

## **‘ME TOO’ – ACTIVITY SUBSIDY IN YORK**

### **What is the purpose of this leaflet?**

- To ensure that school staff and governors understand the purpose of the subsidy and the opportunity that it represents
- To generate a case for allocating school resources (time) to making the most of the opportunity
- To set out the responsibilities of the school, and the support the school can expect to receive from the local authority.

### **What is the aim of the ‘Me Too’ subsidy?**

The subsidy is part of the Government’s commitment to extended services in and around schools. As part of this every school should offer a comprehensive range of exciting, high-quality out-of-hours activities to its pupils, with the aim of:

- Raising self esteem, confidence and aspirations
- Improve wellbeing, responsibility, social and life skills
- Provide inspiration and an opportunity to discover a talent
- Help to build positive relationships with families
- Strengthen engagement

In York the subsidy is called ‘Me Too’ and will provide funding to help schools ensure that these out-of-hours activities are accessible to those pupils who would not be able to afford them, complementing extended services activities and outcomes that schools are *already* delivering.

In addition to Extended Services ‘Me Too’ links to other initiatives that contribute to the Every Child Matters outcomes and the vision for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools including: the ‘Narrowing the Gap’ agenda, increased focus on early intervention, multi-agency working, personalised education and development. Locally these goals are articulated through the Children and Young People’s Plan and the targets within.

### **What are the eligibility criteria?**

The level of ‘Me Too’ funding is not sufficient to make a significant and sustained impact on all pupils. This means that only pupils who are **economically disadvantaged** should be eligible for the subsidy. In York the eligibility criteria for ‘Me Too’ covers young people who are:

- Eligible for Free School Meals
- Looked After
- Young Carers
- Living in Temporary accommodation
- Children in Need – receiving statutory services
- Have an active CAF

Pupils who meet at least one of these local criteria will be referred to as the ‘target group’ for ‘Me Too’ funding. Plus in exceptional circumstances Head’s

have discretion to allocate funding where they are aware of other economic circumstances within a family that would make paying for activities difficult.

### **Guiding principles for using the subsidy**

The six guiding principles below are aimed at helping schools be clear about what they should and should not spend the subsidy funding on. These guiding principles are supported by a detailed set of frequently asked questions available at [www.tda.gov.uk/subsidy](http://www.tda.gov.uk/subsidy)

- GP1: Access:** The funding should enable the target group to access activities from which they would otherwise be excluded due to their inability to pay.
- GP2: Additionality:** The funding should be used to make existing activities more accessible to the target group, and/or to commission new activities that better meet their needs.
- GP3: Involvement:** The target group and their parents/carers should be fully involved in choosing, designing and continuously improving a range of activities that are attractive and relevant. This should help to establish genuine control of the funding identified for them, in the same way as children and young people whose participation is not excluded by inability to pay.
- GP4: Open to all:** Any new activities created and delivered as part of the subsidy work should be available to all and should be financially sustainable, including charging for activities where appropriate.
- GP5: Creativity and personalisation:** For many of the target group there are barriers to participation other than purely financial: especially in these cases, school and other staff should be creative in developing personalised approaches that support individuals.
- GP6: Sustainability and ongoing participation:** The funding arrangements for activities should be sustainable over time and be attractive to the target group to secure their ongoing participation.

### **Who needs to be informed?**

To ensure full engagement schools should disseminate the information to all staff within school. Other agencies and organisations will also be briefed to ensure a partnership approach to engaging families in 'Me Too', especially those who are most reluctant to engage.

- all Primary and Secondary Heads
- all teaching and support staff
- Governors
- school admin teams, bursars, schools business managers (they will be crucial to the success of 'Me Too' within each school)
- School Extended Service leads
- Children's Trust and YorOK brokers
- FIP, YOT, EWO, behaviour support, connexions workers and those able to influence families, and other networks involved with children and families across the city

### **What do schools need to do?**

To enable schools to offer activities with 'Me Too' funding at the earliest opportunity, some forward planning will be required:

- Plans for 'Me Too' should be incorporated into SIP for 2010/11
- Open the debate on allocating school resources to support the roll out of the subsidy at a school/cluster level –identifying a key person within school to coordinate the subsidy.
- Identify the cohort that meet the eligibility criteria
- Think about ways of engaging/raising awareness of these young people and their families
- Look into options for consulting and finding out what the eligible cohort would like to do
- Look to promote existing activities, providers and partners to secure 'quick to wins'
- Look more widely to securing provision for activities identified through consultation.
- Make sure the right staff are aware of the support materials for administration, monitoring and evaluation of the subsidy.

### **What support will schools receive?**

Extended Services , the pilot schools and other partners such as the Play Team, Arts and Cultural Services have been working together to work through the delivery of 'Me Too'. This learning will be shared with schools to support city wide roll out of 'Me Too'.

- Support to identify and engage activity providers through other council services such as the play team, arts and cultural services, libraries, school sports partnerships.
- Sample letters, posters etc will be provided as well as templates for monitoring of take up by the eligible group and the associated expenditure.
- Use of an existing cluster model to provide, baseline activities, support, help with consultation and feedback for SEF.
- Support from Extended Services Team and access to TDA resources.
- Support from other services working with families and young people to support the engagement of the hardest to reach families.

### **Funding**

The funding is for **schools** to spend **directly** on helping economically disadvantaged pupils to participate in extended services out-of-hours activities. These activities should be driven by demand from the target group and will not necessarily be on school site or provided by schools themselves. To meet local demand, schools may need to signpost to or commission activities from third-party providers, including the voluntary and community sector.

The overall funding for the project is £446K. This will be devolved to individual schools termly based on the schools deprivation indices. Funding must be used for provision or access to activities of the young persons choosing, this could include direct payment for an activity, help with transport or equipment.

It must not be used to make activities free for all - those that can afford to pay should be encouraged to do so. It cannot be used to support the administration and payment of activities or for conducting consultation.

### **Links to the SEF**

The school improvement plan can demonstrate clearly the way you intend to utilise the additional 'Me Too' funding to target resources and activities to specific groups or individual pupils, including the most economically disadvantaged.

Demonstrating the rationale and the impact of targeting pupils with regard to learning and support will be important judgments to highlight in your SEF. The effectiveness of how schools manage available resources, to meet the needs of pupils and achieve high quality outcomes, is also important evidence to be outlined in the SEF. The subsidy will play an important role in enabling these outcomes.

Working successfully to meet the aims of the 'Me Too' subsidy will provide this evidence for the SEF, guidance and templates on this will be shared by Extended Services and its partners.

### **Monitoring and Impact Evaluation**

As a result of taking part in activities pupils are more likely to increase their attendance and engagement with the school, and thereby improve their academic attainment. Pathfinder schools reported increased engagement between the families of the target group and the school.

Pathfinders found that monitoring and evaluating pupils' participation in activities has played an important role in maximising the benefits of the subsidy. For example, where schools agree personalised learning goals with individual pupils in the target group, they have used the subsidy to fund extended services activities to support these goals.

In order to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the project locally schools will be expected to keep data on the eligible group; their take up of activities, costs and feedback on the impact on the young person from being involved from a range of perspectives.

This information will be further shared to enable all schools to share good practice and success stories.

The following page includes some examples of impact from pilot authorities and also highlights the potential benefits of the partnership approach to engaging families in 'Me Too'.

For more information contact Sarah Carrick, Extended Services Policy Manager. 01904 554441. or email [sarah.carrick@york.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.carrick@york.gov.uk)

## Examples of Impact – City of York

Package of interventions following a Common Assessment Framework transform the child's and family's situation:

- **Who:** Four-year-old child, with single parent, two siblings (aged two and seven).
- **Situation:** Getting to school late, distracted in class, aggressive behaviour at home, mum has difficulties controlling children at home, child at risk of exclusion from school.
- **How the subsidy funding helped:** Child entered Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process with multi-agency team involvement. As a result of the CAF, the school worked alongside social care and health to deliver a package of interventions. As part of this package, the school used the subsidy funding to provide access to a breakfast club, after-school clubs, and taster activities.

**Impact on the child/family:** The four-year-old is no longer at risk of exclusion, and has expressed gratitude to the headteacher for the opportunities offered. In addition, the family's situation has seen a significant improvement.

Package of interventions dramatically improve school attendance:

- **Who:** Year 10 pupil, with single parent.
- **Situation:** Poor attendance and performance at school, mum is a substance abuser, late with rent payments, mother and son moved into sister's house (where drugs play a role), below threshold for action by housing or social services.
- **How the subsidy funding helped:** Student social worker and the school put together a programme to support the child. School used the subsidy funding to pay for the pupil to attend a fitness centre (particularly swimming which he greatly enjoys).

**Impact on the child:** School attendance has improved dramatically, developed strong relationship with the student social worker with whom he now speaks regularly.

Activities improve whole family relationships:

- **Who:** Parents, son and daughter.
- **Situation:** Father has not worked for some time due to ill health. Son was coming home from school with very high energy levels and so creating problems in the (small) house as he had no creative outlet for his energy. Son was having problems with attendance and performance at school.

- **How the subsidy funding helped:** The subsidy funded a school expedition which the whole family attended: this was the first time for three years that the family had had an outing together and was very successful. Following the positive experience of the expedition, the son started to participate in a number of after-school activities paid for by the subsidy.

**Impact on the child/family:** The mother reports that the initial family outing itself made a significant positive impact on relationships within the family. The son is now very keen to go to school as he looks forward to the after-school activities, and when he returns home afterwards.

Swimming lessons improve relationship between school and family, increase attendance:

- **Who:** Year 9 girl.
- **Situation:** Poor attendance. Was unwilling to attend school on a particular Friday citing that she did not have a swimming costume for the planned trip to the local swimming pool (the trip cost £6.50). The school attendance officer was working closely with the family, and when speaking with her mother discovered that, in fact, the reason the child would not attend was that she knew her parents could not afford the £6.50 cost.
- **How the subsidy funding helped:** The attendance officer offered to use the subsidy funding to pay for the trip to the swimming pool. On hearing the offer her mother broke down in tears and gladly accepted.

**Impact on the child:** Attendance increased and as a result behaviour is improving. Significant improvement in relationship between the family and the attendance officer.