative impact on young people living in poverty.
20. The Committee notes that since 2016, education authorities have had a legal duty to have regard to social disadvantage in new strategic decisions. However, this does not cover either existing policies such as the structure of the school year or more operational decisions such as the increasing use of digital platforms. The Committee recommends that during standard review processes of their schools, education authorities should undertake impact assessments on existing policies and associated practices to assess the impact on low-income families.
21. The Committee further recommends that education authorities ensure that school leaders are mindful of potential impacts of school practice on families with low incomes and are equipped to undertake equality impact assessments if necessary.
22. The Committee seeks an update from COSLA on how its members will take forward the preceding two recommendations.
23. The Committee is concerned that Joseph Rowntree Foundation found a significant difference in the outcomes for young people from deprived communities depending on where they live, specifically which local authority they live in. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government and COSLA work together to analyse these findings and report back to the Committee by the end of 2018 on the basis for this disparity and the actions that require to be taken.

Leadership and teaching approaches

Leadership

24. The Committee recognises that there are many high quality and inspirational school leaders across Scotland. The Committee also recognises the value of interventions that are based on an awareness of the emotional needs of the child or young person and also the value of engaging with families in ways that are supportive to them. The Committee praises the work of headteachers, such as Nancy Clunie, which reflects these principles. The Committee also praises the collaboration and best practice sharing that is taking place in education authorities such as Fife and Glasgow.
25. The Committee acknowledges that effective leadership can take many forms at many different levels in schools. Regardless of which leadership model is adopted by a school, it is vital that the Scottish Government, Education Scotland

and education authorities ensure there is a structure in place that supports and fosters that high quality leadership.

Achievement and a broad curriculum

26. The Committee recommends that Education Scotland (in its new capacity supporting the development of school leaders) identifies how it will enhance knowledge of youth work approaches among school leaders. The Committee also recommends that Education Scotland publishes a detailed plan, including targets and deadlines, on the work they are undertaking to ensure wider learning is accredited appropriately.

Teaching

27. The Committee has found that, in a variety of different contexts, local authorities, schools and teachers are using evidence-based techniques and getting positive results. The Committee considers that evidence to this inquiry could provide a very useful resource for other practitioners. Therefore, the Committee recommends that Education Scotland takes into account the evidence collected during this inquiry.
28. The Committee also recognises that there can be resource implications arising from the adoption of best practice and its adaptation to meet the needs of individuals in each classroom. The Committee reiterates its view that "a continued emphasis on reducing teacher workload is vital".¹
29. The Committee therefore recommends that Education Scotland, through its school inspections, seeks to identify activities taking place in our schools for which there is either strong or limited evidence of improving attainment or reducing the attainment gap. The Committee further recommends that having received this advice from Education Scotland, education authorities and schools should be given the time and space to adopt activities with more robust evidence of effectiveness. This should include ensuring that Continuing Professional Development is developed and delivered in ways that have been shown to be effective.

Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Funding

Resources and additionality

30. The Committee wishes to highlight that many schools do not receive PEF and are undertaking valuable work to improve attainment using core funding. For completeness any system used to evaluate the impact of targeted Government funding must reflect progress in attainment achieved using core funding. An effective evaluation must reflect how attainment is improving, why and where the challenges, including funding levels, remain.
31. The Committee notes the [Scottish Government's evaluation of its Attainment Scotland Fund](#).
32. The Committee recommends that as part of the next stage of this evaluation, the Scottish Government assess the extent to which PEF is used for additional purposes rather than for purposes that would be considered to be candidates to be covered from core funding.
33. In addition, the Committee recommends that the Scottish Government widens the evaluation to assess the separate impacts on the poverty-related attainment gap of programmes and interventions that are totally or primarily funded by:
 - the Pupil Equity Fund;
 - other aspects of the Attainment Scotland Fund; or
 - schools' core budgets.

Challenges

Procurement

34. The Committee welcomes the work schools are doing to tackle the attainment gap. The Committee notes that headteachers are being asked to undertake new tasks as part of PEF processes, such as procurement exercises, with little preparation before they took on these new responsibilities. The Committee recommends that Education Scotland ensures that there is universally available and high quality training for headteachers on how to identify need and commission services through PEF.
35. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that in advance of any additional responsibilities being placed on headteachers in the future, the Scottish Government must ensure that they are provided with the necessary training and resources to undertake their expanded role. The impact on headteachers' workload of these new responsibilities should be acknowledged. When

introducing new responsibilities, the Scottish Government through Education Scotland, should seek to identify ways to alleviate workload in other parts of the headteacher role.

Staffing

36. The Committee notes that headteachers may employ additional teachers through PEF for the remainder of the current parliamentary sessionⁱⁱ. However, some headteachers believe they are not able to do so. For example, there are conditions on employing teachers using PEF in the Scottish Government's guidance and it is unclear whether the requirement to "fill core staffing posts first" before employing teachers through PEF refers to the local authority or the school and this may be cause for confusion. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government makes clear in guidance the circumstances in which a headteacher may and may not employ a teacher through PEF.

Accountability

37. The Committee seeks further clarity on lines of accountability from the Scottish Government between headteachers and education authorities on PEF spending. The Committee also questions how a headteacher is in practice accountable to the school community, as suggested by Education Scotland. The Committee expects Education Scotland to clarify this.
38. The Committee notes the call from School Leaders Scotland that an accountability framework be created to evaluate headteachers' use of PEF. The Committee's experience in Fife indicated that that local authority held its headteachers accountable for, broadly speaking, the "must do" actions outlined in the [Scottish Government's guidance](#) along with pre-agreed outcomes.
39. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government update its guidance to clarify the role of local authorities in ensuring headteachers are accountable for the outcomes resulting from PEF activities. In doing so, the Scottish Government may wish to reflect on the approach taken in Fife.

ii i.e. spring 2021.

Barriers to participation

Cost of the school day - charging for school activities

40. The starting point to address this issue of charging for access to school education is to assess the extent of this practice. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government surveys all education authorities to establish which authorities sanction charging for in-school activities and the level of these charges.
41. The Committee also recommends that the Scottish Government undertake a review of which elements of the experiences offered by schools may attract a charge and the cumulative impact of these charges.

Hunger

42. The Committee commends local authority initiatives to tackle hunger including North Lanarkshire offering free meals during holidays and Glasgow planning to provide free school meals for all pupils up to P4. The Committee appreciates the value of this work and urges the Scottish Government to support and evaluate such initiatives.
43. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government review its current policies for funding free food in schools, taking into account evaluations of the outcomes achieved by expanded free provision of food at local authority and school levels. To take account of these developments, which are at very early stages, the review cannot take place immediately, and so the Committee recommends that it is concluded and published by the end of the current parliamentary sessionⁱⁱⁱ. This review should also examine ways to improve the uptake of existing provision by families who are eligible.

Uniforms

44. The Committee welcomes the recent announcement from the Scottish Government and local authorities that there should be a minimum clothing allowance of £100 a year.
45. The Committee considers that excessively expensive or unnecessary pieces of school uniform should not be required. Reducing the complexity of school uniforms would reduce the cost burden of education on families. The Committee

ⁱⁱⁱ i.e. spring 2021.

recommends that education authorities invite schools to poverty-proof their uniform policies.

46. The Committee also recommends that education authorities should consider carefully the evidence received during this inquiry of children who cannot afford to purchase or maintain school uniforms being sent home or chastised for their appearance at school. The Committee hopes this is a limited issue but considers that no pupil should be denied access to education due to the inability to afford school uniform. Schools should have an emphasis on supportive policies that are mindful of young people who, due to poverty, do not have the full school uniform.
47. The Committee asks that COSLA responds to the Committee by the end of 2018 to provide an update on these two issues.

Community based support and youth work in schools

48. The Committee recognises the distinct and important role that youth work plays in the education of our young people. The Committee recommends that the national youth work strategy currently being developed has a strong focus on how youth work and school based education can complement and support each other.
49. The Committee notes that improvement planning should be developed to be complementary to children's service planning, which for example includes youth work services. This appears to be the appropriate mechanism to ensure that a range of community services and providers are included in the life of a school. The Committee recommends that Education Scotland identify whether School Improvement Plans are being developed to complement community based services for children and young people in a consistent and meaningful way.

Parental involvement

Parent Councils

50. The Committee acknowledges that there are schools with excellent parental engagement but which do not have a parent council. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government examine the impact of not having a parent council on the funding available to schools and whether state funding, through either local authorities or the Attainment Scotland Fund, takes account of schools where it has proven difficult to establish a parent council.

Home and school partnerships

51. The Committee highlights the notable impact of income maximisation for some of the families where schools have acted as an initial hub and directed families towards support. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government undertakes a cost-benefit analysis of rolling out a system of using more schools as hubs for income maximisation advisory services.

Impact of poverty on attainment and education

52. A main focus of the Committee's inquiry has been on what can be done to support the education of children and young people who experience poverty. In doing so, the Committee has also considered and taken evidence on what the impact of poverty is, how to measure deprivation, and how much of an impact education can have on children's outcomes.
53. Growing up in poverty does not mean a child will underachieve. However, the evidence the Committee took was clear that living in poverty has an effect on the family unit which then can impact on a child's learning. This is reflected in data that shows that there is a gap between the attainment of children and young people in the most and least deprived areas of Scotland. ²

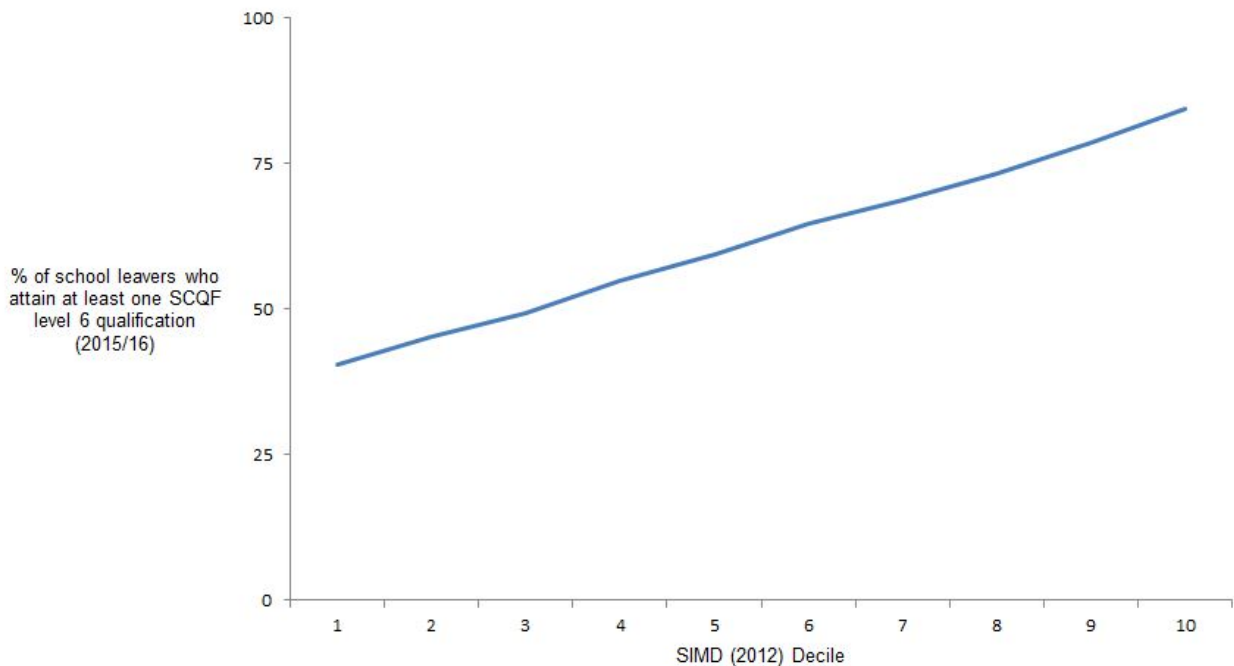
The poverty-related attainment gap

54. The gap in attainment between children and young people living in our most and least deprived areas is known as the "attainment gap".
55. The [OECD defines educational attainment](#) as the "highest grade completed within the most advanced level attended in the educational system of the country where the education was received. Some countries may also find it useful to present data on educational attainment in terms of the highest grade attended". In debates in Scotland and elsewhere it is often used as a shorthand for measurable progression in formal education.
56. The Scottish Government uses the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) ("SIMD") as a measure of poverty. The attainment gap is defined as the difference of attainment between individuals living in the highest and lowest quintile (20%).
57. The Scottish Government consulted on how to measure the poverty related attainment gap in 2017. The Scottish Government has identified 11 key measures to gauge progress in reducing the gap - these measures include health and well-being measures as well as academic attainment. The Scottish Government also published benchmarks setting out what the current attainment gaps are for those measures. ²
58. The Scottish Government's goal is to make "demonstrable progress in closing the gap during the lifetime of this Parliament, and to substantially eliminate it in the next decade." ³
59. To help achieve this goal, the Scottish Government is committed to spending £750 million on its Scottish Attainment Challenge ("SAC") over the course of the current parliamentary session (to April 2021). This funding is being spent on SAC funding for nine "challenge" local authorities and a number of individual schools based on levels of deprivation as measured by SIMD and Pupil Equity Funding ("PEF") which is allocated to individual schools based on free school meal registrations. ²

Education Scotland explained that as well as the targeted funding, there is a universal offer to support all teachers and schools,⁴

60. The graph below shows that attainment increases steadily for young people, the less deprived the area is in which they live. Here the measure of attainment is obtaining one or more SCQF level 6 qualification. (e.g. Higher, or better). The Committee is aware that while the gap between the most and least deprived areas is important, there is positive correlation between educational outcomes and parental income all the way through the income scale.

Graph showing positive relationship between SIMD decile and attainment.



Source: Scottish Government, 2017⁵

How accurate are the indicators used to measure deprivation?

61. The Committee heard evidence that measures of deprivation are imperfect and that designing a system that could adequately identify the different impacts of deprivation is complex. For example the density of poverty in different areas of deprivation, whether rural or urban, is difficult to measure accurately. In addition the Committee heard evidence of a growing number of families that are experiencing poverty despite working long hours in full time jobs. This form of poverty can be challenging to identify, not least because some people in this situation would not necessarily choose to self-identify as experiencing poverty. In addition the deprivation levels in an area can impact on and put pressures on services including education, and this impacts on people regardless of whether they are directly experiencing poverty.
62. SIMD measures levels of deprivation in small local areas. The Northern Alliance highlighted that SIMD tends to highlight concentrations of deprivation and thus has an "urban bias" while missing a significant number of individuals living in rural poverty.⁶ The Committee explored how the concentration of deprivation affects services and therefore outcomes in Scotland's communities. He said—

63. The Cabinet Secretary acknowledged that SIMD is not an individualised measure.

” [SIMD] is a good measure for identifying substantive groupings and areas of poverty, it is not good at identifying individual instances of poverty. The free school meals eligibility criteria give us a more comprehensive presentation of the prevalence of poverty, which results in about 95 or 96 per cent of schools receiving some pupil equity funding.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 157⁷

64. Free school meals' registration was also criticised by some as a measure. The Poverty Alliance highlighted stigma as being a barrier to accessing free school meals, where children and young people could be identified as accessing free school meals.⁸ This stigma may prevent some from registering for free school meals, especially in more affluent areas where free school meals are less common or in smaller schools. On this issue, the Cabinet Secretary said that he is open to dialogue about alternative measures. He said—

” Eligibility for free school meals is the most comprehensive mechanism that is available to me. I am happy to engage in dialogue about how we could find a more comprehensive mechanism because I fundamentally accept [...] the prevalence of poverty possibly being more difficult to identify in rural communities. In smaller schools, families might be reluctant to come forward and say that their children are eligible for free school meals because such eligibility is slightly more obvious in a school of 20 pupils than it is in a school of 200 or 300 pupils.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 157⁷

65. The Scottish Government's education research strategy which was published in April 2017 states that it will explore "a study on the long-term development of a bespoke index of social background which will create individual-level (as opposed to area-based) data involving consideration of the data collected at school registration." The strategy continued—

” A bespoke index will enable more targeted and effective intervention for disadvantaged pupils, and also better take into account disadvantage of those who do not live in deprived areas (usually the greater share of deprived students).

Source: Scottish Government, 2017⁹


66. Education Scotland indicated that it was continuing to work with the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland on refining measures of deprivation, especially to better reflect poverty in rural areas. Gayle Gorman, Chief Executive of Education Scotland said—

” Significant work has been done, and this year PEF funding has gone to more schools across Scotland. However, further work could be done to reflect rural poverty and deprivation, because significant parts of Scotland fall into that category.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], Gayle Gorman, contrib. 101¹⁰

67. The Committee acknowledges that there are strengths and weaknesses in the different measures of deprivation used. There are likely to be imperfections in any such measurement. The Committee welcomes the work highlighted by Education Scotland to refine measures of deprivation, particularly in rural areas and asks to be kept informed of the progress on that work. The Committee also acknowledges that the Scottish Government is open to dialogue on this matter.
68. Given the reliance on two indicators of deprivation as the basis for the allocation of substantial amounts of targeted Scottish Government funding, both of which may under-report rural poverty, the Committee considers it is preferable under the current system of funding that swift progress is made towards developing more sophisticated indicators.
69. The Committee notes that the creation of a "bespoke" measure of deprivation is identified in the Scottish Government's education research strategy. The Committee seeks an update from the Scottish Government on the progress of this work.
70. In the meantime, the impact of using the current indicators as a basis for funding allocation should be explored further. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government assess the extent to which individuals and areas are disadvantaged by using SIMD and free school meals registration as indicators of deprivation. This includes exploring the extent of the "urban bias" highlighted in evidence from the Northern Alliance.

How does poverty impact on children and their education?

71. The Committee heard evidence of a number of ways in which poverty can impact on a child and their education and that poverty is a growing issue for children and young people in Scotland. The Committee is aware that this is a complicated and multifaceted issue and wants to highlight a snapshot of evidence at the outset that highlights the types of experiences and evidence raised during the inquiry.
72. John Loughton spoke about the stress inherent to poverty and told the Committee—
 I liken living in poverty to sitting on a chair that has had three of its legs removed: every part of you is tensed in order to keep balanced; the slightest movement, wind or meander and you will go. [...] When you are surviving, how can you think about thriving, culture or creativity? Why would you think of yourself in the asset model, rather than thinking about the deficits that everyone knows you for?

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018 [Draft], John Loughton, contrib. 62¹¹
73. Children coming to school hungry was a theme that arose frequently in the Committee's evidence. Dr James Foley from North Lanarkshire Council told the Committee that headteachers and other professionals always raise hunger in discussions on poverty; he said "they think that it has a significant impact on their

pupils' ability to learn." ¹² In the Committee's meeting at the Muirhouse Millennium Centre on 16 May, the Committee was told that breakfast clubs "ensure young people can go to school with a full stomach and ready to learn" ¹³

74. The Committee also heard examples of how family homes can lack the resources to support children to do their homework. In primary school, this could be craft materials such as glue or glitter ¹⁴ and in secondary school, that could be access to IT or the internet. The Poverty Alliance said in their submission—

” Ensuring free and consistent access to the internet for all children is a necessity in order to support their learning. Yet many children do not have access to a computer at home and, if they do, access to the internet cannot always be guaranteed due to cost.

Source: The Poverty Alliance, 2018¹⁵

75. A number of organisations (e.g. Glasgow Centre for Population Health ¹⁶) also highlighted the benefits of having a quiet space in the home to do homework, which is not always the case for families in crowded accommodation. As well as space, the Committee heard that some families cannot afford basic amenities such as hot water for showers or beds which can impact on young people's attendance at school and readiness to learn when they are there. ¹⁷

76. A number of respondents to the Committee's call for views and people the Committee spoke to were clear that the concept of "poverty of aspirations" is a myth. Dr Morag Treanor has undertaken research into this topic and in her submission to the Committee said—

” The evidence shows that poorer parents are more likely to aspire to apprenticeships/training/further education and less likely to aspire to higher education for their children. Parents' aspirations may differ by poverty experience, but can only be thought of as 'high' aspirations [...] Aspirations, even in communities struggling with poverty, are very high – the missing element is the knowledge of how to make these aspirations real and obtainable.

Source: Treanor, 2018¹⁸

An increase in child poverty

77. The Committee heard evidence that teachers are increasingly seeing children who are affected by poverty. Andrea Bradley from the EIS said—

” Where the school policy is to wear uniform, they were perhaps not able to sustain wearing it every day. Kids were not able to participate in school trips, did not bring in homework or turned up for PE lessons without the requisite kit [...] Some kids come into school and tell teachers that they are hungry; some steal food or items of equipment from one another at times; and some appear visibly unwell—pale and complaining of headaches—or have unexplained absences from school.

All those factors were combining to suggest to our teachers that there was an increased incidence of poverty. They thought that those things were attributable to the income circumstances of families in their school communities.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018 [Draft], Andrea Bradley, contrib. 46¹⁴

78. John Dickie from CPAG Scotland said—

” There is no question that families are under increased and increasing pressure. That is primarily as a result of cuts in the benefits, tax credits and financial support available, alongside stagnating wages. Low-income families have faced a real squeeze on their incomes and more and more have been pushed below the poverty line. All the projections are that that will continue, as cuts to the financial support available to families kick in and accumulate.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 18 April 2018, John Dickie, contrib. 13¹⁹

79. Dr Jim McCormick from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation said that "child poverty is now rising again, after 20 years of progress" ²⁰ and stated—

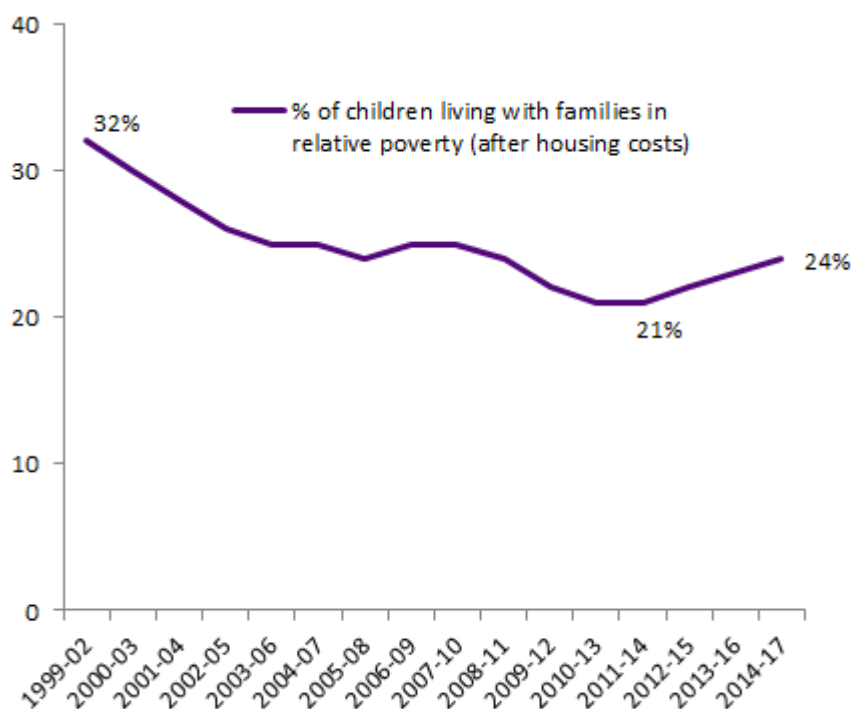
” On the dominant drivers of child poverty in Scotland, in particular the increase that we are likely to see—all things being equal—by the end of this decade, which John Dickie mentioned, the most consistent finding from the evidence is that aspects of UK social security policy are the single biggest reason for the increase, followed by what is happening at the bottom end of the jobs market [...] In particular, when we consider what Governments do directly, the benefit freeze, which I think is to be reviewed in a year or two, has already caused great damage in the context of poverty rates.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 18 April 2018, Dr McCormick, contrib. 45²¹

80. The Scottish Government's *Poverty and Income Inequality Statistics* show that the numbers of children in poverty has been increasing since 2011/12. On the measure of the percentage of children living in relative poverty after housing costs, in 1999/2000 the figure was 32%, this dropped to 19% in 2011/12 and is 23% in 2016/17 (the latest figures available). ²² This is illustrated in the graph below, where the data is presented in 3-year rolling averages.

Child poverty rates

Percentages of children living in families in relative poverty, after housing costs. Three year rolling averages.



Source: Scottish Government, 2018²²

81. The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires the Scottish Government to reduce the number of children who live in poverty by 2030. One target is to reduce to less than 10% children living in households in Scotland in relative poverty after housing costs (relative poverty defined as a household with less than 60% of UK median income in the same year).²³
82. The Cabinet Secretary acknowledges that at least to some degree "the Scottish Government has opportunities to use our policy instruments to address [rising levels of poverty]".²⁴ He also stated—
- ” The Scottish Government makes active representations, publicly and privately, to the UK Government on welfare reform. We consistently set out our concerns about the welfare reform agenda and its implications for children and families in Scotland.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 153²⁴

How can education be 'poverty proofed'?

83. Schools cannot be expected to provide solutions for all of the negative impacts of poverty on education attainment and achievement. A Joseph Rowntree Foundation paper on this topic stated that—

” Just 14 per cent of variation in individuals’ performance is accounted for by school quality. Most variation is explained by other factors, underlining the need to look at the range of children’s experiences, inside and outside school, when seeking to raise achievement.

Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2007²⁵

84. The Committee has heard about a great deal of good policy and practice by education authorities, schools, delivered in the community or in the family home that demonstrate understanding of the challenges faced by those experiencing poverty. For example, during the Committee’s informal meeting on 2 May, an Edinburgh primary school headteacher explained that her school’s homework policy is that a child should not be put under pressure if they have not done their homework. This policy recognises that not all families will have the time or resources to support their children in homework tasks.²⁶

85. Other policies, however, were highlighted as poor practice, as they did not take account of some of the barriers to learning that poverty creates. For example, the move to online payment systems for school trips and dinners presupposes access to the internet and may create digital exclusion.^{17 27} As previously mentioned, digital exclusion can affect homework. The Poverty and Inequality Commission said in its submission—

” The Commission [has heard about] costs being shifted from schools to families, for example through expectations that all families will have access to a computer to carry out homework and a printer to be able to print out material that is a core part of learning. Pupils are not always able to access these resources in school if they do not have them at home.

Source: Poverty and Inequality Commission, 2018²⁸

86. The Committee heard that seemingly small asks of families can lead to significant costs. With respect to school uniforms for example Brian Scott from the Poverty Truth Commission said—

” For parents who have a few kids at school, it is a massive pressure on their budget and finances to have to go out at the start of a new term to change everything again. If the school decides to change colours or whatever, that negates the possibility of even handing the clothes down to younger children.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018, Brian Scott, contrib. 12²⁹

87. One health professional who attended the Committee’s informal meeting on 2 May 2018 questioned why equality impact assessments were not undertaken for changes of policy which had a disproportionate impact on families living in poverty, such as a move to online payment systems.²⁶

88. The Committee also explored whether the structure of the school year and particularly the long summer break negatively impacts on families experiencing poverty. Referring to research from the USA on the impact of the long summer break, Lindsay Graham said in a letter to the Committee—

- ” Many of those living in poverty may have been socially isolated, not had access to regular meals, limited outside play or physical activity and little of the ‘fun’ that other more privileged children might experience during the breaks.

Source: Graham, 2018³⁰

89. The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 requires that when education authorities are making strategic decisions, they must have regard to reducing inequalities of outcome for pupils experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Dr McCormick from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation ("JRF") told the Committee that it had been supporting local authorities to ensure that their budgeting decisions protect low-income people and areas and to be mindful of the impacts of these policy decisions. [15]
90. The 2016 Act does not apply retrospectively meaning all policy established before the Act's implementation have not been developed in this way. In addition, the Act does not apply to lower level operational decisions and the Committee heard evidence of new practices commencing that may not align with the strategic direction of the 2016 Act.
91. The Committee heard evidence from JRF that the outcomes for young people from deprived areas "varies substantially" across different local authorities. JRF looked at the percentage of young people from the most deprived areas attaining five or more Level 5 passes across different local authorities. It found that while in the best performing local authorities (East Dunbartonshire and East Renfrewshire) the percentage was over 50%, in one (Aberdeenshire), it was less than 20%. As well as Aberdeenshire, other local authorities that JRF highlighted as having a lower performance on this measure were Aberdeen City, Stirling, Scottish Borders, and Clackmannanshire. JRF's submission stated—
- ” The reasons for this are not fully understood, but we can speculate that these are likely to include school leadership and culture, use of data to inform practice, improvements in teaching methods, targeted resourcing and relationships with families, communities and wider stakeholders.

Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2018³¹

92. The Committee is deeply concerned that the incidence of child poverty is increasing. The Committee was appalled by some of the evidence it heard, including the amount of evidence received about children in Scotland going to school hungry.
93. The Committee notes that certain trends in policy, such as the increased use of digital platforms can have a disproportionate negative impact on young people living in poverty.
94. The Committee notes that since 2016, education authorities have had a legal duty to have regard to social disadvantage in new strategic decisions. However, this does not cover either existing policies such as the structure of the school year or more operational decisions such as the increasing use of digital platforms. The Committee recommends that during standard review processes of

their schools, education authorities should undertake impact assessments on existing policies and associated practices to assess the impact on low-income families.

95. The Committee further recommends that education authorities ensure that school leaders are mindful of potential impacts of school practice on families with low incomes and are equipped to undertake equality impact assessments if necessary.
96. The Committee seeks an update from COSLA on how its members will take forward the preceding two recommendations.
97. The Committee is concerned that Joseph Rowntree Foundation found a significant difference in the outcomes for young people from deprived communities depending on where they live, specifically which local authority they live in. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government and COSLA work together to analyse these findings and report back to the Committee by the end of 2018 on the basis for this disparity and the actions that require to be taken.

Leadership and teaching approaches

98. A recurring theme across a number of different strands of the Committee's work has been the importance of high quality teaching and leadership in schools. In this inquiry both were highlighted as central to closing the attainment gap. In its submission, the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change ("ROC") told the Committee that the key drivers for schools to make a difference to the outcomes of their pupils were—

” First, schools should invest in teachers' professional development so that teachers develop a wide repertoire of teaching skills that can reflect the range of needs of their learners. Second, a focus on building leadership capacity at all levels within the school is key to success, as is leaders promoting a culture underpinned by high expectations and positive norms in staff and pupils.

Source: Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change, 2018³²

99. The ROC continued to highlight the importance of collaboration and taking a holistic approach to tackling the attainment gap.³²

Leadership

100. The Committee spoke to a number of headteachers in different local authorities. While their personalities differed, the Committee was impressed at the clear leadership abilities of all of those individuals.
101. Nancy Clunie, the Headteacher of Dalmarnock Primary School in Glasgow appeared at Committee on 2 May 2018. 94.7% of the children in Dalmarnock Primary School are in the first quintile (20% most deprived) SIMD zones. Nearly 50% of Dalmarnock pupils are entitled to free school meals and there are a relatively high number of looked after children.³³

Satwat Rehman, Nancy Clunie and Brian Scott during an evidence session on 2 May 2018.



Source: SPCB 2018

102. Ms Clunie had a clear focus and sense of ownership of the wellbeing of her pupils and her school community. This report will explore the detail of some of the programmes she has undertaken later in this report. It was, however, clear that her passion allied to her considerable skill and tenacity made a huge difference to her school.
103. Ms Clunie told the Committee of her efforts to get every parent involved in the life of her school—

” We have the parents who are very keen to be a part and we have got on board the parents who have been reluctant because of language barriers, but there are some parents who we are not getting, so we want to know what would enable us to reach them. [...] We need to explore that and we need to ask them. If that means knocking on doors, that is what we will do. If you will not come to a coffee morning, I will come to you—there is no escape.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Nancy Clunie, contrib. 108³⁴

104. In relation to drawing in support and resources locally and nationally, Ms Clunie said—

” I am not a shrinking violet, so if I need help, I go out and find it. [...] It has just been a case of donning the brave pants and picking up the phone. The worst that they can say to me is, “Away you go,” but nobody ever does.


Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Nancy Clunie, contrib. 86³⁵

105. During a visit to Queen Anne High School in Dunfermline, the Committee learned about a variety of measures that had been put in place to support young people. The programmes were focused on: broadening young people's experience; health and wellbeing; and reducing costs and barriers to participation. Many of these programmes were initiated by other leadership team members, teaching staff and pupils themselves. Nonetheless, the Rector, Ruth McFarlane, had a very clear vision of the purpose of each of the programmes and an understanding of how successful they were.³⁶
106. The Committee also met with the Headteacher and staff from St Serf's RC Primary School in High Valleyfield. St Serf's is in receipt of school-level Scottish Attainment Challenge funding and the Headteacher, Catherine Mullen, candidly explained to the Committee that she and her team had been on a steep learning curve in developing, measuring and delivering interventions that improve attainment. St Serf's improvement model has required the school and teaching staff to learn how to measure outcomes and collect and analyse data. This includes benchmarking and interim targets. Ms Mullen explained that having a robust system of measurement has allowed teachers to take more risks and try new things. If something is not working, the data will show this and approaches can be changed.³⁶ Similarly at the local authority level, the Committee was told that across Fife, the relationship between the local authority and headteachers is characterised by trust, support, autonomy and accountability for performance.³⁷
107. The Committee was keen to establish how positive leadership and effective practice can be shared across schools and education authorities. Following Nancy Clunie's evidence session, the Committee sought supplementary written evidence from the education authority for Glasgow on how it ensures best practice is shared and headteachers can collaborate across the education authority. The response from Glasgow City Council details the approaches that enable collaboration from the principles of good leadership down to very practical ideas. It said—
- ” Our primary schools are put into clusters of between three and five primary schools. Each cluster has a Challenge link officer [...] who meets with the headteachers and carried out quality visits throughout the year. This approach allows us to actively promote the sharing of good practice and provide challenge and support. We also share practice through our regular headteacher meetings. We also have a Leaders of Learning team who support schools across the city, modelling good practice and sharing the good practice that they see as they work across schools. Our Headteacher Learning and Teaching maintains the overview of our work on the Challenge. Evidence is systematically gathered and then shared regularly through becoming a focus for training run by the Challenge team.

Source: Glasgow City Council, 2018³⁸

108. In terms of what constitutes good practice, it is clear that there will be a variation as to what works for different schools, and what works for each individual child in those schools.
109. The Committee recognises that there are many high quality and inspirational school leaders across Scotland. The Committee also recognises the value of interventions that are based on an awareness of the emotional needs of the child or young person and also the value of engaging with families in ways that are supportive to them. The Committee praises the work of headteachers, such as Nancy Clunie, which reflects these principles. The Committee also praises the collaboration and best practice sharing that is taking place in education authorities such as Fife and Glasgow.
110. The Committee acknowledges that effective leadership can take many forms at many different levels in schools. Regardless of which leadership model is adopted by a school, it is vital that the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and education authorities ensure there is a structure in place that supports and fosters that high quality leadership.

Achievement and a broad curriculum

111. The Committee took evidence that achievement is crucial in supporting young people. Education Scotland defines achievement as "learning also takes place outside the classroom, at home and in the wider community [...] and in the variety of activities children and young people are involved in". Education Scotland highlights some examples of what this means in practice, such as sport, outdoor pursuits or youth work.³⁹
112. Non-formal education can be crucial in building confidence and trust for young people and particularly those who have disengaged with formal education. Eileen Prior from Connect argued that—
-  When we talk about the attainment gap, we are often talking about the experience gap.
- Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018 [Draft], Eileen Prior, contrib. 38⁴⁰
113. Dr Terry Wrigley argued that growing up in poverty can have psychological effects, "which damage self-esteem and cause demoralisation".⁴¹ John Loughton said that in his youth "nobody expected anything of me, so I started to live down to that expectation and felt a lack of confidence" but "it was the people in youth work or non-school provision who caught me, captured my imagination and told me that I could be more than the collective sum of the lack of aspiration that everyone had for me because of my postcode, my surname and what my mum and dad did—or did not do."^{42 43}
114. In its submission, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award ("DoE") quoted research and testimony that showed that participation in DoE programmes increases confidence, mental health, team working, resilience and communication skills as well as numeracy and literacy.⁴⁴ The Prince's Trust highlighted its Achieve programme which is delivered in secondary schools to prepare young people with life skills. Two

young people who are in the Achieve programme and their teacher took part in an informal discussion with members of the Committee on 25 April 2018. The teacher told Members that “pupils flourish on the programme, those who were not engaging with their learning go onto better engagement and increased confidence.”⁴⁵

115. Those young people also said that others in their school, including teachers, looked down upon the Achieve group. This lack of esteem from teachers of a youth work approach being taken in schools was reflected in a discussion group the Committee held with public sector Community Learning and Development professionals. Partially this was put down to a lack of understanding of the value of youth work and achievement-based learning, but partly there were cultural barriers. One participant in the discussion reported that some teachers have objected to the pupils who had disengaged with school participating in DoE and other Youth Achievement activities as they feel these pupils are being rewarded for bad behaviour. Good relationships with the senior leadership teams ("SLT") in schools were identified as crucial by the whole group. The participants said that where a member of the SLT understands and values CLD, the school will be supportive and ensures that space is created for CLD programmes and projects through the year.⁴⁶
116. Secondary schools' success however is not measured by pupils' achievement; rather success is often measured by formal exam results. Gayle Gorman, Chief Executive of Education Scotland, recognised that school leaders might be discouraged from investing PEF monies into achievement-based activities if the achievements are not fully recognised and accredited in a similar way to National qualifications.
- ” We are working with many of the partners that are seeking recognition for their awards so that they can be registered and added to the accreditation portfolio. That will enable such achievement to be celebrated. It should be; it is sad that it is not. [...] We continue to have dialogue with the SQA and other partners. We continue to advocate wider learning and parity of esteem for that wider learning.
- Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], Gayle Gorman, contrib. 81⁴⁷
117. Broader achievement is vital to our young people in developing confidence and soft skills. This in turn helps with attainment in schools by giving children and young people the confidence and capacities to tackle a range of subjects. Children from poorer households face a double disadvantage - their families are less able to fund wider activities that create opportunities for rich experiences, and poverty can create or worsen confidence issues. For some, this lack of confidence and other issues may lead to disengagement with school and education. CLD and third sector programmes clearly constitute a valuable support to young people and the schools that utilise them.
118. In addition, if schools feel they are strategically directed towards delivering qualifications and other achievements traditionally associated with attainment then those who may not consider they want to pursue such routes can feel 'outside the system'. The importance of feeling on a par with peers and treated in the same way was clear in the evidence received.

119. The Committee recommends that Education Scotland (in its new capacity supporting the development of school leaders) identifies how it will enhance knowledge of youth work approaches among school leaders. The Committee also recommends that Education Scotland publishes a detailed plan, including targets and deadlines, on the work they are undertaking to ensure wider learning is accredited appropriately.

Teaching

120. The Education Endowment Foundation ("EEF") said in its submission to the Committee—

” There is evidence that improving the quality of teaching is likely to have a disproportionately positive impact on children from low-income families, and that the quality of teaching is generally lower in schools serving disadvantaged communities.

Examples of cost-effective strategies that focus on teaching quality, include the use of metacognitive [learning to learn] strategies, reading comprehension strategies, and the provision of effective feedback.

Source: Educational Endowment Foundation, 2018⁴⁸

121. The Scottish Parliament Information Centre's ("SPICe") 2016 briefing *Closing The Attainment Gap: What Can Schools Do?* highlighted high quality teaching and learning as a key aspect for schools to close the attainment gap. The briefing was authored by Geetha Marcus, an education specialist and former headteacher. The briefing identified circumstances when teachers can best make a difference to pupils' outcomes. These are:
- highly trained and effectively deployed teachers;
 - teachers who are granted greater autonomy to be active and creative drivers of change;
 - teachers who are research literate;
 - teachers who have an understanding of the impacts of poverty and other inequalities.⁴⁹
122. This was echoed in the submission from the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change ("ROC") whose key message was "that for improvement in academic outcomes for young people to occur there must be a focus on improvements in the quality of learning and teaching".³²
123. ROC suggested that a Collaborative Action Research approach be taken "to identify priorities for change, implement improvement strategies and track and monitor the impact of these interventions".³² The Committee spoke to teachers using this

approach during its visit to Dunfermline⁵⁰ and Education Scotland noted it is being used as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge.⁵¹

124. As well as hearing about teaching interventions and approaches that can be effective in closing the attainment gap, the Committee also heard about practice that has been shown to have a negative impact on the attainment gap. Strathclyde University (and others including the EEF and EIS) highlighted setting and streaming^{iv} as one such practice.

” Setting and streaming in primary and secondary sectors enshrines disadvantage: Children in poverty tend to be placed in low attainment groups and make less progress and often suffer a ‘pedagogy of poverty’.

Source: Strathclyde University, 2018⁵²

125. Dr Terry Wrigley also cautioned against setting and streaming and 'pedagogies of poverty'. He called for Scotland to adopt "teaching for excellence" which gets pupils "thinking harder and more critically, taking initiatives, solving problems, developing creativity. Many children in poverty need extra attention to basic skills, but this should be done in the context of interesting and challenging activities." ⁴¹

126. Furthermore, while a broader curriculum that includes vocational training was widely welcomed, Shelagh Young from Home-Start UK said—

” I would not want to see a notion that we have a twin track so that children who enter school behind the curve go down a vocational route, and we accept that as achievement.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Shelagh Young, contrib. 61⁵³

127. High quality Continuing Professional Development ("CPD") is key to support our teachers to improve teaching and learning in the classroom. Danielle Mason from the EEF told the Committee that—

” There is a good base of evidence about the type of CPD that works. We are talking about longer-term interventions that are relevant to teachers' day-to-day expertise and build a strong relationship between peers who are doing the training and the trainer.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 18 April 2018, Danielle Mason, contrib. 23⁵⁴

128. North Ayrshire Council has funded a Professional Learning Academy through its Scottish Attainment Challenge funding which appears to have followed the approach the EEF advocates. John Butcher, Executive Director of Education and Youth Employment, North Ayrshire Council, explained the approach to the Committee—

iv Grouping pupils based on ability.

” The difference between the training at the professional learning academy and the training that I went to as a young teacher [...] is that in my training there was often very little follow-up. You went to something, you learned something and you may or may not have implemented it. The professional learning academy follows up the training: teachers go for training and staff development and it is followed up with coaching and mentoring so that they implement in the class the practice that they have learned. [...] It has made a huge difference.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], John Butcher, contrib. 108⁵⁵

129. Nancy Clunie, Headteacher of Dalmarnock Primary School, said that she had used PEF to provide CPD for her teaching staff "in various therapies so that we can offer children sessions at lunchtime and after school" supporting her pupils' health and well being.⁵⁶

130. The Committee is mindful that workload is an ongoing issue for teachers in Scotland. In its report *Teacher Workforce Planning for Scotland's Schools* the Committee recommended that—

” A continued emphasis on reducing teacher workload is vital in ensuring the education reforms proposed by the Scottish Government, and the Curriculum for Excellence, can be implemented with minimal impact on teachers and, by extension, on children and young people's education.

Source: Education and Skills Committee, 2017¹

131. It is clear that there is a desire from a broad range of stakeholders for teachers to take an evidence-based approach to their practice. In terms of the impact on teachers' workload the EEF said—

” Adopting evidence-based approaches to improving attainment for disadvantaged pupils requires time for selection, implementation and evaluation of such approaches. In numerous process evaluations for programmes evaluated in England, time and workload have been cited as key barriers to the effective delivery of approaches.

Time for implementing successful interventions can often be made through critically assessing and stopping existing practices that are not having positive impacts on learning.

Source: Educational Endowment Foundation, 2018⁴⁸

132. The Association of Heads and Deputies in Scotland ("AHDS") and the EIS highlighted the need to protect teachers' and other educational staff's time. AHDS reported that its members (primary school leaders) had identified a lack of resources, particularly teachers, as a key barrier to improving learning and teaching.⁵⁷ The EIS said—

” There is no cheap way of delivering an education system that is both excellent and equitable. Only long-term, protected investment will deliver that worthy ambition.

Source: EIS, 2018⁵⁸

133. The Committee has found that, in a variety of different contexts, local authorities, schools and teachers are using evidence-based techniques and getting positive results. The Committee considers that evidence to this inquiry could provide a very useful resource for other practitioners. Therefore, the Committee recommends that Education Scotland takes into account the evidence collected during this inquiry.
134. The Committee also recognises that there can be resource implications arising from the adoption of best practice and its adaptation to meet the needs of individuals in each classroom. The Committee reiterates its view that "a continued emphasis on reducing teacher workload is vital".¹
135. The Committee therefore recommends that Education Scotland, through its school inspections, seeks to identify activities taking place in our schools for which there is either strong or limited evidence of improving attainment or reducing the attainment gap. The Committee further recommends that having received this advice from Education Scotland, education authorities and schools should be given the time and space to adopt activities with more robust evidence of effectiveness. This should include ensuring that Continuing Professional Development is developed and delivered in ways that have been shown to be effective.

Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Funding

136. The Scottish Government has ear-marked £750m in its Attainment Scotland Fund over the course of the current Parliament^v to target "improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing" particularly for children who experience deprivation.⁵⁹ The Scottish Government stated that it will invest £179m in the current financial year via three main elements:
- £120m of Pupil Equity Funding is allocated directly to schools, on the basis of the number of children registered for free school meals, to help schools deliver activities and interventions that support children affected by poverty.
 - The Challenge Authorities and Schools Programmes that provide targeted support to the local authorities and schools with the largest concentration of pupils living in deprived areas based on SIMD.^{vi} The Schools Programme supports 46 primary schools and 28 secondary schools with the highest concentration of children living in SIMD deciles 1&2 across 12 other authority areas.
 - In addition, the fund supports a range of national programmes, such as new routes into teaching, continuous and lifelong professional learning, and partnership working.⁵⁹
137. Through the course of the inquiry, the Committee has heard of good practice being funded through these schemes. This report has already mentioned the Professional Learning Academy in North Ayrshire and the work at St Serf's Primary in Fife funded through the Scottish Attainment Challenge ("SAC").
138. The Committee has also been provided with evidence from local authorities, schools and third sector organisations about the work that is being funded through the Pupil Equity Fund ("PEF"). The Committee was told in [written submissions](#) about:
- A Falkirk Primary School that spent PEF on a supply of clothes which led to "improved self-esteem and engagement in learning. One pupil is now taking a full part in PE due to having an appropriate and fitting gym kit." (Reported by CPAG p17)
 - Nurture and Transition Groups which allow children the opportunity to address concerns they may have around peer relationships, school or other issues that they may feel anxious about. (Reported and delivered by OPFS p120)
 - Family Support Workers. (Reported by and delivered by Barnardo's Scotland p133)

^v I.e. between spring 2016 and spring 2021.

^{vi} The Challenge Authorities are Clackmannanshire, Dundee City, East Ayrshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire.

- Intergenerational projects providing opportunities for older people to mentor/tutor in schools. (Reported by Generations Working Together p196)
- *Big Hopes, Big Future* home-based support to help families to get actively involved in early learning through a range of play-based activities. (Reported and delivered by Home-start UK p198)
- Outdoor education trips (Reported by the Scouts p221)
- Counselling. (Reported and delivered by The Spark p237)
- Bringing youth workers into the school (Reported by YouthLink Scotland p246)
- A cluster of schools employing a welfare rights advisor in school to support income maximisation for families. (Reported by NHS Scotland- Facing up to Poverty Practice Network p320)

This is of course just a snapshot and there was much more practice identified to the Committee throughout the course of the inquiry.

139. Many of the interventions the Committee heard about are focused on the health and wellbeing of the child and indeed the success of the family unit. Kirsten Hogg from Barnardo's told the Committee that "health and wellbeing underpin a child's ability to learn and underpin the whole attainment agenda"⁶⁰. She also said—

” When we are looking at interventions with children, let us also think about what else is happening in their homes, because the stress levels that impact on the rest of the family have a knock-on effect on the child—on their attachment relationships and the levels of stress that they experience. Yes, let us do the things [like supporting income maximisation], but let us try to look at everything in the round within the family.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Kirsten Hogg, contrib. 35⁶¹

140. The Attainment Scotland Fund ("ASF") was introduced in 2015. The Scottish Government evaluated the first two years of the fund and a report was published in March 2018. The report found that the fund had "appeared to have had a positive impact" on: collaboration; data/evidence usage and understanding; and skills development for teachers and school leaders. In terms of the scope of interventions, the report said—

” Numeracy, Literacy and Health and Wellbeing. During the first two years, Literacy and Health and Wellbeing interventions were prioritised. Progress around Numeracy was less evident.

Source: Scottish Government, 2018⁶²

141. The interim evaluation report only considered the first two years of the ASF and therefore did not evaluate PEF, which was introduced in the third year. The report states that "a final evaluation report will be published at the end of Year 4".⁶²

Resources and additionality

142. There was some discussion at Committee about whether PEF enabled services to be reinstated that had previously been funded through normal local authority funding. A number of contributors to the Committee's inquiry placed the work to reduce the attainment gap and the Attainment Scotland Fund in the context of reducing resource budgets for local authorities. COSLA said that "since 2010/11 there has been a real terms reduction of £513 in spending per primary pupil, representing a 9.7% reduction"; with the per pupil reduction in spending mainly arising from increasing pupil numbers.⁶³
143. One teacher said that "PEF money is a sticking plaster – it is merely a re-injection of the money that has been stripped out of Scottish Education over the past decade".⁶⁴ Furthermore, NASUWT said "regrettably, while core services continue to be cut and support staff removed, PEF will not deliver the impact needed in reducing the poverty-related attainment gap."⁶⁵
144. Nancy Clunie, Headteacher of Dalmarnock Primary School, argued that while there is a limit to budgets the solution lies in innovative approaches. In terms of PEF, she said—

” I have not used pupil equity funding for anything that should come from the school budget, and my school budget is such that I have been able to do many a thing. PEF has been extra—I make that very clear. [...] Our view is that PEF is to make a difference, and I do not want the two merged. The school budget certainly covers what it should be covering, and PEF has allowed us to do things like residential trips, which had stopped for my school because only a few people could afford them. This year, we had 56 children away for a week, and those are the kind of weeks that children never forget. It is about building memories.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Nancy Clunie, contrib. 127⁶⁶

145. The Cabinet Secretary recognised in his evidence that there has been a period of financial constraint in the public sector. As noted above, the Scottish Government's guidance says PEF must "deliver activities, interventions or resources which are clearly additional to those which were already planned".⁶⁷
146. In relation to additionality for PEF, the Cabinet Secretary said—

” [The guidance] makes it clear that pupil equity funding must be used for additional purposes, not as a replacement. [...] Anybody who considers how to use the pupil equity funding must be mindful of the condition of grant and the guidance that goes with it.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 180⁶⁸

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills during an evidence session on 23 May 2018.

Source: SPCB 2018

147. The Committee wishes to highlight that many schools do not receive PEF and are undertaking valuable work to improve attainment using core funding. For completeness any system used to evaluate the impact of targeted Government funding must reflect progress in attainment achieved using core funding. An effective evaluation must reflect how attainment is improving, why and where the challenges, including funding levels, remain.
148. The Committee notes the [Scottish Government's evaluation of its Attainment Scotland Fund](#).
149. The Committee recommends that as part of the next stage of this evaluation, the Scottish Government assess the extent to which PEF is used for additional purposes rather than for purposes that would be considered to be candidates to be covered from core funding.
150. In addition, the Committee recommends that the Scottish Government widens the evaluation to assess the separate impacts on the poverty-related attainment gap of programmes and interventions that are totally or primarily funded by:
 - the Pupil Equity Fund;
 - other aspects of the Attainment Scotland Fund; or

- schools' core budgets.

Challenges

Procurement

151. It is for headteachers to decide what PEF funded activities should take place in their schools. This has created challenges for headteachers. Graeme Young from Scouts Scotland told the Committee that good commissioning is very important. He suggested that the first step for headteachers is to work collaboratively with parents, young people and the wider community to identify needs and to "make and informed decision on what services are required". He continued—

” Sometimes, that might mean purchasing a service, but sometimes it might mean working in partnership to develop a new service. Sometimes, too, it is just about better signposting to what is already out there and supporting what is already out there. There is a process element in all of this.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Graeme Young, contrib. 14⁶⁹

152. Andrea Bradley from the EIS welcomed the additional funding for schools but reported that schools, in the first year of PEF, were rushed into spending the money.⁷⁰ In terms of commissioning new services from the third sector, John Butcher from North Lanarkshire Council said—

” One of the fundamental issues around PEF that was never considered when it started was that, unlike social work, for example, which has procured services from the third sector for years and years and has relationships with Aberlour, Barnardo's and whatever else, education has no history of procurement. There was an assumption when PEF came in that suddenly all our headteachers would know how to procure. That knowledge does not exist, so it will take a little bit of time to work our way through that.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], John Butcher, contrib. 159⁷¹

153. The Committee had heard evidence both from schools and third sector providers that on occasion procurement rules and procedures had prevented or delayed headteachers using PEF to purchase services. The Cabinet Secretary explained the split responsibilities for administering PEF monies. He said—

” The decision-making power on how the money is spent rests with headteachers, as does the responsibility for how effectively it is spent. [...]

The public finance accountability—the judgement about whether the money has been spent on the purpose for which it was intended; that might be the best way to express it—rests with the local authority.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 169⁷²

154. Another impact of this process is that third sector providers now liaise directly with headteachers rather than local authorities as they might have done in the past. Finlay Lavery from the Prince's Trust said—

” Historically, local government funding for [our work in schools] has followed on from the concordat. Eight or 10 years ago, we were funded directly by the Scottish Government, but we are now in the hands of more than 300 headmasters, so the procurement experience is hugely patchy. An unintended consequence may be that, for a transition period at least, some organisations—especially national organisations—will be faced with losing rather than gaining ground on things that are clearly working.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018 [Draft], Finlay Lavery, contrib. 96⁷³

155. Stella Gibson, from The Spark, also spoke about difficulties in procurement facing headteachers and limits in how much can be spent on a third sector organisation. She said—

” From our perspective, the most successful local authorities in relation to pupil equity funding and the ease of working with schools have been those that put together a preferred list of options for their headteachers. In those cases, the local authorities have gone through the procurement process informally and recommended only quality services. That is where we have seen the greatest impact.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018 [Draft], Stella Gibson, contrib. 108⁷⁴

156. The Committee also heard of examples of schools [working together and pooling their PEF allocation to procure services](#). PEF has been welcomed by most respondents to the inquiry, for example Nancy Clunie, Headteacher of Dalmarnock Primary School, said that she had experienced no issues with procurement and that she has been able to do everything she wanted to do with the money.⁷⁵

157. The Cabinet Secretary conceded that headteachers are on a learning curve with PEF. He said—

” This is new territory so, inevitably, there is new ground to be covered by individual headteachers in acquiring the skills that they need to have to take these decisions.

We have held a series of events with headteachers. We held events in spring 2017 and we have held them again in spring 2018 to discuss all the issues arising out of pupil equity funding. The events have been really well attended and have involved discussions with headteachers around the country

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 222⁷⁶

158. The Committee welcomes the work schools are doing to tackle the attainment gap. The Committee notes that headteachers are being asked to undertake new tasks as part of PEF processes, such as procurement exercises, with little preparation before they took on these new responsibilities. The Committee recommends that Education Scotland ensures that there is universally available

and high quality training for headteachers on how to identify need and commission services through PEF.

159. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that in advance of any additional responsibilities being placed on headteachers in the future, the Scottish Government must ensure that they are provided with the necessary training and resources to undertake their expanded role. The impact on headteachers' workload of these new responsibilities should be acknowledged. When introducing new responsibilities, the Scottish Government through Education Scotland, should seek to identify ways to alleviate workload in other parts of the headteacher role.

Staffing

160. The Committee was told that some headteachers felt that there were limitations on how they could spend PEF. For example, not being able to fund a core teaching post.⁵⁰ School Leaders Scotland reported that its members had issues with the time lag to appoint staff, the non-permanent nature of PEF funded posts, a shortage of applicants and wider Human Resources issues.⁷⁷

161. The Scottish Government guidance does not proscribe headteachers using PEF to hire teaching staff. However, it states that PEF funded activity must be "to deliver activities, interventions or resources which are clearly additional to those which were already planned". Specifically in regard to recruiting teachers, the guidance says that headteachers should work closely with their local authority. The guidance goes on to say—

” Any teachers recruited through Pupil Equity Funding will be excluded from the authority's contribution to any national teacher numbers and / or ratio commitment, which means it is essential to fill core staffing posts first before recruiting additional teachers.

Source: Scottish Government, 2018⁶⁷

162. The Cabinet Secretary told the Committee that "there should be no impediment" to a headteacher employing additional teachers using PEF.⁷⁸ He also said that the funding is in place for the lifetime of this Parliament and it is unlikely that there will be very much movement in school level allocations.

” In my judgement, it would be fair for anyone to conclude that, as the Government has given a commitment to £120 million of pupil equity funding for this year, the next and the year after that, it would be a reasonable and considered public policy decision to recruit those teachers on a longer-term contract.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 196⁷⁹

163. The Committee notes that headteachers may employ additional teachers through PEF for the remainder of the current parliamentary session^{vii}. However, some headteachers believe they are not able to do so. For example, there are conditions on employing teachers using PEF in the Scottish Government's guidance and it is unclear whether the requirement to "fill core staffing posts first" before employing teachers through PEF refers to the local authority or the school and this may be cause for confusion. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government makes clear in guidance the circumstances in which a headteacher may and may not employ a teacher through PEF.

Accountability

164. As noted above, the Scottish Government's guidance⁶⁷ sets out a number of conditions for PEF as well as guidance on how to spend the money. The guidance states that headteachers and schools must use PEF to:
- deliver activities, interventions or resources which are clearly additional to those which were already planned;
 - provide targeted support for children and young people affected by poverty;
 - develop a clear rationale for use of the funding, based on a clear contextual analysis which identifies the poverty related attainment gap in their schools and plans must be grounded in evidence of what is known to be effective; and
 - have plans in place at the outset to evaluate the impact of the funding, including clear outcomes and how progress towards these will be measured.
165. The guidance also states "the headteacher will be accountable to their local authority for the use of Pupil Equity Funding within their school."⁶⁷
166. The Committee was told by Education Scotland that in terms of PEF, headteachers "are accountable to the children and families that they have within their school" and "accountable in terms of best value practice to the local authority".⁸⁰
167. During its visit to Dunfermline, the Committee heard first hand about accountability between that local authority and its headteachers, including accountability for outcomes for interventions under the Attainment Scotland Fund. The Committee was told that—
- ”** Headteachers are free to initiate their own programmes. They are also accountable and must show that the programmes are making measurable improvements.

Source: Education and Skills Committee, 2018³⁶

Members talking with Ruth McFarlane, Headteacher of Queen Anne High School 1 May 2018.



Source: SPCB 2018

168. In this model, the schools are held accountable to the local authority for how they approach identifying need and interventions, how they measure success and the outcomes but not the substance of the interventions/programmes themselves. This was presented as being within a culture of constructive criticism and support. The Committee was told that schools in Fife that had not been allocated Scottish Attainment Challenge ("SAC") monies but had received PEF were in an earlier stage of the process of adopting the necessary practice and that SAC and PEF have led to better accountability.³⁷
169. Other evidence indicated that accountability structures were less clear in some instances. School Leaders Scotland sought "immediate discussion and thereafter clarity around the accountability framework and procedures which will be applied to schools to evaluate impact of actions taken, and value for money".⁸¹
170. The Cabinet Secretary told the Committee that while headteachers are free to use their professional judgement on how PEF should be spent to close the poverty related attainment gap, it is the local authorities that are accountable for PEF to be spent for this purpose.⁷² The Cabinet Secretary also noted that PEF has conditions of grant (such as the condition that funding be given to headteachers to spend) and that PEF may be withheld if those conditions are not met.⁸²

171. The Committee seeks further clarity on lines of accountability from the Scottish Government between headteachers and education authorities on PEF spending. The Committee also questions how a headteacher is in practice accountable to the school community, as suggested by Education Scotland. The Committee expects Education Scotland to clarify this.
172. The Committee notes the call from School Leaders Scotland that an accountability framework be created to evaluate headteachers' use of PEF. The Committee's experience in Fife indicated that that local authority held its headteachers accountable for, broadly speaking, the ["must do" actions outlined in the Scottish Government's guidance](#) along with pre-agreed outcomes.
173. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government update its guidance to clarify the role of local authorities in ensuring headteachers are accountable for the outcomes resulting from PEF activities. In doing so, the Scottish Government may wish to reflect on the approach taken in Fife.

Barriers to participation

174. One of the key issues raised in this inquiry was barriers to participation in education. This included a number of cost barriers.

Cost of the school day

175. Child Poverty Action Group Scotland ("CPAG") has done a great deal of work in identifying the costs of education and ways to reduce or eliminate them. John Dickie from CPAG said—

” Pupils are being charged for materials such as ingredients for home economics lessons and materials for art and design as well as for trips to the theatre as part of English and drama courses.

[...]

The reality is that pupils and teachers themselves say that pupils are making subject choices on the basis of cost.

[...]

their ability to enjoy participating in subjects is diminishing, because they know that their participation is causing stress for their families. Charging is also reducing the disposable income that is available to families to enable them to meet all their other needs—to pay the bills, buy food and all the rest of it—and to sustain their home.

[...]

The other big cost is school trips, particularly the primary 7 residential trip that local authorities across Scotland organise. The cost of the trip is well over £300 in some cases—the charge varies, but there is a charge—and there is evidence that children are being left behind and are not participating in the school trip.

We surveyed schools in one local authority area and found that, on average, three or four pupils in every P7 class were not participating in the P7 residential trip. When we hear young pupils describe how big a part of P7 the trip is, we can imagine what a big impact being left behind must have on the young people's sense of what school and education have to offer.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 18 April 2018, John Dickie, contrib. 59⁸³

176. Kevin Lowden from the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change ("ROC") took up this theme and said that research shows that participation in enrichment activities, such as cultural activities, museums or outdoor activities, can help to close the attainment gap. He continued—

- ” [It is] all the more crucial that they are part of the repertoire that schools, local authorities and Government use in tackling the issues that we are talking about. If the cost of the school day impacts on schools’ ability to provide enrichment opportunities, that is a key issue.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 18 April 2018, Kevin Lowden, contrib. 60⁸⁴

Kevin Lowden from the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change speaking to the Committee on 18 April 2018.



Source: SPCB 2018

177. Andrea Bradley from the EIS said that her members are reporting that costs for practical subjects are increasingly being passed on to families due to departments’ budgets being squeezed. EIS’ view is—

- ” All things that are essential to children and young people’s participation in day-to-day learning have to be met by school funds.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018 [Draft], Andrea Bradley, contrib. 20⁸⁵

178. The impact on children of well-meaning but exclusionary practices was made clear by a child quoted in CPAG’s submission—

- ” There’s nothing to do at the summer fair if you don’t have money. Even throwing a sponge at the teacher costs about £1. Sometimes you just have to sit in class if you don’t have any money, that’s happened to me. You get made fun of. (Learner, P5)

Source: CPAG Scotland, 2018⁸⁶

179. Brian Scott, a commissioner at the Poverty Truth Commission also highlighted the costs of non-uniform days and dressing up for events. Mr Scott said that poverty can limit access to other activities, even if they are free.

” For pupils who have to rely on the school bus to take them to school, there is very rarely the possibility of later travel, after the school day is done, which means that they cannot access homework clubs and other after-school activities.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Brian Scott, contrib. 47⁸⁷

180. CPAG's *Cost of the school day* project and the City of Edinburgh's *1 in 5* project are two examples of these issues being highlighted and addressed at the local authority level. These projects are also working to bring home to teachers the pressures of life in poverty. One of the outcomes identified of the on-going *1 in 5* project was "attitudinal and cultural change and increased empathy" in the schools.⁸⁸

181. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 ("the 1980 Act") states, "school education provided by an education authority shall be provided without payment of fees" and while there are exceptions to this, fees should not be charged if they prejudice "the adequate provision of free school education" (s.3 of the 1980 Act). In addition, education authorities must provide education materials free of charge that "are necessary to enable the pupil to take full advantage of the education provided." (s.11 of the 1980 Act). Ministers have the power to take action if an education authority fails to perform its duties under the 1980 Act. (s.70 of the 1980 Act)

182. During the inquiry there was some discussion on what *core education* should be, that is, what should not be charged for. The 1980 Act defines school education as "progressive education appropriate to the requirements of pupils, regard being had to the age, ability and aptitude of such pupils" (s1. of the 1980 Act). The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 ("the 2000 Act") provides for every child to have the right to education (s1. of the 2000 Act) and education authorities have a duty to ensure that education "is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential." (s.2 of the 2000 Act).

183. Education has changed since the passages of the 1980 and 2000 Acts; Curriculum for Excellence ("CfE") has a broad definition of education. One of the foundational documents of CfE, Building The Curriculum 3, says—

” The curriculum is the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated. It includes the ethos and life of the school as a community; curriculum areas and subjects; interdisciplinary learning; and opportunities for personal achievement.

and—

” Personal achievement provides children and young people with a sense of satisfaction and helps to build motivation, resilience and confidence. The experiences and outcomes include opportunities for a range of achievements in the classroom and beyond.

Source: The Scottish Government, 2008⁸⁹

184. Decisions on charging for access to elements of education and school life is a matter for schools and education authorities. Given the duties set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, and the broad definitions of school education and the curriculum, it is unclear how materials or visits that are necessary for full exploration of a course can attract a charge, especially for courses that lead to a qualification. The Committee understands that financial pressures impact on decisions taken at education authority and school level but is concerned at evidence that costs for elements of education are increasingly being passed on to families.

185. The starting point to address this issue of charging for access to school education is to assess the extent of this practice. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government surveys all education authorities to establish which authorities sanction charging for in-school activities and the level of these charges.

186. The Committee also recommends that the Scottish Government undertake a review of which elements of the experiences offered by schools may attract a charge and the cumulative impact of these charges.

Stigma

187. During the informal discussion the Committee held on 9 May, Members were told, "Parents do not want to be identified as struggling, often they are working 60 hour weeks and there is a sense of failure if they were to be identified."⁹⁰

188. The Committee was told by a parent of their experience where their home life and challenges faced by their son were not dealt with sympathetically by his school—

” Our housing is poor, dampness and mould which affects Mark’s [name changed] health. He has had time off school [...] I have spoken to teaching staff regarding our needs, and sometimes I feel as though I am talking to a brick wall, almost robotic. Regardless of having various conversations with teachers who are lacking the insight to seeing the youngster as an individual with very individual needs, talents and gifts, the conversation is always drawn back to what "the school" must achieve. [...] There is a stigma regarding poverty at the school. [...] Due to the inability of the school at times to develop a holistic view regarding Mark, he has felt withdrawn, and has on different occasions, lost the impetus and motivation to attend school.

Source: Poverty Truth Commission, 2018⁹¹

189. Stigma in relation to the individual young person was also explored. Shelagh Young from Home-start UK observed—

” Based on our practice and my personal experience [...], the more that a child feels included along with the rest and the less that they carry around some sense of stigma and shame, the better they are likely to do.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Shelagh Young, contrib. 92⁹²

190. For example, in terms of the provision of youth work approaches to education for individuals who are disengaging from education, Susan Hunter from Youth Link Scotland said—

” We cannot have what is thought of as the base for young people who do not want to be at school; we have to do it in a way that is free from stigma, that is inclusive and that values young people as individuals and as contributors with something to give, not just something to receive.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Susan Hunter, contrib. 85⁹³

191. Stigma is an issue that many witnesses, at all levels of the education system, were clearly mindful of as having a strong emotional impact on young people and their families. It can often be the basis for a lack of attendance or engagement at school. The Committee is clear that any intervention that appears to single out young people and families that experience poverty is less preferable than practices that remove the need for interventions. Work that seeks to remove barriers and inequalities limits experiences of stigma and it is important that all practitioners have a good understanding of the impacts of poverty on young people, including the impact of stigma. The Committee therefore commends the continuing good work of CPAG Scotland's *Cost of the School Day* project which has worked with a number of local authorities and the City of Edinburgh's *1 in 5* project.

192. Two common areas where those sharing their experiences highlighted the potential for children to feel stigmatised was in relation to school meals and school uniforms. These are explored further below.

Hunger

193. The Committee heard from a number of witnesses about the importance of young people being ready to learn. Children living in poverty face additional barriers in this respect, including hunger.

194. Hunger was an issue that arose in almost every session the Committee held on this inquiry. Dr James Foley from North Lanarkshire council said—

” When poverty is discussed, the first thing that people who work in deprived communities raise with me is usually the growing incidence of hunger being a problem. Headteachers and teaching professionals across the board mention hunger every time we discuss poverty, and they think that it has a significant impact on their pupils' ability to learn.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Dr James Foley (North Lanarkshire Council), contrib. 100¹²

195. One common way to ensure that children are fed and able to learn is with the provision of breakfast at school. During a recent visit to Sweden and Finland, the Committee visited schools where breakfasts (and lunches) were provided free of charge.⁹⁴ Breakfast clubs appear to be fairly commonplace in Scotland, although there was a mixed picture of how well these were used by young people. In Muirhouse, one group of young people said that they were on too early for them and another participant identified breakfast clubs as a real help.¹³

196. In their supplementary submission to the Committee, Home-start UK highlighted research that showed that breakfast clubs can improve concentration levels and have social benefits for children. However, research also showed that sustaining breakfast clubs can be difficult. Cost and stigma for those who receive breakfasts free on a means-tested basis can be barriers to attendance.⁹⁵

197. Tynecastle High School said that as a result of the City of Edinburgh's *1 in 5* programme it instigated a universal and free breakfast club. The school said—

” The uptake for this was immediately successful and has remained consistent over the whole year. When students were surveyed, it was clear that the majority of them would not have had any breakfast without this in-school provision, and that they valued the opportunity to prepare for the day and be ready to start learning. This also offers an opportunity to equip students with basics they may not have, and help them be ready to have a successful day.

Source: Tynecastle High School 1 in 5 Group, 2018⁹⁶

198. Lunches were also identified as an issue. Free school meals are provided to all pupils in the first three years of primary school. Nancy Clunie, Headteacher of Dalmarnock Primary School, said one of the challenges is to ensure that parents register for free school meals in good time before the universal provision stops. She also identified an issue for families just above the threshold for free school meals. She said—

” There are some children—although not many—further up in the school to whom we will say, “I didn’t see you in the lunch hall,” and they will say that they do not have money or that their mum does not have money. That is okay, though, because Ms Clunie has money—nobody in our school goes hungry.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Nancy Clunie, contrib. 29⁹⁷

199. In secondary school, pupils routinely leave the campus and get food at local shops or take-aways. Putting aside the issue of whether this means young people are having nutritious lunches it has a negative effect on the young people entitled to free school meals. They are left with a choice to stay in school and have a school dinner or join their friends and not eat.⁹⁸ A young person who wrote to the Committee said—

” I feel very socially segregated as pupils who are better off eat packed lunches or go out of school and poorer people go for school dinners. I feel that it makes me feel like part of an underclass and I wish everyone ate their lunch together. Particularly as I don’t have the choice to hang around with my friends I have to go alone to the dinner hall.

Source: Anonymous (Child/Young Person 2), 2018⁹⁹

200. The Committee is concerned at the evidence that some young people decide to go hungry rather than eat their free school meals. The Committee is also concerned that there may be relatively low levels of registration for free school meals in some areas. [As noted above, this may be down to a stigma about registering](#), or that some families are not aware of their entitlement.

201. Having enough nutritious food is a prerequisite to being able to make the most of the school day. The Scottish Government provides free school meals for all in the first three years of primary school and for older children whose families meet specific criteria.

202. The Committee commends local authority initiatives to tackle hunger including North Lanarkshire offering free meals during holidays and Glasgow planning to provide free school meals for all pupils up to P4. The Committee appreciates the value of this work and urges the Scottish Government to support and evaluate such initiatives.

203. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government review its current policies for funding free food in schools, taking into account evaluations of the outcomes achieved by expanded free provision of food at local authority and school levels. To take account of these developments, which are at very early stages, the review cannot take place immediately, and so the Committee recommends that it is concluded and published by the end of the current parliamentary session^{viii}. This review should also examine ways to improve the uptake of existing provision by families who are eligible.

Uniforms

204. Clothing was also highlighted as an issue for low-income households. As previously mentioned, some individuals felt they have been disciplined for not having full uniform and others suffering bullying because their uniform was unclean.¹³ The Children's Parliament said—

” In some cases, not wearing the dress code can result in the child not going to school as the child can be sent home to put on the correct uniform which they may not have. Children can feel confused and upset in such a situation, or perhaps frustrated and angry.

Source: Children's Parliament, 2018¹⁰⁰

205. Local authorities provide clothing grants and the amounts are set locally; the consistency and adequacy of these grants was challenged several times during evidence. For example Brian Scott from the Poverty Truth Commission said—

” There are vast differences between local authority areas. I do not understand why. I know that the local authorities are responsible for setting the uniform grants, but why is there such disparity?

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Brian Scott, contrib. 10¹⁰¹

and Satwat Rehman from OPFS said—

viii i.e. spring 2021.

- ” A lot of families say that they get the school clothing grant and buy what they need to buy, but they need to keep replacing things [...] School clothing is an on-going cost for families, not a one-off cost, so we need to look at that for those families.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Satwat Rehman, contrib. 18¹⁰²

206. After the Committee completed evidence taking on this inquiry, the Scottish Government announced that it had agreed with local authorities a minimum level for school clothing grants of £100 per year with the figure to be reviewed biennially.¹⁰³

207. The complexity and specific nature of some school uniforms was also highlighted as adding unnecessary costs for families. Eileen Prior from Connect urged schools not to "require children to wear highly individualised school uniforms with braiding that changes every year."¹⁰⁴ Andrea Bradley of the EIS said—

- ” Things such as braiding or school-logo polo shirts are unnecessary fripperies that cost families money and bring about stigma for families that are unable to afford them. We need to talk to local authorities and headteachers about putting in place a policy that makes school uniform universally affordable.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018, Andrea Bradley, contrib. 39¹⁰⁵

208. During the Committee's visit to Queen Anne High School, the Committee learned about an innovative pupil-led uniform swap shop. Members were told that the original idea came from a pupil who grew several sizes in a single year. Pupils may use the service: to get appropriate uniform; if they had had an accident and needed clothing; or indeed any other reason. The swap shop also had coats, shoes and sanitary products. The swap shop was not promoted as an anti-poverty measure, rather as a sustainable way to reuse clothes.³⁶

Members visiting a uniform Swap Shop.



Source: SPCB 2018

209. As recommended above, schools and education authorities should assess policies and practices to ensure that families and children do not face additional barriers as a result of living in poverty.

210. The Committee welcomes the recent announcement from the Scottish Government and local authorities that there should be a minimum clothing allowance of £100 a year.

211. The Committee considers that excessively expensive or unnecessary pieces of school uniform should not be required. Reducing the complexity of school uniforms would reduce the cost burden of education on families. The Committee recommends that education authorities invite schools to poverty-proof their uniform policies.

212. The Committee also recommends that education authorities should consider carefully the evidence received during this inquiry of children who cannot afford to purchase or maintain school uniforms being sent home or chastised for their appearance at school. The Committee hopes this is a limited issue but considers that no pupil should be denied access to education due to the inability to afford school uniform. Schools should have an emphasis on supportive policies that are mindful of young people who, due to poverty, do not have the full school uniform.

213. The Committee asks that COSLA responds to the Committee by the end of 2018 to provide an update on these two issues.

Community based support and youth work in schools

214. As discussed above, Community Learning and Development approaches and third sector family support can enhance the learning environment in a school. It is clear from the evidence that the many and varied services are also very valuable value in their own right independent from school.

215. The Committee spoke to many youth workers, and one message was that there is a feeling that youth work is not sufficiently valued. Local authorities are not under a statutory duty to provide youth work services and some argued that there was too much of a distinction between education delivered in schools and colleges and that which takes place in other settings. John Loughton said—

” I talk about youth work and I get very annoyed when the terms “school” and “education” are used interchangeably, as they are very different. School is one critical hub of education.

[...]

Alongside school, there is an opportunity to recognise youth work as being for re-engagement and employability, and not just about going to have a custard cream after school, having a game of pool or collecting badges. It should be about accredited achievement as well as formal attainment. There is an opportunity to see that one size fails most.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018, John Loughton, contrib. 62¹⁰⁶

216. Susan Hunter from Youth Link Scotland highlighted the value of youth work particularly when children and young people are disengaging with formal education and schools.¹⁰⁷ She also said—

” Youth work does not exist to support schools; it exists as its own professional entity, and that is how it needs to be presented.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Susan Hunter, contrib. 26¹⁰⁸

217. CLD professionals expressed frustration that they were not able to support young people who were not attending school during the school day. In the Committee's focus group with CLD professionals Members were told that the only option for the CLD professional was to say that the young person should go to school. This meant that the young person, who was keen to engage with education albeit not school, didn't receive any education.⁴⁶ John Loughton said that, in practice, Scotland does not have universal compulsory education, he said—

” We have lots of young people outside school. They just do not turn up or they are put on part-time timetables that they do not engage with anyway.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018, John Loughton, contrib. 65¹⁰⁹

218. The value of youth work was discussed during the Committee's informal meeting on 25 April. It was argued that young people most in need can find solace in youth

work and positive adult relationships that they may not have at home. It was also suggested that youth work can work well because it is not as rules-based as education in schools and therefore creates a different dynamic between young people and their educators.⁴⁵

219. Youth work is only one aspect of Community Learning and Development. Other services support children, young people and families. As discussed above, [good health and wellbeing is foundational for a young person's attainment](#) and achievement.

220. Supporting the family has benefits for the child. As discussed this could be in supporting income maximisation or supporting the family in other ways. For example, Learning Link Scotland highlighted the importance of adult education—

” Adult education supports educational attainment in children, not just adult education focussed on parenting skills or family learning but also adults learning for their own purposes has a positive effect on children’s learning, creating a learning environment in the home where study and homework are normal and formal education is seen as a positive thing. Community based adult education works toward engaging traditional non-participants of education who are usually also those who do not engage in their children’s school in a positive way.

Source: Learning Link Scotland, 2018¹¹⁰

221. Jackie Howie from Learning Link also highlighted the benefits of work taking place right through education. She said—

” Parents are much more likely to get involved in their children’s education in the early years. If you can capture them with their children’s education but also for themselves, they are more likely to stay with the educational process throughout its duration.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Jackie Howie (Learning Link Scotland), contrib. 6¹¹¹

222. While early years has not been a focus of this inquiry, the Committee is very aware that early years provision can have a big impact on closing the attainment gap. The Cabinet Secretary also highlighted early years as a key stage for work to close the attainment gap. He said—

” One of the major drivers of the expansion of early learning and childcare is to provide us with an even stronger platform for closing the poverty-related attainment gap as early as we possibly can. [...] The earlier we can provide support, particularly to young people who do not get the appropriate support at home, the better.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 228¹¹²

223. Nancy Clunie, Headteacher of Dalmarnock Primary School in Glasgow, told the Committee about her approach to partnerships within and outwith the school.

” We now no longer talk about partners; they are just friends of the school. When I come to do the school improvement planning, they are round the table because they support everything else that is going on. The education that we provide is not education in a silo; it is supported by a range of statutory and third sector services that I could not run the school without.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Nancy Clunie, contrib. 84¹¹³

224. The Committee notes that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires local authorities and local NHS Boards to produce Children's Services Plans. These plans should set out the "local authority and health board's plans for the provision of all "children's services" and "related services"". The plans should be comprehensive and include third sector provision. ¹¹⁴
225. The Scottish Government's 2017 statutory guidance on the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 states that improvement plans should be developed in a way that "complements other relevant planning and reporting regimes including, most notably, children's services planning". ¹¹⁵

226. The Committee recognises the distinct and important role that youth work plays in the education of our young people. The Committee recommends that the national youth work strategy currently being developed has a strong focus on how youth work and school based education can complement and support each other.
227. The Committee notes that improvement planning should be developed to be complementary to children's service planning, which for example includes youth work services. This appears to be the appropriate mechanism to ensure that a range of community services and providers are included in the life of a school. The Committee recommends that Education Scotland identify whether School Improvement Plans are being developed to complement community based services for children and young people in a consistent and meaningful way.

Parental involvement

228. Parental involvement with schools and learning is often highlighted as an important way to improve attainment. There are different types of engagement. Education Scotland identifies three broad themes¹¹⁶ for parental engagement: supporting learning at home; parental representation (such as parent councils); and creating home/school partnerships.
229. The Committee is aware that carers, guardians and others act as significant caregivers for children. In this report the term "parent" is used as a shorthand for any caregiver who acts in this capacity.

Support for learning

230. Danielle Mason from the Education Endowment Foundation said, in her view, parental support of learning is the most important aspect of parental engagement.¹¹⁷ She also highlighted a recent trial using a text messaging system which prompts parents to engage with their children's homework or upcoming tests.¹¹⁸
231. The National Parent Forum of Scotland concurred and said—
- ” The more parents engage in their child's learning, the more likely it is that they will help raise their child's attainment. This is backed up by research on school effectiveness, which shows parental engagement to be one of the key factors in securing higher achievement i.e. what parents do with their children at home and throughout their education is much more significant than any other factor open to educational influence.
- Source: National Parent Forum of Scotland, 2018¹¹⁹
232. The Committee heard evidence that parents may lack time, knowledge or the resources to support their children's learning at home. Young people at the Committee's meeting in Muirhouse on 16 May reported that their parents are often too busy working to support home-learning.¹³ One Parent Families Scotland, in its submissions said—
- ” Many single parents face significant challenges resulting from low income, poor health, low qualifications and a range of structural barriers such as the lack of flexible, affordable childcare, low pay, irregular hours and insecure employment; expensive and poor quality housing and barriers to improving their skills or taking up training or further education.
- Source: One Parent Families Scotland, 2018¹²⁰
233. Brian Scott from the Poverty Truth Commission said that this can add to parents' alienation from the education system—

- ” People who do not have the means sometimes feel like outcasts and as if they are outside the system that everyone has access to, which is a source of stigma and embarrassment. For a parent who cannot provide the relevant technical ability or computer access, the sense of failure can add more pressure.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Brian Scott (Poverty Truth Commission), contrib. 6¹²¹

Parent Councils

234. Nancy Clunie and other headteachers told the Committee that they found it hard to establish and maintain a parent council, or did not have a parent council at all.¹²² The Committee has also heard that it is sometimes challenging to establish a parent council that is reflective of the diversity of the school.⁵⁰
235. Parent councils can play a vital role in the school and support closing the attainment gap. Connect has called for "Parent Councils and schools to work together to support families living in poverty as much as they are able, to mitigate where possible the impacts on learning which are the result of poverty". Connect's submission to the Committee highlighted a number of ways that parent councils can help, for example, funding free or subsidised breakfast clubs, subsidising school trips, and distributing second-hand school uniforms or discounts for new uniform.²⁷
236. Parent councils can add enormous value to a school, particularly in supporting (and challenging) the school leadership, but also as a fundraising body. However, a school cannot will a parent council into existence if there is not an appetite for one. For those schools where parent councils do not exist, it is even more important that the school leaders have strong relationships with the wider parent forum. Furthermore, there may be a funding gap for the types of activities identified by Connect in their submission.
237. The Committee acknowledges that there are schools with excellent parental engagement but which do not have a parent council. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government examine the impact of not having a parent council on the funding available to schools and whether state funding, through either local authorities or the Attainment Scotland Fund, takes account of schools where it has proven difficult to establish a parent council.

Home and school partnerships

238. The Committee was told a number of times that parents who had perhaps had a poor experience of school as children and young people, could then be reticent to engage with the school as parents. A group of secondary school pupils the Committee met at the Muirhouse Millennium Centre reported that their parents were engaged neither with nor by the school.¹³

239. Breaking down barriers between parents/carers and schools was seen as key by many who spoke to the Committee. Some argued that the third sector is best-placed to do this and to be a "broker" between parents and schools. Shelagh Young from Home-start UK said that some parents find themselves in an "us and them" relationship with schools, she said—

” A lot of parents have not had [good role-models] and they are very suspicious and distrustful of teachers and of professionals, so volunteer-led models are incredibly important. I would argue that [...] schools need to get more open, more accessible and more engaging, but they might need to link up more often with organisations that are experienced in supporting volunteers to do that community-led work.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Shelagh Young, contrib. 12¹²³

240. Kirsten Hogg from Barnardo's Scotland talked about the work of their family support workers and the importance of taking time to build relationships with families—

” Sometimes it is a really long game, so we go in and build up a relationship with a family for one reason. Through building that relationship, families come to feel that they will not be judged by the worker, that they can trust them, and that the worker is there to help and support them. They also feel able to ask us to help.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Kirsten Hogg (Barnardo's Scotland), contrib. 5¹²⁴

241. The Committee also heard about the good work schools are doing to engage parents in the life and work of the school. Nancy Clunie, Headteacher from Dalmarnock Primary School, is focused on building relationships with her parents. She saw the school as providing a space to support parents' education, mental health, and create opportunities for parents and their children to go on visits together "to build good memories as a family".¹²⁵ This holistic approach means that parents engage frequently with the school and Ms Clunie was clear that good engagement comes from listening to parents—

” We have never introduced or offered something that has not come from something that a parent has said. What we have done has been led by parents. We only need a spark. On the first day back in January, two parents said to me, "I had a thought about summer school. I don't know what to do in terms of first aid. Could we get something in summer for that?" Someone else had a near miss with a fire and said that they would quite like to know how to deal with that, so we are running fire training for parents. What we do comes from things that parents have said.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 02 May 2018 [Draft], Nancy Clunie, contrib. 96¹²⁶

242. Attendees at the Committee's informal discussion group on 9 May 2018 said that positive relationships that have grown from food projects have led to wider benefits. One said "eating together is such a leveller and the most successful initiatives they have run have been based around food in the summer holidays".⁹⁰

243. By building close relationships with families, the third sector (or the school) is then able to help in other ways, such as signposting to other services or advice. At the informal meeting on 9 May, Members were told that—

” The positive relationships that have grown from food projects and income maximisation work has followed this initial contact. This has helped parents change energy tariff, internet supplier or highlight basics they need like a bed for their child.

Source: Education and Skills Committee, 2018¹⁷

244. Linda Lees from the City of Edinburgh Council also highlighted a scheme to help families claim benefits for which they were eligible—

” We put a welfare officer into one of our clusters and they have been giving appointments to families within all the schools in that cluster. The 47 families that have been involved in accessing appointments have maximised their income to the tune of around £150,000 across all the families.

Source: Education and Skills Committee 09 May 2018 [Draft], Linda Lees, contrib. 137¹²⁷

245. This inquiry has demonstrated that the health and well-being of the family unit is vital to the attainment and achievement of young people. The establishment of lines of communication between schools and parents is a key starting point to initiate work that can provide support to them and their families.

246. The Committee highlights the notable impact of income maximisation for some of the families where schools have acted as an initial hub and directed families towards support. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government undertakes a cost-benefit analysis of rolling out a system of using more schools as hubs for income maximisation advisory services.

Annexe

Evidence

Official reports

The Committee took formal evidence during five meetings in April and May 2018. Links to the Official Reports of those meetings are listed below.

- [18 April 2018](#)
- [25 April 2018](#)
- [2 May 2018](#)
- [9 May 2018](#)
- [23 May 2018](#)

Informal discussions and visits

Meet and greet

The Committee held a community meeting on 16 May 2018 at the Muirhouse Millennium Centre.

The Committee heard evidence from parents/guardians/carers, young people and a variety of professionals who are working directly with families affected by poverty.

- [Read the notes from the Muirhouse Millennium Centre meeting 16 May \(190KB pdf\)](#)

Informal meetings

The Committee asked the third sector, community and membership organisations giving formal evidence at the meetings on 25 April, 2 May and 9 May to bring along a small number of practitioners and/or service users for an informal dialogue with members of the Committee immediately before the formal sessions.

- [Read the notes from the 25 April \(237KB pdf\)](#)
- [Read the notes from the 2 May \(147KB pdf\)](#)
- [Read the notes from the 9 May \(83KB pdf\)](#)

School visit

The Committee visited a school in Dunfermline on Tuesday 1 May.

- [Read the notes from the visit to Queen Anne High School 1 May \(377KB pdf\)](#)

Community Learning and Development

The Committee held a discussion group on this topic with CLD professionals on Monday 30 April.

- [Read the notes from the CLD discussion group 30 April \(153KB pdf\)](#)

Written submissions

You can read all of the submissions to the Committee on this inquiry here:

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/107990.aspx>

Submissions were received from:

- The Scottish Government
- Education Scotland
- Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland
- The Education Endowment Foundation
- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- The Poverty Alliance
- Poverty and Inequality Commission
- Poverty Truth Commission
- Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change

Local Government Submissions

- COSLA
- City of Edinburgh Council 1 in 5
- East Ayrshire Council
- North Lanarshire Council
- The Nothern Alliance
- Glasgow City Council
- North Lanarkshire Council- additional submission

School Submissions

- Dalmarnock Primary School
- Kelvinside Academy
- Tynecastle High School 1 in 5 group

Submissions from Unions

- AHDS
- EIS
- NASUWT
- School Leaders Scotland
- UNISON

Submissions from Parent Representatives

- Connect
- The National Parent Forum of Scotland
- One Parent Families Scotland

Submissions from Children's Representative/ Charities

- Aberlour
- Barnardo's
- Children 1st
- Children in Scotland
- Children's Parliament
- Children's University Scotland
- Includem
- Save The Children
- Scottish Youth Parliament

Other Organisations working with Children, Young People and Families

- Apex Scotland
- The Church of Scotland
- CLD Standards Council
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Generations Working Together
- Home-Start UK
- Home-Start Uk- additional submission
- Home-Start Edinburgh West and South

- Learning Link Scotland
- The Princes Trust
- Reading Wise
- Scouts Scotland
- Scottish Outdoor Education Centre
- Stretch a Nickel Foundation
- The Spark
- Young Scot
- Youth Link Scotland
- Youth Scotland

Submissions from Further and Higher Education

- Colleges Scotland
- Heriot- Watt University
- Universities Scotland
- University of Stirling
- University of Strathclyde

Other Organisations

- The Awards Network
- Axiom Consultancy (Scotland) Ltd
- CELCIS
- Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER)
- Culture Counts
- Edinburgh International Science Festival
- Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- Inch Youth Club
- National Theatre of Scotland
- NHS Scotland- Facing up to Poverty Practice Network

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- NHS Health Scotland
- RSE
- Scottish Library and Information Council
- Social Work Scotland
- Sumdog

Submissions from Academics

- Dr Lynne Duncan and Dr Sarah McGeown
- Professor Stephen Gorard FRSA FAcSS
- Andrew Green
- Professor Grant Jarvie
- Dr Morag Treanor
- Dr Terry Wrigley
- Lindsay Graham

Submissions from Individuals

- Caroline Farquhar
- Maggie Hodge
- Niall McKinnon
- Lorna Walker
- Mrs Carol H Ajundi
- Vijay Kumar
- Shelagh Campbell
- Suzanne Ensom (English Speaking Union) & Nick Bibby
- Simon Needham

Anonymous Submissions

- Parent 1
- Child/ Young Person 1
- Child/ Young Person 2
- Teacher 1
- Teacher 2

- Teacher 3
- Teacher 4
- Teacher 5
- Teacher 6
- Teacher 7

Extracts of minutes

Wednesday 7 February 2018

2. Work programme (in private): The Committee considered its work programme.

[...]

The Committee discussed its work programme from April 2018 to June 2018 and agreed to undertake work in relation to poverty and education.

Wednesday 21 March 2018

5. Work programme (in private): The Committee considered its work programme. The Committee agreed its engagement work for its inquiry on attainment and achievement of school aged children experiencing poverty.

Wednesday 18 April 2018

1. Decision to take agenda items in private: The Committee agreed to take agenda items 3 and 4 in private. The Committee also agreed to take the future reviews of the evidence on its Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty inquiry in private.

2. Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty: The Committee heard evidence on its inquiry from—

- John Dickie, Director, Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland;
- Kevin Lowden, Research Officer, Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change;
- Danielle Mason, Head of Research, Education Endowment Foundation; and
- Dr Jim McCormick, Associate Director Scotland, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

3. Review of evidence (in private): The Committee deferred the consideration of the evidence it heard earlier to the next week's meeting.

4. Work programme (in private): The Committee considered its work programme and agreed to write to a number of stakeholders encouraging them to contribute to the Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty inquiry.

Wednesday 25 April 2018

2. Attainment and achievement of school aged children experiencing poverty: The Committee heard evidence on its inquiry from—

- Andrea Bradley, Assistant Secretary, Educational Institute of Scotland;
- Stella Gibson, Chief Executive, The Spark;
- Finlay Laverty, Senior Head of Partnerships, Prince's Trust Scotland;
- John Loughton, Chief Executive, Dare2Lead; and
- Eileen Prior, Chief Executive, Connect.

3. Review of evidence (in private): The Committee considered the evidence it has heard so far on its inquiry on attainment and achievement of school aged children experiencing poverty.

Wednesday 2 May 2018

2. Attainment and achievement of school aged children experiencing poverty: The Committee heard evidence on its inquiry from—

- Nancy Clunie, Headteacher, Dalmarnock Primary School;
- Kirsten Hogg, Head of Policy, Barnardo's Scotland;
- Satwat Rehman, Director, One Parent Families Scotland;
- Brian Scott, Commissioner, Poverty Truth Commission;
- Chelsea Stinson, Children's Voices Programme Manager, Children's Parliament.

3. Review of evidence (in private): The Committee considered the evidence it heard earlier.

Wednesday 9 May 2018

2. Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty: The Committee heard evidence on its inquiry from—

1. Martin Canavan, Policy and Participation Officer, Aberlour Child Care Trust;
2. Shelagh Young, Director of Scotland, Home-Start UK;
3. Jackie Howie, Lead Officer, Learning Link Scotland;
4. Graeme Young, Head of National Activity Centres, Scouts Scotland; and
5. Susan Hunter, Senior Development Officer Policy and Research, Youthlink Scotland;

and then from—

- Linda Lees, Lifelong Learning Strategic Manager, City of Edinburgh Council;
- John Butcher, Executive Director of Education and Youth Employment, North Ayrshire Council; and

- Dr James Foley, Performance Analyst, Youth and Communities, North Lanarkshire Council.

Oliver Mundell declared an interest as he is Cub Scout leader. Ruth Maguire also declared an interest as she was a Councillor for North Ayrshire council.

3. Review of Evidence (in private): The Committee deferred reviewing the evidence it heard earlier to the Committee meeting on 16 May 2018.

Wednesday 16 May 2018

4. Review of Evidence in relation to the Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty inquiry (in private): The Committee considered the evidence it has heard on its inquiry.

Wednesday 23 May 2018

1. Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty: The Committee heard evidence from—

- Gayle Gorman, Chief Inspector of Education and Chief Executive,
- Elizabeth Morrison, Interim Strategic Director,
- Louise Turnbull, HM Inspector and Interim Assistant Director, and
- Gail Copland, Attainment Advisor, Education Scotland;

and then from—

- John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Scottish Government.

2. Review of evidence (in private): The Committee considered the evidence it heard earlier.

Wednesday 13 June 2018

1. Decision to take items in private: The Committee agreed to take agenda item 4 in private. The Committee also agreed to take any future considerations of its draft report on the Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty inquiry in private.

4. Inquiry into Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty (in private): The Committee agreed to defer its consideration of the draft report to the committee meeting on the 20th June 2018.

Wednesday 20 June 2018

3. Inquiry into Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty (in private): The Committee considered a draft report and agreed to consider a further report at its next meeting.

Wednesday 27 June 2018

Education and Skills Committee

What support works? Inquiry into attainment and achievement of school children experiencing poverty, 4th Report, 2018 (Session 5)

1. Inquiry into Attainment and Achievement of School Aged Children Experiencing Poverty (in private): The Committee agreed its report on this inquiry.

- [1] Education and Skills Committee. (2017). Teacher Workforce Planning for Scotland's Schools (paragraph 138). Retrieved from <https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdnep.azureedge.net/published/ES/2017/9/1/Teacher-Workforce-Planning-for-Scotland-s-Schools/10th%20Report,%202017.pdf>
- [2] The Scottish Government. (2018). Pupil attainment: closing the gap. Retrieved from <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/schools/pupil-attainment/>
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- [7] Education and Skills Committee 23 May 2018 [Draft], John Swinney, contrib. 157, <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11556&c=2095929>
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- [14] Education and Skills Committee 25 April 2018 [Draft], Andrea Bradley, contrib. 46, <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11490&c=2086351>

- [15] The Poverty Alliance. (2018). Education and Skills Committee Submissions Pack: Attainment and achievement of school aged children experiencing poverty (p33). Retrieved from http://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20180418Poverty_and_Attainment_Submissions_Pack.pdf
- [16] Glasgow Centre for Population Health. (2018). Education and Skills Committee Submissions Pack: Attainment and achievement of school aged children experiencing poverty (p309). Retrieved from http://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20180418Poverty_and_Attainment_Submissions_Pack.pdf
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Education and Skills Committee

What support works? Inquiry into attainment and achievement of school children experiencing poverty, 4th Report, 2018 (Session 5)

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