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| Committee(s) | Dated: |
| Education Board | 8 November 2018 |
| Subject: Evaluation of City Premium Grant Funding for City Academies 2017/2018 | Public |
| Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services | For Information |
| Report author: Daniel McGrady | |

Summary

This report provides Members with a summary of the impact evaluations for projects delivered by City Corporation Academies over 2017/18 using additional funding known as the City Premium Grant agreed by the Education Board.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the summary of the impact evaluations submitted by City Corporation academies for the projects funded by the 2017/18 City Premium Grant and delivered in the 2017/18 academic year.

Main Report

Background

1. At its meeting on 20 July 2017, the Education Board endorsed proposals to allocate additional funding to the City Corporation's academies to support projects identified by the academies to boost learning and improve the educational offer. The nine academies which received funding were sent an evaluation form to complete, asking them to focus on the impact of projects on attainment, aspiration, skills and wellbeing and to submit evidence of impact. This report highlights the main impact areas for Primary and Secondary schools and includes some commentary of the evaluative methods used.
2. At the time of writing this evaluation report, City of London Academy Southwark had not provided their impact analysis. That means that they remain ineligible for further City Premium Grants until such time as the reporting requirements have been met.

Current Position

Secondary

A total of £600,000 was awarded to City Corporation secondary academies.

3. The most popular use of the funding was to pay for extra revision and exam preparation sessions, with an estimated total of £136,079 spent on this. The offer included residential revision weekends, half-term and Saturday sessions and one-to-one tutoring. The impact was on exam results at Key Stage 4, with many secondary schools attributing improved exam results on last year to extra revision sessions for pupils. In some cases, schools compared the performance of those pupils who received extra revision sessions with those who did not and noted some direct impact on attainment. For example, at City of London Academy Highgate Hill, the progress rate of Year 11 students who accessed one-to-one tutoring in English Literature and Maths was marginally higher than the Year 11 whole cohort. One common benefit of these sessions was the impact on pupil confidence and resilience, with one school noting that pupils who would otherwise give-up during exam papers demonstrated an improved determination to finish the paper.
4. Two secondary schools used their funding allocations to improve school inclusion and attendance, spending an estimated £68,685 of the total funding allocation. City of London Academy Islington used additional funding on bespoke Alternative Provision (AP) for vulnerable students at risk of exclusion and noted that the attainment of pupils whilst in alternative provision was significantly higher than their predictions had they remained in

mainstream education at the academy, and no pupils attending the provision were excluded. Whilst these provisions are expensive, the overall return on investment may be high due to the prevention of long-term negative outcomes of regular non-attendance and exclusion from school.

5. Music education, including instrumental lessons, orchestras and ensembles, was a popular use of the grant for Secondary Academies, with an estimated total of £59,382. Provision was focused primarily on pupils in Years 7 and 8 and included both universal offers and targeted offers at talented young people. The main areas of impact across these projects included an increased interest in music and improved attainment in music lessons. Academies also noted the demonstrably improved confidence and team-working capabilities of pupils who participated in groups or orchestras and who performed music to live audiences. Those academies who ran music programmes also noted the beneficial effect of pupils engaging in extra-curricular activities, both in terms of improved engagement in learning, and the opportunities for parents to be involved in pupil performances.
6. Some Secondary Academies used the additional funding to provide direct careers and work experience information, advice and guidance, spending an estimated total of £33,034 (this does not include projects which would have a wider impact on pupils' employability). These projects demonstrated some impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding of the requirements of specific careers, their forward thinking and career goals, and participation in work placements. In both examples of using the funding for these purposes, it was too early for the schools to show the long-term impact of these interventions on destination and NEET data.

Primary

A total of £75,000 was awarded to City Corporation primary academies.

7. A noteworthy alteration from the original funding bid was demonstrated by Redriff Primary School which originally bid for £50,000 to improve pupils' oracy skills, however used their total additional funding allocation of £50,000 on projects to improve pupils' performance in maths following a low progress score for maths in 2016/17. Redriff's interventions have shown impact on results, noting progress in maths at +4.7 compared with -0.6 for 2016/17. This represents an effective repurposing of the City Premium Grant to respond to school performance needs.
8. CPD for teachers was the most common use of the City Premium Grants across primary academies with primary schools spending an estimated £20,000 of the total allocation on CPD. The CPD was largely focused around innovative and alternative methods of teaching, such as using woodwork to teach maths, using phonics to teach reading and writing, and using oracy skills to develop maths skills. Whilst no comparative impact evaluations were carried out comparing pupils' performance of those who received an intervention and those who had not, CPD can be presumed to have contributed to a positive trajectory in results.
9. Parental engagement was a common theme across projects delivered by the primary academies. Parent workshops and learning at home resources to strengthen parental involvement in children's phonics and learning was a key aspect of City of London Primary Academy Islington's (COLPAI) nationally favourable results in reading and writing. Similar approaches were used by Redriff to boost achievement in mathematics which also positively impacted on results.

Areas for improvement in measuring impact

10. Where schools have used the City Premium Grant funding for projects which develop pupils' soft skills, or 'fusion skills' (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, Instrumental Lessons, Team Building trip), the impact analyses are often focused on outputs rather than the pupils' demonstrable development of these skills. There are cases where schools have stated that 'pupils feel more confident' but not how this skill is then applied across the curriculum and becomes an accessible skill in that pupils' learning toolkit. This is a noticeable gap across all of the evaluations, and so points to the schools' limitations in tracking and assessing pupils' fusion skills.
11. Schools were most successful in demonstrating the impact of their interventions when they compared baselines before the project with the results afterwards and compared the progress

of pupils who participated in the project with non-participants. This approach more confidently demonstrated that the project had a direct impact on outcomes for pupils, rather than other unknown contributing factors which cannot be purposefully replicated.

12. Some secondary academies used City Premium Grant funding on school ICT projects, spending an estimated £71,006 of the total allocation. The desired outcomes of these projects were primarily to improve pupil engagement in learning by making it easier for pupils to access work at home and for parents to access updates on their children's learning. There is very little evidence of the impact of these projects on improving pupils' learning. Members may therefore want to ensure clear KPIs for ITC related projects in future bidding processes.

Conclusion

13. This report provides Members with a summary of the impact evaluations for projects delivered by City Corporation Academies over 2017/18 using additional funding provided by the Education Board.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Summary of 2017/18 proposals approved by the Board.
- Appendix 2 – School level summary of impact of City Premium Grant 2017/18 funding.

Daniel McGrady

Lead Policy Officer (Education, Culture & Skills)

T: 020 7332 1864

E: daniel.mcgrady@cityoflondon.gov.uk