

# Closing the Gap From the Inside-Out: The *Leader in Me* Approach

With an increase in the number of pupils coming from low income households in the UK, closing the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children in education is essential.

Contributors to the Disadvantage Gap in Education include:

## Advantaged Pupils

- self-advocate
- believe they “belong” at school
- have positive school culture
- graduate from high school

are more likely to

## Disadvantaged Pupils

- get excluded
- are chronically absent
- have emotional issues
- move schools multiple times

## Failed Attempts at Change

Government initiatives aimed at closing the disadvantage gap in education have not met their promise because they failed to understand and target its root. As a result, the inequality in education for low- vs. high-income pupils continue to perpetuate cyclical poverty. **What can be done?**

**Social-emotional learning (SEL)** skills like perseverance, self-control, and optimism are “critical tools for **improving outcomes** for low-income students.”

- *How Children Succeed*, Paul Tough

We must equip our teachers with more than academic toolkits. We must build their social and emotional capacity so they can model and effectively develop the SEL of their pupils. **But how?**

*Leader in Me's* SEL approach targets a persistent driver of the disadvantage gap: the limiting paradigms of pupils from low-income families and their teachers.

Limiting Paradigms:	Leader in Me Paradigms:
Control pupil behaviours with punishments and rewards.	Empower long-term pupil success by tapping into pupils' internal motivation and unique talents.
Reinforce limiting paradigms about 'low-income' pupils' abilities and potential.	Foster an optimism for personal and academic growth through goal achievement and SEL skill development.
Teach SEL in disjointed lessons by teachers who have been given little or no training.	Invest in building the SEL capacity of all teachers and staff so they can model and empower pupil SEL development in a unified and supportive school culture.
Focus SEL approach within the school.	Provide SEL development to families and the community to reinforce pupil development and maximize opportunities for application of SEL skills.

## How *Leader in Me* Addresses the Disadvantage Gap in Education

