



Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

December 2024

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school at KS3+4	1232
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	13%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-27
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	August 2025, August 2026, August 2027
Statement authorised by	James Shapland, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Hash Khalil, Assistant Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Peter Hepburn

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£156,759
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£139
Total budget for this academic year	£156,898
<i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

What are your ultimate objectives for your disadvantaged pupils?

Our aim for all students is to provide the best opportunities and support so that they are able to flourish and succeed. Our school was founded to care for the most vulnerable children in society and we pride ourselves on our determination to ensure this remains a high priority. It is our ambition to provide care and support for all of our disadvantaged students in receipt of PP funding as well as those who are vulnerable in other ways such as those who are CIN (child in need).

How does your current pupil premium strategy plan work towards achieving those objectives?

A key part of the action plan is to address the fact that disadvantaged students do not always have the same opportunities as their peers. As well as high quality teaching for all students, we will target more focused support to address individual learning challenges. Since the pandemic, schools have also witnessed a deterioration in engagement, self regulation and adherence to rules and boundaries and attendance for a number of students. All of these must be addressed if we want these students to succeed.

What are the key principles of your strategy plan?

As a school that has invested in the Hertfordshire Steps programme, we believe that a key part of securing improvements is building and developing positive relationships between school staff, students, their families and their peers. Feedback from these stakeholders has indicated to us how valuable this is and we believe that every student needs to feel a sense of 'belonging' in order to flourish within the parameters and rules of the school community. We know students will experience challenges that are unique to their own circumstances so we are keen to foster a supportive, and where necessary adapted, Teaching and Learning approaches to supporting their progress. In addition, giving students the space to articulate their ideas and feelings, aspirations and frustrations, as well as opportunities to develop their character, will help them develop the greater self-regulation and agency required to take ownership of their learning and progress. These principles underpin much of our plan and the associated activities.

Challenges

This details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged pupils.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Lower attainment and progress for disadvantaged students exacerbated by knowledge gaps and/or lower literacy (including oracy)/numeracy on entry and in some cases SEND
2	Lower attendance and persistent/severe absence for some students resulting in lack of learning and not making the most of opportunities on offer
3	Need for further educational conversations regarding progress, self regulation and guidance on achieving highly aspirational outcomes
4	Students feeling excluded from the school community as a consequence of their disadvantages
5	Students feeling that they are not able to make positive effective changes in their lives
6	Need for effective strategies, boundaries and routines to support positive attitudes to learning and emotional regulation
7	School not imparting effectively enough the sufficient skills and knowledge to parents to act effectively as co-educators

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Our ambition is that the progress of disadvantaged students will improve and is closer to their peers in all performance measures including attainment, progress, attendance and attitude to learning and behaviour. Incremental progress on these measures will be benchmarked following the reintroduction of national performance data tables and other data sets.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improve rates of progress (including literacy/oracy/numeracy skills) across all year groups for students eligible for PP including those with SEND	Attainment and progress of students eligible for PP is in line with those who are not (internal and external assessments and literacy programmes). Progress of PP students in any group in line with other PP students
Students improve their attendance including a reduction of PA and SA	The school provides appropriate support for specific individual challenges, for students to improve attendance so that it improves and is closer to their peers
Students develop and can articulate high	Reward and consequence points for PP

aspirations for themselves in terms of their learning, behaviour and their education and career 'next steps' and know how to achieve them	students improves and is closer to their peers Student and staff voice indicate development of their ability to articulate these aspirations Destinations data indicates aspirational choices appropriate to the individual and successful next steps
Students feel a greater sense of belonging , esteem and status	Increased attendance, SDQ scores, extracurricular and leadership participation Increased uptake of meal and trip offers
Students develop a greater sense of agency and ownership to become more independent learners	Targeted students take part in leadership opportunities Improved attitude to home-learning scores and VESPA scores
Students develop more positive and well-regulated attitudes to learning	Reward and consequence points for PP students in line with peers Improved attitude to learning scores Increased SDQ scores Feedback from student focus groups
Parents are better enabled by the school to support the learning of their children	Feedback from parents indicates increased capacity to support their child's progress Reduction in F1 points for PP students High (90%+/in line with peers) attendance at events in school

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (e.g. CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £80496

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff development to enhance T+L approaches including supporting PP students with SEND, digital pedagogy including AI, Independent learning, revision techniques and Literacy, Numeracy and Oracy across the curriculum PP students prioritised in Quality First Teaching. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of INSET and CPD to keep this a high priority 	<p>In line with EEF research, staff CPD audit and school SEF, key areas of T,L&A are targeted in the CPD programme for the year.</p> <p>Monitoring the impact of the T,L&A training through QA cycle raises the profile of quality first teaching of PP students.</p>	<p>1, 3, 5</p> <p>1</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improving the use of A2L maps by teachers to improve the planning and delivery of teaching for students ○ Use of intersectionality charts in departments to plan T+L in response to multiple barriers faced by individuals ● The T,L & Assessment of PP students is a focus on the QA cycle that Middle Leaders and SLT complete ● Student Voice - focus groups with PP students to identify which interventions have been most impactful 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bedrock for all students in Year 7 and 8 ● Form reading in Year 7 and 8 to improve reading and fluency 	<p>PP students have on average a lower reading age than non PP students when they start in Year 7. Effective use of reading comprehension strategies give a potential gain of +6 months. We have used these interventions previously and know they are successful for individual PP students</p>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to develop and embed the school Character programme 	<p>Research suggests that there are enabling character traits which can improve educational attainment, engagement with school and attendance</p>	3, 5, 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prioritise PP students as we continue to develop the extra and co-curricular offer in school to enable students to develop leadership opportunities and so enhance the social and academic skills that will benefit them in the future. 	<p>Taking leadership roles develops essential communication, problem-solving, decision-making and organisational skills as well as increasing confidence and self-esteem, empathy and performance in the classroom. Current programmes in school have also demonstrated these outcomes.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce the Paul Dix relational approach to complement the whole school Steps approach to prosocial behaviour management 	<p>Self-regulation (feelings and behaviours) strategies have a potential gain of +7 months</p>	4, 5, 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce the VESPA mindset programme into KS4 	<p>The model has been successfully implemented at KS5 at Ashlyns. Research demonstrates that these interventions have a positive influence on student mindset.</p>	1, 5

Targeted academic support (e.g. tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £36296

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted support programme for year 11 students including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 11 RAP (Raising Achievement Plan) 1 to 1 Tutoring of year 11 students by KS5 students Revision strategies PP/SEND parental event Services for Young People careers support 	<p>EEF: Effective use of tuition strategies give a potential gain of +5 months. Pilot from last year showed positive outcomes for most students</p>	1, 3, 4, 5, 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutor led pastoral support including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff CPD on 'Belonging' and the role of the tutor embedding a culture of continuous contact home to build positive relationships with families termly data tracking and interventions supporting the whole school behaviour strategy including threads and punctuality drive 	<p>EEF: Effective use of parental engagement strategies give a potential gain of +4 months. HfL CPD</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group literacy intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on Lexia in Year 7 with a RA of under 10 and shared reading in Year 8 with a RA of under 11 on Reading Plus in Year 9 on Reading Plus 	<p>As per challenge 1 above for literacy interventions. More intensive support is needed for those students with significantly lower literacy skills</p>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to improve persistent and severe absenteeism including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> early identification and intervention by the pastoral team EBSA coffee morning EWO support WBA attendance services 	EBSA toolkit	2, 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer tutoring programme using prefects (year 10 with year 8) and Student wellbeing ambassadors (year 13 with year 10) 	Peer tutoring strategies have a potential gain of +5 months	3, 4, 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving extracurricular participation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tutor support funding support regular check-ins and ensuring provision for CLA/PLA students SOHK programme to be continued and enhanced through sports leader programme with partner primary schools 	<p>Research indicates many benefits including academic performance, social skills, positive mental health and self esteem. Student and staff voice feedback clearly indicate that these activities foster a great sense of belonging within the school community.</p>	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for CLA/PLA students including: 	Virtual School	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PLA (previously looked after) parent support group including for prospective (year 5+6) parents ○ ePEP actions including tutoring/ support in identified areas ○ bespoke pastoral support 	<p>CLA SEF Trauma and Attachment toolkit</p>	
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Wider strategies (e.g. related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £40106

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support from the PP administrator for all PP families including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ transition support ○ settling in meetings ○ securing attendance at parental events 	<p>HfL CPD including Great Expectations programme EEF: Effective use of parental engagement strategies give a potential gain of +4 months. Our experiences have also shown these strategies promote positive outcomes</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementing actions from the EEE (Eliminating Economic Exclusion) HfL visit including in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ meal provision ○ extracurricular uptake ○ communication with parents ○ families above the FSM threshold ○ uniform/equipment provision ○ hardship support e.g. Toy Hub 	HfL programme	2, 4, 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summer club 	Summer schools offer a potential gain of +3 months.	2, 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast club 	Breakfast clubs have been shown to reduce hunger, improve focus in class and punctuality to school (DfE)	3, 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After school study support 	Increased attendance at after school study support gives an opportunity for students to improve their independent learning routines in a structured supportive environment	1, 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding support for resources and experiences that support learning as required, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ chromebooks ○ trips ○ study resources ○ revision resources ○ music lessons ○ uniform 	Ensuring that students are fully equipped and able to participate fully in any opportunities given them is essential to support their learning and sense of belonging (HfL inclusive practice webinars)	1, 2, 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wellbeing support including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use of therapeutic interventions for students identified from the SDQ questionnaire 	PP student referrals to therapeutic support are above school average.	2, 3, 6, 7

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Signposting parents to Dr Kathy Weston resources on Tooled Up Education platform 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Voice activities undertaken with students from all Key Stages to understand what students feel support them most as well as what they feel we can do to improved further 	Our experiences have also shown these activities provide valuable and insightful feedback as well as providing those individuals with greater agency	3, 5

Total budgeted cost: £156898

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

In order to analyse progress made on closing the gap between PP and non PP students for a number of metrics we have used the 2020-21 academic year as a benchmark (with 2019 GCSE outcomes for attainment and progress benchmarks). The aim to close identified gaps by one third over each of the academic years for the duration of the 2021-24 plan is proving to be challenging. Analysis of Year 11 attainment data for 2024 compared to the previous year, as well as 2019 results (which were the benchmark for the 3 year action plan) shows:

- An increase in A8 of PP students compared to 2023 from 34.7 to 38.4 (which was also an increase of 1.3 compared to 2019 pre-pandemic results)
- A decrease in the A8 gap between PP and non PP students by 2.2 points compared to 2023 (although a slight increase of 0.4 compared to 2019)
- A decrease in the % of PP students achieving 9-4 in both English and Maths (7.1%) when compared to 2023 results (although an increase of 3.0% compared to 2019)
- An increase in the % of PP students achieving 9-5 in both English and Maths (1.0%) when compared to 2023 results (also an increase of 8.4% compared to 2019)
- An increase in P8 of PP students compared to 2023 from -0.40 to -0.27 (which was also an increase of 0.02 compared to 2019). This P8 score was the highest for all local (Dacorum) secondary schools
- A decrease in the P8 gap between PP and non PP students by 0.10 points compared to 2023 (also a slight decrease of 0.03 compared to 2019)

Whilst these results indicate an overall improvement in the attainment outcomes of PP students, and some improvement in reducing the progress gaps, it is clear that improving the academic outcomes will continue to be an ongoing endeavour.

Significant efforts were made throughout the year by teachers, pastoral and support staff to support these individuals. We used in-school tutoring programmes for students across a variety of subjects, including Maths, English, Science, Languages and Humanities. This included successful use of KS5 students as peer tutors for almost every Year 11 PP student in an identified subject (of which 78% improved on the grade in their mock exam and 60% achieved at or above their target grade in that

subject). Many PP students were successfully targeted by the Year 11 'Raising Achievement Programme' which provided personalised intervention, including direct parental involvement.

As part of the continued focus on developing a personalised approach to Teaching & Learning, we delivered, for example, a staff Inset session on 'intersectionality', which focused on students who face multiple barriers (PP, SEND, low literacy). This involved every teacher producing personalised charts to identify every such student they teach in each year group, then planning strategies to use to both build positive relationships as well as support their learning in upcoming lessons. All students complete termly subject data reflection tasks, with tutors giving targeted support to PP students. We continued to use and update the Learning Support Strategies for PP students as these documents allow strategies to be shared between staff and have been updated to include strategies from Steps 'Roots and Fruits' meetings.

We have reduced the gap for students receiving C4 isolations and C5 suspensions compared to the previous year; however, this is not in line with the three year ambition to close the gap completely. Displaying consistently positive learning behaviour remains a challenge for some of our students, as indicated by a rise in Consequence points received by PP students and is a high priority going forwards, as an integral part of the School Improvement Plan. As part of our response to this, we are entering our third year of collaboration with the 'School of Hard Knocks' rugby intervention programme, which includes a character based curriculum as well as 1 to 1 mentoring. For students we enrolled this year we have witnessed an improvement in the behaviour and attitudes for many when comparing the Spring term to last Autumn. This has included 38% of students on the programme improving their attendance, 75% reducing their overall behaviour points (with 25% reducing the number of C4s and 33% reducing C5s) and 100% increasing the number of merits received.

Following the success of the pilot mixed year group mentoring programme between Year 8+10 we have continued to use this as a vehicle to support students to form productive relationships with positive older role models where students are supported in being able to discuss their attitude to learning and set targets for improvement. The majority of students fed back how much they valued the experience. Teaching positive learning behaviour, an area of need highlighted in the statement of intent, is also a key part of the whole school Character Education programme.

Data sets from 2023-24 targeted Lexia and Reading plus literacy interventions show we have now closed the gap in terms of average months of progress.

Our PP students are given priority consideration for targeted careers events. All year 11 PP students attended an off-site careers fair and took part in Morrisby testing and follow up interviews to help guide their decisions for post 16.

Our PP support worker continues to contact parents on a regular basis to respond to any concerns and discuss support required, which helps to secure higher levels of engagement with school events such as PTCs. This is an area where we saw a significant improvement in the gap for attendance by parents of PP students for all year groups (reducing from 36.1% gap to 8.6%). We are continuing to inform our action plan strategy by incorporating student voice activities, including focus groups, in each of KS3, 4 and 5. For example, this highlighted the need for greater support on how to revise so we subsequently held a year 11 parental revision event to provide parents with strategies to support their child as well as resources for students to use in the run up to the Trial Exams. All KS4 students are provided revision guides for their GCSE subjects.

In recent years we have experienced (and supported) a significant increase in requests for financial assistance towards school costs such as food, uniform, equipment and extra-curricular activities. We recently undertook the HfL EEE (Eliminating Economic Exclusion) audit of our provision. This report indicated that the school is taking positive steps to address the issues: *Leaders at Ashlyns School are committed to striving to ‘close the gap’ and to providing the highest quality of educational provision for students eligible for PP.... The discussions with staff during the visit demonstrated the passion they feel for this agenda and their determination to do all they can to support economically disadvantaged learners. There is a lot of good practice to celebrate at the school.* Further areas to improve were also identified and have been incorporated into the new action plan.

The extremely successful transition Summer School took place over 5 days and was attended by many new Year 7 PP students. It included a wide ranging programme of events and experiences including daily literacy and numeracy, science, sports, arts, wellbeing and enrichment activities. Both parent and student feedback evidenced how much the students had enjoyed and benefited from the experiences which clearly helped develop their sense of belonging (the most frequently stated student benefit being ‘Making new friends in Year 7’). We continue to track participation in, and promote further participation with, extra-curricular experiences, including an engaging Sports Day at a local school, providing music tuition for students showing a particular interest as well as setting up bespoke clubs based on student feedback.

We have taken the most successful aspects of the previous year to build upon in 2023-24, whilst also incorporating new evidence of emerging challenges to develop our strategy. This process will also be undertaken to inform the new three year action plan for 2024-27.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Rugby intervention programme	School Of Hard Knocks
Tooled Up Education - Family support	Dr Kathy Weston