

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

This statement details our Academy's use of Pupil Premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils in the 2025/26 Academic Year.

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	Biggleswade Academy
Number of pupils in school	610 (Reception - Year 6)
Proportion (%) of Pupil Premium eligible pupils	15% (90 pupils)
Academic year/years that this current plan covers	3 years (2024/2025 to 2026/2027)
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Mark Steer (Principal)
Pupil Premium lead	Eduardo Lopes (Associate Principal)
Governor / Trustee lead	Chris Jones (Chair of Trustees)

Funding Overview

Detail	Data
Pupil Premium funding allocation this academic year	£191,078
Recovery funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil Premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£191,078

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of Intent

At Biggleswade Academy, we aim for all pupils, regardless of background or challenge, to make strong progress socially, emotionally, and academically, achieving high standards across all subjects. Our Pupil Premium strategy focuses on supporting disadvantaged pupils to reach these goals, including those who are already high attainers.

We have ambitious plans to help raise the attainment of our disadvantaged children and most importantly, we want to establish Biggleswade Academy as an **equitable** school for disadvantaged children.

What this means in practice is:

- Staff make conscious, deliberate and individual choices for disadvantaged pupils, in order that they make the same (or better) progress than their peers;
- We act early to identify when a pupil needs additional support and use meaningful strategies to help close any gaps in learning and progress;
- Disadvantaged pupils are actively challenged and encouraged to succeed across the whole of their time with us - both academically and in the wider life of the school;
- We encourage a dialogue as our school community about not just sympathy but *empathy* - a recognition that not all of us may have the same advantages as others but work together to build and establish a culture of supporting one another at all times.

Ultimately, high-quality teaching is at the heart of this approach, with staff having specific training in how to best support disadvantaged pupils and move their learning forward. This approach will also take on board common challenges and individual needs, using robust diagnostic assessments across the Academy to inform (not make assumptions) about the specific types of support that our disadvantaged pupils need.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of the Challenge
1	<p>Assessments and observations of pupils (particularly those in Reception and Key Stage One) indicate underdeveloped listening and oral language skills and fine motor skills amongst pupils in these year groups, with a greater proportion of disadvantaged children being affected than non-disadvantaged.</p> <p>73% of disadvantaged pupils in Reception during 2024/25 had a Good Level of Development (GLD) in Listening, Attention and Understanding. Equally, 73% had a GLD in Early Number understanding.</p> <p>In comparison, 81% of non-disadvantaged pupils had a GLD in Listening and 81% had a GLD in Early Number.</p>
2	<p>Assessments, observations and discussions with pupils suggest disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with Phonics than their peers (internal 2024-25 data reflects this, as well as published phonics data).</p> <p>50% of disadvantaged pupils were Working At the Expected Standard. In comparison, 84% of non-disadvantaged pupils were At the Expected Standard.</p> <p>This negatively impacts their development as readers in Key Stage One, where they complete the Phonics Screening, but equally, as pupils move into (and through) Key Stage Two.</p>
3	<p>There is a need for a greater emphasis on extra-curricular clubs being attended by disadvantaged children. Previous attendance registers for the different extra-curricular clubs have shown that less than 10% of disadvantaged children attend clubs made available to all children at the school.</p>
4	<p>When considering self-esteem, confidence and behaviour, pupil surveys have noted that disadvantaged pupils are not always aware or put themselves forward for school roles and responsibilities. These children must feel successful in their learning and aware of their value to the school. A greater emphasis on Personal Development is needed to develop children's perception of their value within the school community.</p>
5	<p>Attendance data over the 2024 - 25 academic year indicated that attendance among disadvantaged pupils was 7% lower than non-disadvantaged pupils. However, this group has shown improvement for the second consecutive year, demonstrating a positive trend in closing the attendance gap. We are committed to continuing this progress. In 2023- 24, there was an 8% gap between the two.</p>

6	Pupils may have limited opportunities to access cultural capital with their families and do not always take up opportunities promoted by the school (e.g. day trips, residential trips, rewards events).
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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 oral language skills	<p>Assessments and observations will indicate a significant improvement in oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement in lessons; - Work Sampling (looking specifically at the work disadvantaged children have produced); - Ongoing formative assessment of specific children. - Planned activities within Schemes of Work to promote oracy and collaborative learning.
Improved understanding of Early Number	<p>Teacher assessments and observations in the Early Years will indicate a significant improvement in Early Number understanding among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff feedback on the new 'Mastering Number' Scheme introduced - Engagement in lessons; - Work Sampling (looking specifically at the work disadvantaged children have produced); - Ongoing formative assessment of specific children; - Planned activities within the Maths Schemes of Work to promote Early Number; - Maths Lead involvement in the Early Number learning journey at the Academy.
Improved Reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils	KS1 Phonics outcomes in 2025/2026 to show that more than 65% (or the National Average of all pupils, whichever is higher) of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.
To achieve and sustain an <u>equitable</u> approach for all pupils at our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils, where pupils are supported to realise their potential.	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing and engagement from 2025/26, which is demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys, and teacher observations; - A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils; - For all staff at the Academy to take a conscious and deliberate approach into providing the best possible support, at the right time, for all disadvantaged pupils; - Increased engagement and attendance at Parents' Evenings

	from the parents of disadvantaged children.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils at the end of the strategy 3-year cycle.	<p>Sustained high attendance by the end of 2025/26 demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The overall attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced to equal or less than 6% by the end of the 2025/2026 academic year. - The overall attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced to equal or less than 5% by the end of the 2026/2027 academic year.

Activity This Academic Year

This details how we intend to spend our Pupil Premium (and recovery premium funding) this academic year to address the challenges previously listed.

Teaching & Learning

Budgeted cost: £80,253 (42%)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Provide targeted staff training on supporting disadvantaged pupils to develop an equitable approach, ensuring consistently high expectations for all disadvantaged learners across the Academy.	<p>There is a growing body of evidence that teachers using explicit approaches to support disadvantaged pupils have the most impact on those pupils compared to other strategies schools might employ.</p> <p>Waterford - article highlighting the important distinction between equity and not just equality in education.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
The SLT will support the improvement of disadvantaged pupils by mentoring staff and setting specific goals aimed at enhancing the progress and attainment of disadvantaged children in their classes.	<p>Ambition Institute: a summary of why coaching teachers improves Teaching & Learning.</p>	
Train staff in a variety of techniques to support learners in achieving their potential, including Character Education, Restorative Conversations, and Zones of Regulation, so that pupils improve their	There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance,	1, 4, 5, 6

self-regulation and are able to learn effectively throughout the school day.	attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers): EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
<p>To improve transitions across the Academy, the SLT Pupil Premium lead will work closely with the Progress Leaders for Reception and Year 1 to ensure a smooth and effective entry for disadvantaged pupils. This approach will be applied across all year groups, with key strategies that support specific disadvantaged pupils being recorded and reviewed regularly to maintain continuity and effectiveness.</p> <p>To do this, a Pupil Premium register will be created, shared and reviewed on a regular basis, by the Pupil Premium lead.</p>	<p>There is a long-established body of evidence that concludes that when done successfully, good transition between year groups, key stages and new settings can result in reductions in lost learning and improve social and emotional bonds.</p> <p>EEF paper on successful school transitions</p>	4, 5, 6

Targeted Academic Support

Budgeted cost: £66,877 (35%)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Staff know the Pupil Premium children in their class and specifically track their progress over the course of the year by giving them regular, meaningful feedback.</p> <p>Where Pupil Premium children are identified as not making sufficient progress, teaching staff provide additional support for Pupil Premium children, in order for them to reach Age Related Expectations (Equity Model).</p>	<p>There is strong evidence that feedback motivates and inspires learners to close gaps in their learning and make accelerated progress.</p> <p>The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will support this by monitoring the progress of disadvantaged pupils and holding discussions with staff to review and guide their interventions.</p> <p>EEF - why it has a high impact on educational outcomes.</p>	1, 2, 4, 6
To improve oral language skills, particularly in the lower years, dialogic activities will be	There is strong evidence that oral language interventions, such as high-quality classroom	1, 2, 4

<p>embedded across the curriculum. A trained speech and language specialist will deliver these interventions and monitor the progress of the children involved.</p>	<p>discussions, are cost-effective and have a significant impact on pupils' oracy. This is a particular priority for Reception and KS1.</p> <p>Oral language interventions Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	
<p>Ensure that staff use assessment systems (such as NFER, which compares a child's attainment against national contexts) to accurately check the Progress and Attainment of Pupil Premium children.</p> <p>The use of the Accelerated Reader program (Years 2 - 6) to provide additional support with Pupil Premium children in developing their reading skills and attainment.</p>	<p>Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction:</p> <p>Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	2
<p>To provide additional support for phonics teaching, the Academy's Phonics Specialist will work with relevant year groups, with a particular focus on Years 1 to 5. Priority will be given to disadvantaged pupils who need to secure their phonics knowledge and be able to apply it confidently across their wider learning.</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks:</p> <p>Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	2, 3
<p>To provide tailored, small-group support for pupils in Years 3 - 6 who are Working Below the Expected Standard, a targeted intervention group will be established for the core subjects to promote accelerated progress and help close the attainment gap with their peers. This will be named the Cognition & Learning Group, with parents informed of the strategy so they can</p>	<p>This arrangement enables the teaching to focus exclusively on a small number of learners, usually in a separate classroom or working area. Intensive tuition in small groups is often provided to support lower attaining learners or those who are falling behind.</p> <p>Small Group Tuiton -Teaching and Learning Toolkit - EEF</p>	

actively support their children's learning.		
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Wider Strategies

Budgeted cost: £43,948

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>A designated Associate Principal to strategically manage the attendance across the Academy (Attendance Officer).</p> <p>Class teachers to regularly monitor the attendance of children in their class, following a clear process to inform parents of high absence and provide information and support when needed.</p> <p>Extra support given to monitoring the absence of Pupil Premium children through dedicated additional office administration hours.</p>	<p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.</p>	<p>5</p>

<p>Promote inclusiveness and tolerance with the Academy's system of values, in order that pupils at Biggleswade Academy develop a shared and mutual approach that reflects not just a sympathetic approach but an empathic one too.</p> <p>This will be an important distinction to build in our school community with the intention to ensure the disadvantaged pupils feel secure and valued in their school and know that they will be supported: not just by staff, but by their peers as well.</p>	<p>There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers):</p> <p>EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf(educ</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>
<p>Where appropriate, Pupil Premium children to have access to our Youth Support Worker (YSW), who provides one-on-one or small group session support with a focus on improving confidence and self-esteem in the children that they work with. The YSW can also support parents in seeking appropriate advice from within and outside of the Academy.</p>		
<p>In some cases, when appropriate, parents of Pupil Premium children will be directed towards the Academic and Pastoral Fund, which will enable them to apply for additional funding in order to support them with sending their children on Academy educational visits, school uniform allowance, materials for academic studies and music tuition.</p>	<p>Cultural capital is one of the most important concepts within the sociology of education, and it goes a long way to explaining why middle-class children do better in education than working-class children. If we can improve a disadvantaged child's cultural capital, we can improve their outcomes.</p> <p>https://revisesociology.com/2016/04/05/cultural-capital-and-educational-achievement/</p>	<p>3, 4, 5, 6</p>
<p>Opportunities to increase exposure to personal</p>	<p>There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with</p>	<p>3, 4, 5, 6</p>

development and cultural capital will be created and disadvantaged pupils will be proactively selected to engage with these (e.g. rewards days, residential trips etc.)	improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers): https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/prioritise-social-and-emotional-learning	
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Total budgeted cost: £191,078

Part B: Review of Outcomes in the Previous Academic Year

This details the impact that our Pupil Premium activity had on our pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

<p>With the Academy now in its second year of transitioning to a primary school, our Pupil Premium profile has changed significantly. It is important to recognise that both the number of Pupil Premium pupils on roll and the level of associated funding have reduced during this period.</p> <p>Last year, assessments and observations in Reception highlighted underdeveloped listening, oral language and fine motor skills, with a greater proportion of disadvantaged children affected compared with their non-disadvantaged peers. Through our Pupil Premium strategy, 73% of disadvantaged pupils in Reception achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) in Listening, Attention and Understanding in 2024/25, a substantial increase from 40% in the previous academic year.</p> <p>Internal assessments, including moderated writing across the BCUS cluster, provided detailed data on the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Years 1–6. On average, Pupil Premium children achieved 37% lower than their Non-Pupil Premium peers, with other internal assessments showing</p>

a similar gap. In response, specialist training was provided to staff on supporting and raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, and a Pupil Premium register is used to continue to monitor and support these students. This approach enabled staff to implement more targeted strategies in the classroom, and facilitated the transfer of effective support practices across year groups during transition points.

KS1 Phonics Screening data from the 2024-25 Academic Year showed that 50% of disadvantaged pupils were Working At Expected Standard. In comparison, 84% of non-disadvantaged pupils were At the Expected Standard. This reduction is still being addressed in this new academic year to raise the attainment of the disadvantaged pupils in Phonics.

KS2 SATs data from the 2024 - 25 academic year showed that attainment levels for Pupil Premium pupils increased by over 10% in Maths compared to the previous year (55% vs. 44%). In Reading, there was also a 10% increase (51% vs. 41%). In Writing, however, there was no change, with 40% of Pupil Premium pupils achieving the Expected Standard. Consequently, Writing has been included as a focus in both our Pupil Premium Strategy and our School Improvement Plan.

As last year's cohort was the 'COVID' Year 1 cohort, local data has not been released for them, and we are therefore unable to make comparisons with the Local Authority (LA).

The overall school attendance for the 2024 - 25 academic year was **95%**, which is in line with the national average and an improvement on the **94%** recorded in 2023 -24.

Although all pupils are expected to attend school regularly, absence among disadvantaged pupils remained **7% higher** than their peers. However, this group has shown improvement for the second consecutive year, demonstrating a positive trend in closing the attendance gap. We are committed to continuing this progress. To support this, we prioritise close monitoring of attendance for all Pupil Premium children, including early communication with parents where concerns arise. Attendance is regularly reviewed by Form Tutors and Progress Leaders and overseen by the school's Attendance Officer and a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Our school attendance system, linked to the MIS (Arbor), enables staff to monitor attendance more easily, allowing for early identification and timely action to support improved attendance.