'Menu of approaches': evidence brief and supporting resources

This planning tool is designed to support you—a school leader, governor, or trustee—as you consider potential approaches to your Pupil Premium spending. It introduces findings from high quality research related to each strand of the Department for Education's **'menu of approaches'** and signposts evidence-informed resources.

Before considering approaches, a crucial first step in strategy development is to conduct a robust diagnosis of specific barriers to learning faced by your socio-economically disadvantaged pupils. For more support with developing your Pupil Premium strategy, see our **Guide to the Pupil Premium.**

High quality teaching

Developing high quality teaching, assessment and a broad and balanced, knowledge-based curriculum that responds to the needs of pupils	Evidence indicates that high quality teaching is the most powerful way for schools to improve pupil attainment, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged students. Schools should focus on building teacher knowledge and pedagogical expertise, curriculum development, and the purposeful use of assessment. This could include the selection of high quality curriculum materials or investment in the use of standardised assessments. • Our **Teaching and Learning Toolkit** summarises the best available evidence on a variety of teaching and learning approaches, explaining their average impact, cost, and key considerations when putting them into practice. • Our **guidance reports** offer evidence-informed recommendations on how schools can improve practice across a range of areas such as literacy, maths, science, and teacher feedback. • Cognitive science approaches offer principles that hold promise for improving the quality of teaching. Our **Cognitive Science in the Classroom: A Review of the Evidence** provides an accessible summary. • Evidence Based Education's **Great Teaching Toolkit** summarises high quality evidence on improving teacher effectiveness.
Professional development to support the implementation of evidence-based approaches - for example, training provided by a **DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics programme** or mastery-based approaches to teaching or feedback	Supporting continuous and sustained professional development is crucial to developing teacher practice. The content of professional development should be based on the best available evidence and should balance the need to build knowledge, motivate teachers, develop specific techniques, and embed new approaches. • Our **Teaching and Learning Toolkit** summarises the evidence on potential approaches that schools might choose as a focus for professional development. • Our **Effective Professional Development guidance report** can support you in selecting, designing, and delivering meaningful professional development opportunities. • Our **accompanying support tools** drill further into the detail, exploring what a balanced approach to professional development could look like, and more.
Mentoring and coaching for teachers	Mentoring and coaching can be an important source of support, particularly for early career teachers. Schools should carefully consider the core components that make these strategies effective when developing their approach. • Our **Effective Professional Development** guidance report is accompanied by a poster, **Effective Mechanisms of Professional Development**, which outlines the mechanisms that make mentoring or coaching more likely to be effective. • The National Institute of Teaching's **Mentoring and Coaching of Teachers** research report gives an overview of the research underpinning mentoring and coaching.

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Recruitment and retention of teaching staff - for example, providing cover time to undertake professional development such as **National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)**	Managing workload and offering effective professional development are key to retaining great teachers, which, in turn, is crucial to maintaining a high standard of teaching and learning. • Our **Effective Professional Development guidance report** offers evidence-based recommendations. • The **DfE's Reducing School Workload Collection** offers support and practical resources for use in schools.
Technology and other resources to support high quality teaching and learning - for example, software to support diagnostic assessment	To improve learning, schools should consider the specific barriers technology is addressing, particularly for disadvantaged students, and use technology in a way that is informed by effective pedagogy. • Our **Using Digital Technology to Improve Learning** guidance report offers evidence-informed recommendations and practical examples around how to use technology to improve teaching and learning. • Our **Remote Learning: Rapid Evidence Assessment** gives an overview of the evidence underpinning strategies to support remote learning.

Targeted academic support

One to one, small group or peer academic tuition, including through the National Tutoring Programme	Intensive support—either one to one or as part of a small group—can support pupil learning if provided in addition to, and explicitly linked with, normal lessons. Peer tutoring involves pupils working in pairs or small groups to provide each other with explicit teaching support. You should think carefully about how you implement tuition, including how you will assess learning gaps, select curriculum content, prepare staff to deliver sessions, and monitor their impact. • Our Teaching and Learning Toolkit has strands that summarise the evidence underpinning **one to one tuition** and **small group tuition.** • Our **Making a Difference with Effective Tutoring** guide provides advice on implementing tuition in schools.
Targeted interventions to support language development, literacy and numeracy	Targeted academic support can support pupil progress and can be employed to help boost language development, literacy, or numeracy as well as other subject areas. Interventions should be carefully linked to classroom teaching and matched to individual pupils' specific needs, while not inhibiting their access to the wider curriculum. • Our **Selecting Interventions tool** offers evidence-informed advice to help you select an appropriate programme. Evaluation reports from every EEF trial can be found on our **projects page.** • We have dedicated web pages on effective approaches to supporting **literacy** and **numeracy.**
Targeted interventions and resources to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged pupils with SEND	Disadvantaged pupils with SEND have the greatest need for excellent teaching. Specific approaches to support these pupils may include explicit instruction, cognitive and metacognitive strategies, scaffolding, flexible grouping, and the targeted use of technology. • Our guidance report on **Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools** includes five evidence-based recommendations to support pupils with SEND. • Our **'Five-a-day' resource** presents well-evidenced principles that can help to raise attainment for all pupils, including those with SEND.
Teaching assistant deployment and interventions - for example, by supporting high quality provision within the classroom and delivering targeted interventions	Strategic deployment of teaching assistants is important to ensuring that priority pupils are supported. TAs should be fully prepared for their role in any given lesson or intervention and their input should supplement (rather than replace) high quality provision from the class teacher. • Our **Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistants guidance report** presents six recommendations, including adopting evidence-based interventions to support small group and one to one instruction. • Our **Teaching and Learning Toolkit** strand on teaching assistant interventions.

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Wider strategies

Supporting pupils' social, emotional, and behavioural needs	Social and emotional skills support effective learning and are linked to positive outcomes later in life. Schools may consider whole-class approaches as well as targeted interventions, monitoring the impact of these choices carefully. • Our **Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools** guidance report outlines five core competencies that can be taught explicitly to support pupil development. • Our **Improving Behaviour in Schools** guidance report presents six recommendations on how to develop and refine your school's approach to managing behaviour. • Our Teaching and Learning Toolkit strands on **social and emotional learning** and **behaviour interventions** present evidence and advice.
Supporting attendance, including approaches outlined in the DfE's **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** guidance	Poor attendance at school is linked to poor academic attainment across all stages. Some parental communication approaches and targeted parental engagement interventions show promise in supporting pupil attendance. • Our **Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning** guidance report includes advice around how to support attendance. • Our **Rapid Evidence Review: Attendance Interventions** examines the existing research on interventions that aim to improve attendance.
Extracurricular activities, including sports, outdoor activities, and arts and culture - for example, music lessons and school trips	Extracurricular activities are an important part of education in their own right. These approaches may increase engagement in learning but it is important to consider how increased engagement will be translated into improved outcomes. • Our Teaching and Learning Toolkit strands on **arts participation** and **physical activity.**
Extended school time, including summer schools	Extended school time could mean extending core teaching through targeted after-school tuition, homework, or summer school programmes. Such programmes are more likely to impact learning if they are clearly structured, linked to the curriculum, and led by well-qualified and well-trained staff. Schools should consider the cost and implications on teacher time when considering extended school time approaches. • Our Teaching and Learning Toolkit strands on **extending school time**, **summer schools,** and **homework.**
Breakfast clubs and meal provision	There is some evidence that providing free, universal, before-school breakfast clubs can benefit pupils by preparing them for learning or supporting behaviour and school attendance. • Our independent evaluation of the **Magic Breakfast programme.**
Communicating with, and supporting, parents	Levels of parental engagement are consistently associated with improved academic outcomes. Practical approaches, such as supporting shared book reading or tailoring positive communications about learning, can prove actionable for schools. • Our Teaching and Learning Toolkit has a strand on **parental engagement.** • Our **Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning** guidance report offers practical approaches to communicating effectively with, and supporting, parents.

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