



## Tackling the impact of poverty and disadvantage

In 2021-22, external research and our inspection and engagement work showed that children and young people from deprived backgrounds were disproportionately affected by the pandemic. In many cases, these learners fell behind more than their more privileged counterparts and their attendance, which was already poorer, became worse. Research also shows that child poverty in Wales is worse than in all the other UK nations, with an average of 34% of children in Wales living in poverty ([Child Poverty Statistics - End Child Poverty](#)).

Providers that are particularly effective at tackling the impact of poverty and disadvantage on their learners focus strongly on high standards and equity, as well as on mitigating the material impact of poverty.

### Features of the work of these providers

- Leaders demonstrate a wholehearted commitment to inclusion and high standards, and convey a clear vision that is shared by all involved with the provider and permeates all aspects of its work.
- There is a relentless focus on high quality teaching and learning for all.
- There is a strong moral commitment and culture of high aspirations for all learners, not only broadening horizons through experiences such as trips, talks about universities, competitions and so on but through everyday experiences, such as the level of challenge in lessons, expectations of behaviour and engagement, and the quality of language expected in day-to-day interactions.
- The providers offer comprehensive well-being provision that is tailored to the needs of individual learners and helps to remove barriers to learning.
- There is effective multi-agency working between the provider and a range of external services within the local authority, charities and beyond. This means that all agencies have a shared understanding and collective responsibility to meet the needs of individuals, families and the community, and are pulling in the same direction to offer co-ordinated support.
- The curriculum is flexible and genuinely meets the needs of all learners, while also making all learners feel part of the provider's community.
- The provider is part of the local community and the local community is integral to the provider. The providers knows, understands and supports individual learners, their families and the community very well.
- Providers look outwards, to other providers and to research to find solutions and improve their provision, but always ensure that whatever they adopt is suitable for their context, staff, learners and families.
- The development of early language skills to prepare young children living in poverty to make a successful transition to school is a key element of provision in non-maintained settings. Where this is most successful, settings work effectively with a range of partners including health, local authority officers and primary schools to identify children's needs, plan interventions and ensure consistent approaches to children's language development.
- All learners are supported to develop the basic skills that they need, with a particular focus on literacy skills (especially reading and speaking), and basic numeracy skills.
- Providers enable all learners to see a relevant and feasible future pathway for themselves throughout their educational journey.
- Leaders consistently evaluate the impact of their work on the lives and life chances of the children and young people in their care. All partners are involved in regular opportunities to evaluate the approaches to supporting learners and their families.