PUPIL PREMIUM STRATEGY STATEMENT

This policy document and the content contained therein remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school. No amendments can be made without their express instructions and they remain the final arbiters in any matters relating to it.

Review Date: Autumn Term 2025

Next Review Date: Autumn Term 2026

Reviewed By: Mr N Dunn

APPROVED BY THE HEADTEACHER – Autumn Term 2025

Pupil premium strategy statement

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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Balshaw's Church of England High School
Number of pupils in school	924
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	15.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3 year plans are recommended)**	2024/25-2026/27
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026
Statement authorised by	S. Haycocks
Pupil premium lead	N.Dunn
Governor / Trustee lead	S. Edwards

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£154,420
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£154,420

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Balshaw's Church of England High School works to achieve the best possible outcomes for all of its students. Reversing the impact that socioeconomic disadvantage has on the educational outcomes of students over the long term is a key priority for the school, and is designated as a whole school priority within our School Development Plan.

We are ambitious in our aspirations for disadvantaged students and set challenging goals for our school to achieve in this regard. We expect our disadvantaged students to be ambitious for their own outcomes. We strive to achieve this by focussing our efforts on what evidence tells us is most likely to be effective for pupils from lower socio-economic backgrounds and implementing strategies that have a strong evidence base of success (EEF Toolkit, for example). However, we also recognise that it is important that the approaches we take are appropriate and adapted for the specific context of our school setting and the needs of our learners. All the strategies we implement are also aligned carefully with the School Development Plan in order to ensure the greatest possibility of success.

As a School we believe that high quality teaching and learning is the best lever for addressing disadvantage and its impact upon learning outcomes. Therefore, the focus on enhancing the learning of disadvantaged students comes from: Quality First Teaching, Challenge for All, acknowledging that the place for learning to close the gap is in the classroom rather than bolt-on strategies. Teachers understand what high quality teaching looks like and promote self regulated and self driven learning. Recognising how disadvantage impacts on learning is essential to establish an approach that truly benefits our pupils and diagnostic assessment is a fundamental part of addressing gaps in learning. Decisions on intervention are based upon data and a response to the evidence using frequent tracking, for example gauging the performance of disadvantaged pupils against national benchmarks and age related expectations, alongside internal measures such as attendance figures, behaviour monitoring and pupil voice.

At Balshaw's we are committed to promoting an ethos of high expectations for all students who are treated as individuals without an expectation that one group of students has less potential to succeed. We recognise that disadvantage is not always recognised by the label Pupil Premium, and we take a nuanced approach to identifying those students who are experiencing significant disadvantage. In this sense we are not label led in our use of the Pupil Premium. Rather the specific needs of pupils are central to our approach, and we are committed to an early intervention approach.

Relentlessly supporting pupils to develop their literacy is a critical aspect of our drive to improve educational outcomes, regardless of current attainment, as it underpins self

confidence, self esteem, builds background knowledge, encourages participation in learning, social interaction and develops oracy.

Ongoing impact evaluation strategies enable us to understand whether the plans that we are putting in place are having the impact that we intend, or whether we need to adapt those plans in order to achieve greater success.

Although the Pupil Premium Co-ordinator may have oversight of this cohort of students, the responsibility for closing the attainment gap is devolved to all teaching and support staff. Staff are provided with the support they need so that they can take ownership of the components of the Strategy and deliver them successfully. This includes access to training and follow on support.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families suggest that the education of many of our disadvantaged pupils has been disproportionately impacted by partial school closures during their primary education. These findings are backed up by several national studies. This challenge underpins many of the other challenges identified.
2	**The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils is in many aspects lower than that of their peers**. On average, KS2 SAT Scale Scores for disadvantaged students for Year 7 2025 intake are 3.62 lower in Grammar, Punctuation, Vocabulary and Spelling than non-disadvantaged students, 3.46 lower in Reading and 2.4 lower in Maths. Disadvantaged students typically have lower CAT4 mean scores. This lower attainment pervades throughout their time at Balshaw's. The percentage of disadvantaged students achieving grade 4 in English and Maths GCSEs at the end of Year 11 over the past 5 years is also lower than non-disadvantaged students.

Percentage of Students achieving Grade 4 or above in English & Maths			
	Pupil Premium	Non Pupil Premium	Difference
August 2019 Results	52.2	81.9	-29.7
August 2022 Results	68	78	-10
August 2023 Results	72	81	-9

August 2024 Results	60	83.7	-23.7%
August 2025 results	48.1	83.3	-35.2%

Average Total Progress 8			
	Pupil Premium	Non Pupil Premium	Difference
August 2019 Results	-0.41	0.09	-0.50
August 2022 Results	-0.31	-0.08	-0.23
August 2023 Results	-0.3	0.09	-0.39
August 2024 Results	-0.29	0.28	-0.57
August 2025 Results	-.2	0.36	-0.56

3	**Disadvantaged students arrive at Balshaw's with typically lower ability**. Assessments of student cognitive ability on entry indicate that disadvantaged students arrive at Balshaw's at a lower point than their non-disadvantaged counterparts. The average mean Mean CAT4 test score on entry for a disadvantaged student over 3 years 2022-2025 was 93.7, whereas for non-disadvantaged students it was 100.2. In 2025 the average mean CAT4 test score on entry for Year 7 disadvantaged students was 92, whereas for non-disadvantaged students it was 98.
4	Assessments on entry to year 7 show that **disadvantaged students' quantitative reasoning and ability to think with numbers is typically lower than their non-disadvantaged counterparts**. CAT 4 assessments show that the quantitative reasoning score of disadvantaged students over 3 years 2022-2025 was on average 94, whereas for non-disadvantaged it was 100. In 2025 Year 7 quantitative reasoning score for disadvantaged students was 93, whereas for non-disadvantaged students it was 97.
5	Assessments, observations and discussions with KS3 pupils indicate that **disadvantaged pupils generally have lower levels of reading comprehension** than their peers. This impacts their progress in all subjects. For Year 7 new intake 2025 disadvantaged students had a Standard Age Reading Score of 102 whereas non-disadvantaged students had a score of 106. The expected score is 100. This indicates a higher average reading age among our disadvantaged pupils than previous years but still demonstrates a gap between them and their non-disadvantaged peers. This average score comparison is also limited due to the disparity found within the disadvantaged readers group (a range from 80-119).
6	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified **increasing levels of social and emotional issues** for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression and low self esteem. This can manifest itself as challenging behaviours or poor behaviour for learning which has a negative impact on the learning of others.
7	Our attendance data for the academic year 2024-25 indicates that absence among disadvantaged students (FSM6) was 9.5% compared to 5.0% for non-disadvantaged students. The attendance of disadvantaged students was 4.3% higher than the national average for disadvantaged students. The best place to address the impact of socio-economic disadvantage on education is in the classroom therefore higher level of absence from school by pupils in this group

	presents a major obstacle to rectifying this inequality. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively
8	Our observations and discussions with students and families have shown that **disadvantaged students typically have less access to learning resources at home**, including quality ICT learning tools such as laptops.
9	Our observations suggest many **lower attaining pupils, including some who are disadvantaged, lack the ability to apply metacognition/self regulation strategies** in their learning across the curriculum.

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.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved progress among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of KS4, with a focus on EBacc subjects.	We will close the APS gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners. The same proportion of disadvantaged learners will be entered for the EBacc as their non-disadvantaged peers. *Over the three years of this strategy, data tracking will indicate the APS score difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners is reducing. Data will also indicate a reducing discrepancy in EBacc uptake.*
Improved reading ages among disadvantaged students across KS3.	Disadvantaged pupils will show reading competency equitable to their non-disadvantaged peers. *Over the three years of this strategy, those identified for reading interventions will make between 8 months and 2 years of progress.*
Improved numeracy across disadvantaged students throughout the school.	Disadvantaged pupils will show numeracy competency equitable to their non-disadvantaged peers. *Over the three years of this strategy, key staff will report, and data will demonstrate a closing of the gap in the numeracy skills of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners.*

To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	The School will robustly address the wellbeing needs of disadvantaged pupils, leading to improved outcomes. *Over the three years of this strategy, quantitative data from pastoral audits will demonstrate robust support for disadvantaged pupils' wellbeing. Qualitative and quantitative data will indicate that the support received is effective and impactful on progress.*
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged students.	The overall absence rate for disadvantage pupils being no more than 5%, and the removal of the attendance gap between disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers. *Over the three years of this strategy statement, we will see an annual reduction in the difference between attendance of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils will continue to be above national average.*
Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects.	Disadvantaged pupils are as capable of metacognition and self-regulation as non-disadvantaged learners. Evident in there being no 'Attitude to Learning' or 'Attitude to Home Learning' gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners. *Over the three years of this strategy, data tracking will demonstrate a reduction in the difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners' 'Attitude to Learning' or 'Attitude to Home Learning'.*

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £109,662

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of CAT 4, NGRT, NGST, Progress Tests in English, Maths and Science standard diagnostic assessments. Training will be provided to staff to ensure assessments are interpreted correctly.	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to ensure that they receive the correct support and timely intervention where required. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Diagnostic_Assessment_Tool.pdf	1,2,3,4,5
Purchase of laptops for disadvantaged students as part of the laptop for all schemes. Training will be provided to staff on the most effective pedagogy in using digital technology to boost attainment in the classroom.	During the pandemic it has become clear that disadvantaged students typically have less access to digital learning resources in the home. As a School we have embraced the skills developed through partial school closures and look to maintain the strengths of blended learning moving forward. Providing laptops for all students, including access for disadvantaged students, will enable greater flexibility in explanation, feedback, assessment and home learning. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/digitalTech/EEF_Digital_Technology_Guidance_Report.pdf	8,9
Purchase of educational software packages for all students to provide a platform for home learning and improving attainment in vocabulary, numeracy and science.	Educational software packages such as Bedrock vocabulary provide opportunity for pupils to increase the quality and quantity of their practice both inside and outside the classroom. It can also be an effective tool for self-quizzing and retrieval practice. Technology can also be engaging and motivating for pupils who have grown up as digital natives. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/digitalTech/EEF_Digital_Technology_Guidance_Report.pdf	8,9
Developing metacognition and	Metacognition and self-regulation can have a +7 month impact upon learning. There is some evidence to suggest	8,9

self regulation skills in all pupils by providing CPD and support to staff.	that disadvantaged pupils are less likely to use metacognitive and self-regulatory strategies without being explicitly taught these strategies. Explicit teaching of metacognitive and self-regulatory strategies could therefore encourage such pupils to practise and use these skills more frequently in the future. With explicit teaching and feedback, pupils are more likely to use these strategies independently and habitually, enabling them to manage their own learning and overcome challenges themselves in the future. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation?utm_source=/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_search&search_term=metacognition https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED612286.pdf	
Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF guidance report "Improving literacy in Secondary Schools". We will support the whole school literacy drive through the "Literacy Coordinator" role who will lead staff CPD and initiatives designed to raise the levels of literacy across the School, not just within the English department.	Young people who leave school without good literacy skills are held back at every stage of life. Literacy is key to academic success across the curriculum. Last year, nationally over 120,000 disadvantaged students made the transition from primary to secondary school below the expected standard for reading. The educational prospects for this group are grave. Disciplinary literacy is key to ensuring students are able to understand complex concepts in every subject. Reading comprehension, vocabulary, oracy and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English Why Closing the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report Improving literacy in Secondary Schools: Guidance Report	5
Sustaining the impact of Teaching Assistant support.	There is good emerging evidence that TAs can provide noticeable improvements to pupil attainment. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/teaching-assistants The effective use of Teaching Assistants working well alongside teachers provides excellent supplementary learning support. Pupil Premium students are more likely to be SEND or low attaining and Teaching Assistants can be the key means by which inclusion is facilitated for these students.	1,2,3,4,5,6,9

Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £14,744

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Academic Support Programme in school to mentor students, including disadvantaged, identified as underachieving or having biggest gaps in knowledge.	The impact of mentoring varies but, on average, it is likely to have a small positive impact (+2 months) on attainment. Some evidence suggests that some pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds show low engagement with or have low expectations of schooling. Mentoring interventions may be more beneficial for these pupils, as the development of trusting relationships with an adult or older peer can provide a different source of support. EEF Toolkit Mentoring	1,2,6,7
Introduction of reading comprehension strategies, as an intervention of students displaying lower reading ages, focussing particularly on disadvantaged students, who need additional help to comprehend texts and address vocabulary gaps.	Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on pupils' ability to understand a text. This has been measured at +7 months impact in secondary schools. It complements the School's other priorities such as developing metacognition and whole school literacy. Activities implemented within the school include whole class readers, paired reading and bedrock vocabulary. EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Reading Comprehension Strategies	5,9
Introduction of numeracy strategies, as an intervention for students working at lower than expected levels. This will particularly focus on disadvantaged students.	The EEF guidance on Mathematics suggests that high-quality, structured intervention may be required for some pupils to make progress and that the selection of the intervention should be guided by effective assessment of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses. We use rigorous assessment in order to identify a cohort of students for intervention and to identify their specific weaknesses. KS2_KS3_Maths_Guidance_2017.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)	4

Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £30,014

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Support for mental health and social wellbeing. The School has the provision in the pastoral hub through the roles of; Pastoral Manager Mental Health and Wellbeing, Pastoral Manager Behaviour Standard, Family Liaison Officer and Inclusion Unit Manager.	Effective pastoral care can improve students' attendance and retention rates, foster an orderly atmosphere in which all students can access opportunities and enhance their academic achievements, promote tolerance, subdue racism and inequality and teach respect for self and others. It also ensures that all students, including those who are socio-economically disadvantaged are provided with access to the support that they need. This creates a climate in which all students, including disadvantaged, can achieve highly. BERA: Pastoral Care	1,2,6,7
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's Guidance: Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities. A School Attendance Officer and Pastoral Staff will be appointed and receive ongoing training on how to improve attendance.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools who have significantly reduced their persistent absence levels. DfE's Guidance: Improving school attendance	1,2,6,7
Enrichment fund for developing cultural capital and aspirations within disadvantaged students.	There is growing evidence that the skills, such as self control, resilience, team work and determination, developed through opportunities such as extra-curricular visits, arts participation and aspiration interventions have the potential to improve outcomes. Disadvantaged students are less likely to have the opportunity to engage in these activities in their lives away from school and are therefore less likely to experience the benefits through their participation. EEF Guidance Life Skills and Enrichment	1,2,6,7

Total budgeted cost: £ £154,420

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

- The information below is a review of the previous academic year 2024/25

The 2024/25 GCSE results show a difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners of -0.56, marking a decrease in the gap of 0.01 from the previous year and an almost doubling of the gap from 2022. Considering the lack of Progress 8 scores for those year groups affected by Covid, it will be important to establish confident monitoring using APS difference to ensure this gap decreases over the life of this strategy. It will be of particular importance to improve the percentage of pupils achieving a Grade 4 or above in English and Maths as data shows this has been changeable over the past 4 years.

Review of expenditure

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Activity	Estimated Impact	Lessons Learned
Purchase of CAT 4, NGRT & NGST standard diagnostic assessments. Training will be provided to staff to ensure assessments are interpreted correctly.	The purchase of standardised tests has allowed a more focussed approach to assessment and intervention. This has allowed us to identify students whose progress has slowed and the provision of support where it is needed most.	The School needs to continue with the forensic approach to assessment and develop the use of data yielded further to have maximum impact. The School is investing in further tests (Progress Tests in English, Maths and Science) to enhance our understanding of pupil progress against nationally standardised benchmarks.
Purchase of laptops for disadvantaged students as part of the laptop for all scheme. Training will be provided to staff on the most effective pedagogy in using digital technology to boost attainment in the classroom.	Laptops are now very much part of the pedagogy employed throughout the School and the Laptops provided for disadvantaged students enables them to fully access the curriculum.	The School is continuing to enhance teachers skills and awareness regarding of teaching using technology.
Purchase of educational software packages for all	The packages purchased by the School compliment the Laptops	Ensuring maximum usage of all packages to ensure best value

students to provide a platform for home learning and improving attainment in vocabulary, numeracy and science.	for all scheme and enable best use of these in the classroom and for home learning.	for money is essential. The School is raising awareness of revision software such as GCSE Pod through student assemblies and parental contact.
Developing metacognition and self regulation skills in all pupils by providing CPD and support to staff.	Metacognition CPD is delivered through regular spotlight briefings and teaching and learning breakfasts. The Embedding Formative Assessment CPD Programme has been running for 1 year and has demonstrated results across the school. There is evidence of these strategies being used through lesson observations, staff feedback, pupil voice and departmental reviews.	Ongoing CPD is required in this area to fully embed metacognitive practices in the classroom. This will be furthered during the second year of the Embedding Formative Assessment CPD programme. Beyond this programme, the implementation of metacognitive skills will be maintained with opportunities for new staff to engage and ownership passing to a departmental level.
Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF guidance report "Improving literacy in Secondary Schools". We will support the whole school literacy drive through the "Literacy Coordinator" role who will lead staff CPD and initiatives designed to raise the levels of literacy across the School, not just within the English department.	The profile of literacy across the School has been raised through the work of the literacy coordinator. A great range of innovations has taken place placing reading and vocabulary at the heart of the School curriculum.	Testing conditions for NGRT testing should be standardised to ensure the validity of the results.

Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Activity	Estimated Impact	Lessons Learned
Academic Support Programme in school to mentor students, including disadvantaged, identified as underachieving	The Academic Support Programme provided mentoring to a group of underachieving Year 11s in the run up to their exams. For some	The School is implementing an earlier approach to targeted support and has introduced mentors to pupils at the end of

Activity	Estimated Impact	Lessons Learned
or having biggest gaps in knowledge.	students this saw an increase in their results and allowed the review of outcomes using information in the meeting records, to help understand why certain students achieved the way that they did.	year 10 following the mock exams.
Introduction of reading comprehension strategies, as an intervention of students displaying lower reading ages, focussing particularly on disadvantaged students, who need additional help to comprehend texts and address vocabulary gaps.	Teaching Assistants have received training on the delivery of reading comprehension strategies and are providing this support to students with particularly low standards of reading comprehension.	The School will continue to look to support and enhance this provision to ensure that all students have a good standard of reading comprehension from which to work with.
Introduction of numeracy strategies, as an intervention for students working at lower than expected levels. This will particularly focus on disadvantaged students.	Unfortunately, instances of staff turnover have impacted upon the consistency of delivery.	The School will ensure that key individual(s) are able to drive forward a strategy for improved numeracy across the school.

Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Activity	Estimated Impact	Lessons Learned
Support for mental health and social wellbeing. The School has expanded the provision in the pastoral hub through the addition of a Pastoral Support Assistant and a Pastoral Support Officer.	The Pastoral Support Assistant and a Pastoral Support Officer roles have a great impact on supporting the needs and monitoring the welfare of our disadvantaged students, who often need them the most. Unfortunately, staff turnover has impacted upon the consistency of delivery but the strength of the team has still allowed the provision of exceptional support.	The School will continue to support provision in this vital area, and where staff turnover occurs we will look to recruit staff who enhance our pastoral care even further.
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's Guidance: Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities.	FFT aspire data shows that the attendance of disadvantaged students continues to be above that of those nationally (FSM6	The School will continue to support the Attendance Officer in maintaining an attendance

A School Attendance Officer and Pastoral Staff will be appointed and receive training on how to improve attendance.	+2.9% above the national figure).	percentage above that of national figures.
Enrichment fund for developing cultural capital and aspirations within disadvantaged students.	The School has supported disadvantaged students with costs to attend various educational visits and to take peripatetic music lessons. Disadvantaged students have priority access to enrichment opportunities that they are less likely to access outside of school than their more advantaged peers. Disadvantaged students continue to attend the range of extracurricular clubs the School has to offer.	The School will continue to look to widen its offer of extracurricular opportunities and encourage disadvantaged student attendance wherever possible.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
Bedrock Vocabulary	Bedrock Learning
SISRA Analytics	Juniper Education
School Synergy	School Synergy
GCSE Pod	Soundbite Learning – Access
Focus ELearning	Focus Learning Corporation
Educake	Educake