

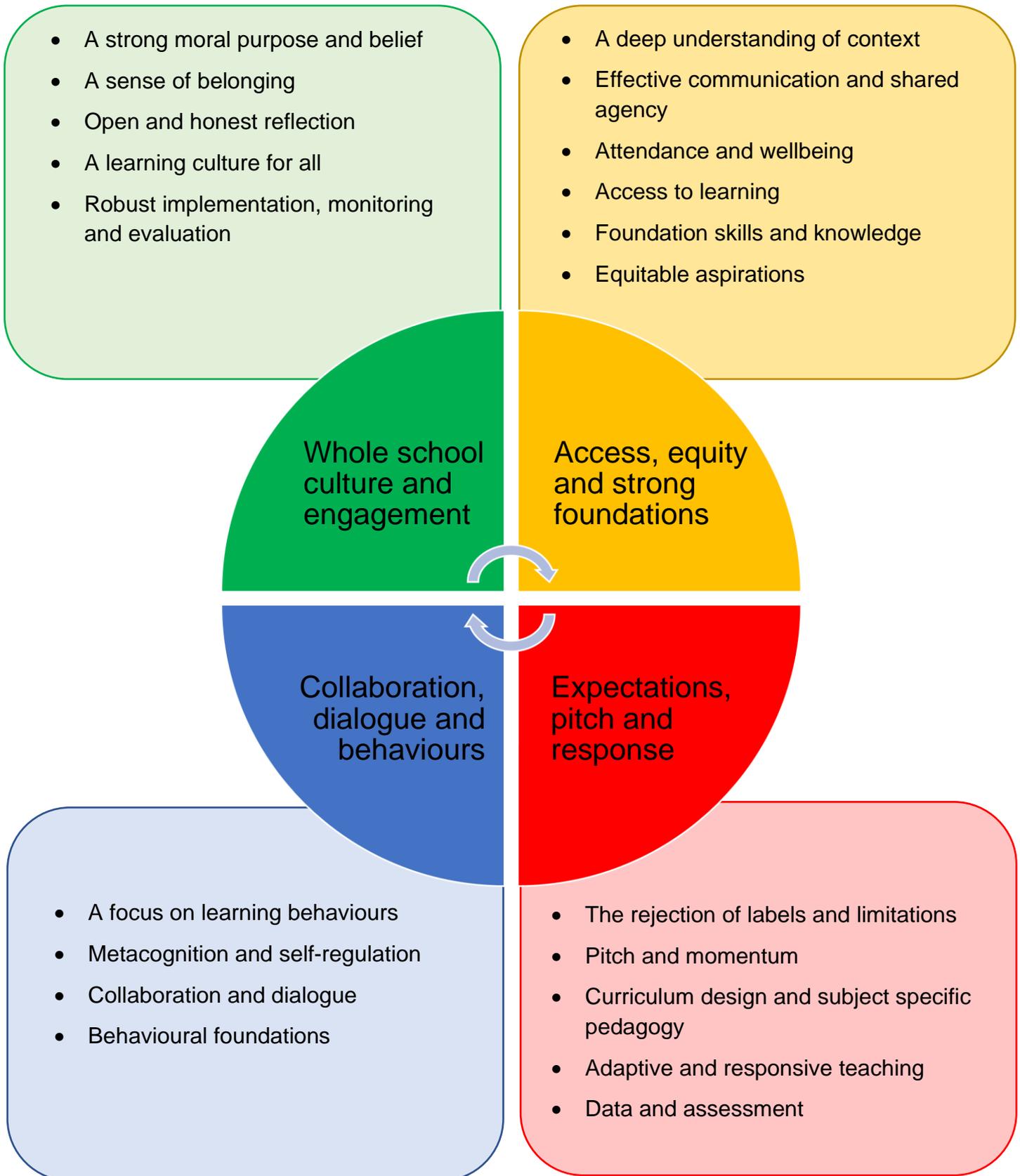
SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

Tackling Educational Disadvantage (TED) Guidance

Green section: Whole school culture and engagement

Revised 2023

The Four Core Sections



Whole school culture and engagement

Vision is underpinned by a shared moral purpose to provide the best education and life chances for all, resulting in a culture without limitations on achievement and an environment where all pupils feel safe.



Building block: There is a collective, shared vision and ambition for disadvantaged pupils, which recognises that academic attainment is necessary and critical in terms of widening opportunity and life chances but is not in itself sufficient for success.

A strong moral purpose and belief

Effective leadership develops and sustains a culture where:

- all staff value pupils' diverse strengths and characteristics, adopting a strengths-based approach, rather than a deficit model
- all staff are committed to addressing challenges faced by pupils experiencing disadvantage, believing that their actions really can improve pupils' experiences, well-being, outcomes and life chances
- all teachers are committed to addressing challenges faced by pupils experiencing disadvantage in their own classrooms, and this is reflected in the way teachers talk about pupils and families
- all staff recognise that pupils' physiological and safety needs must be met and can identify when intervention needs to take place.

“The inclusive teacher challenges that mindset that seeks to predetermine the capacity of each learner, replacing it instead with a curiosity about what the learner can achieve.”

[Nasen, Teacher Handbook SEND, \(2022\)](#)

Building block: There is a unified belief that all pupils, irrespective of background or barriers, can attain well; high expectations for all is a lived and evidenced mantra.

A sense of belonging

- All pupils and staff feel that they belong in their school; they feel valued by their community and value their role within it.
- Schools ensure that all pupils and staff have positive, trusting relationships, and these relationships are proactively established and nurtured by all.
- Relationships are reciprocal in nature with regular shared interaction and feedback. All voices are heard.
- All pupils and staff are actively engaged in wider school life, taking part in assemblies, performances, visits and extra-curricular activities.

“Placing value on students’ ideas and opinions not only contributes towards their sense of self-worth, but also builds a greater sense of community and belonging in school.”

[Gaunt and Stott, Transform Teaching and Learning through Talk \(2018\)](#)

“There is a strong evidence base that teacher-pupil relationships are key to good pupil behaviour and that these relationships can affect pupil effort and academic attainment.”

[EEF, Improving Behaviour in Schools Guidance Report \(2021\)](#)

Open and honest reflection

- Schools are honest and robust in their self-evaluation, ensuring a true reflection of current practice and the impact of chosen strategies. This honesty allows leaders to shape priorities and drive improvement effectively.
- The pupil premium strategy is an honest document focused on improving outcomes for pupils experiencing disadvantage. The focus goes far beyond operational compliance.
- The views of all stakeholders, including pupils and families, are actively sought and used to inform self-evaluation and resulting strategy, even when some of these views may be difficult to hear.
- Staff and pupils are honest and open about things they do not understand, or that they find challenging, seeking information, advice and guidance and modelling positive learning behaviours. This includes seeking feedback and advice from external agencies.
- Teachers and pupils share and reflect on successes and failures within the context of a safe learning culture.

Building block: School self-evaluation is timely, routine and rigorous; it instigates change where needed and drives further improvement.

Building block: School self-evaluation outcomes and research evidence are used in an honest and open way and not used selectively to support existing practices, activities or biases.

A learning culture for all

- Schools evaluate teaching and learning through the lens of pupils most vulnerable to underachievement, understanding that by improving the provision for these pupils, teaching and learning will be better for all.
- The continuing professional development (CPD) offer is focused on improving outcomes, exploring challenges to learning faced by pupils, and developing shared approaches to address these. Teachers learn from one another.
- CPD for staff utilises approaches such as modelling, revisiting prior learning, spaced practice, feedback and action planning so that the learning of adults is implemented into their day-to-day practice.
- A wide variety of research and information is used to inform thinking, with leaders aware of how research can be used to justify existing activities or biases.
- Everyone in the school community takes responsibility for their own learning and invests in the learning of others, believing that attainment is never fixed. This is reflected in vocabulary used by both pupils and staff.

Building block: Professional learning for adults within the school is appropriately targeted to pupil need, promoting high-quality learning for all which is at the heart of the school's strategy.

Building block: The school recognises the part it can play in system-wide improvement and participates in opportunities to share and disseminate good practice beyond its own boundaries.

“Collective teacher efficacy (CTE) is the collective belief of the staff or the school/faculty in their ability to positively affect students. CTE has been found to be strongly, positively correlated with student achievement. A school staff that believes it can collectively accomplish great things is vital for the health of a school and if they believe they can make a positive difference then they very likely will.”

Hattie, Visible Learning

“The evidence tells us that high quality teaching is the most important factor when it comes to improving attainment outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Schools should focus on developing teaching practice over a sustained period to drive meaningful change in their setting.”

[EEF, Moving forwards, making a difference: A planning guide for schools 2022-23 \(2022\)](#)

“The more mechanisms professional development includes and effectively implements, the larger its likely impact on pupil attainment. But what exactly do they entail, and how may they be ordered?”

- A. Build Knowledge
- B. Motivate Teachers
- C. Develop Teaching Techniques
- D. Embed Practice

[EEF, Effective Professional Development Guidance Report](#)

Robust implementation, monitoring and evaluation

- Leaders and governors have a clear rationale for their spending of the pupil premium funding and its intended impact.
- Time is invested in the exploration phase, ensuring effective diagnostic assessment of the challenges faced by pupils and how these challenges present themselves in school.
- Challenges are prioritised based on need and where the school can have most impact.
- Early intervention sits at heart of the school's strategy.
- Schools focus on doing fewer things, more effectively, over time.
- Success criteria are clear from the outset and understood by all so that leaders and governors can be honest and robust in their evaluation of impact.
- Success criteria focus on pupils' learning, rather than activity. Activity is not mistaken for impact on pupils.
- There is an emphasis on the ongoing process of implementation and evaluation.
- Schools understand that quality of implementation is as important as the approaches chosen and invest time in the implementation process. This includes a focus on sustaining the quality of strategies already embedded, into practice.
- Approaches are given time to embed but schools are quick to respond if it is clear that strategies are not having impact or need to be changed.
- Actions are monitored and evaluated regularly against agreed success criteria. Monitoring and evaluation are ongoing processes, not an events.
- Evaluations of impact are validated by those who have not been involved/invested in delivery so that the view of impact is not distorted.

“ Schools should probably make fewer, but more strategic, choices and pursue these diligently.”

[EEF, Putting Evidence To Work: A School's Guide To Implementation \(2021\)](#)

“ Using five critical levels of evaluation, you can improve your school's professional development program. But be sure to start with the desired result-improved student outcomes.”

[Guskey, Does it make a difference? Evaluating Professional Development \(2002\)](#)

Building block: All staff understand the school's strategy for tackling educational disadvantage and their role within it; all are accountable for the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.

Building block: Leaders and class teachers target resource at pupils at risk of under-achievement; success is measured through the quality and extent of learning, rather than the amount of resource made available or the number of interventions provided.

Building block: Robust quality assurance processes are in place, internally and externally, including a clear and dedicated focus on disadvantaged pupils, their provision and outcomes as well as the culture of inclusion more broadly.

Potential Barriers

If...	then...
the focus on disadvantage is driven by external obligations rather than a moral purpose...	surface level interventions are chosen to demonstrate that the school is meeting its obligations, and these do not necessarily impact on pupils' learning. Systemic cultural changes do not take place.
staff are not open an honest about strengths and needs...	actions are unlikely to meet need.
teachers are judged and categorised within the school...	this reinforces the view that ability is fixed.
teachers feel scared to take risks...	pupils feel the same, so a culture of learning for all is not established.
pupils are passive in learning...	relationships are not secured, a sense of belonging and learning behaviours are not developed, and it is more difficult to assess and respond to pupils' needs.
staff do not expect high attainment from pupils experiencing disadvantage...	they may limit access to the full curriculum and cap pupils' opportunities to attain well.
staff have little opportunity/time to learn about the challenges that their pupils face and what makes the biggest difference to pupils...	staff may not know how to adapt to meet the pupils' needs and ensure that they learn well.
CPD is not planned for learning over time and to ensure the application of learning into daily practice...	little impact is seen.
self-evaluation focuses on the hard work and activity of staff...	evaluation of the impact of strategies on pupils lacks accuracy, leading to ineffective action.
the views heard are those of non-disadvantaged pupils and families...	these views are seen to represent everyone.
insufficient importance is given to identifying priorities and exploring a range of possible approaches and actions prior to strategic decision making...	poorly targeted decisions may be made, and resources wasted.

If...	then...
approaches are adopted without considering the context of the school, the specific cohort, or the readiness of the school to deliver the strategies...	pupils' needs may not be met.
work to improve outcomes focuses on monitoring of data rather than effective pedagogy...	staff may feel that they are held to account without being supported, and a perception may develop that this cohort of pupils is a problem to be fixed.
the school's pupil premium strategy remains on the website but is not effectively shared and developed with staff and key stakeholders...	the strategy is not lived and remains a paperwork exercise that does not impact on pupils.
the ambitions of the pupil premium strategy are not realised in the classroom on a day-to-day basis...	impact happens in pockets, but the full potential of the strategy is not realised.
pupils' physiological needs and needs for safety, belonging and esteem are not met...	pupils may struggle to learn.