

Pupil premium strategy statement – Fortis Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	1304
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	51.7%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	3 years
Date this statement was published	September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	Sarah Murcott Executive Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Joe Clark Senior Deputy Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Jacob Axton Chair of Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£1,696,955.55
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
Total budget for this academic year <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>	£1,696,955.55

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Fortis Academy is committed to providing all students with a first-class education, regardless of their starting point. The Pupil Premium Strategy focuses on disadvantaged pupils with an aim to raising their attainment and progress.

The Government states that: “Pupil Premium spending is most effective when used across 3 areas:

1. High quality teaching, such as staff professional development
2. Targeted academic support, such as tutoring
3. Wider strategies to address non-academic barriers to success in schools, such as attendance, behaviour, and social and emotional support”

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) recommends that schools focus their Pupil Premium funding on supporting high-quality teaching and this is something we are committed to at Fortis for the benefit of all students with a particular focus on disadvantaged students. In addition, our strategy works to improve and develop disadvantaged students’ attendance, reading, literacy and numeracy as well as their behaviour and confidence (which is supported by our trauma-informed, restorative intervention strategies).

Our values are encapsulated in our motto: Enriching Lives. This goal extends not only to students in the classroom, but also families and the community. Our Pupil Premium strategy aims to enrich the lives of students, and in particular develop their character, resilience and aspiration. 51.7% of our students are eligible for the Pupil Premium, from a culturally diverse background, and many have additional vulnerabilities, such as SEND or EAL. The Pupil Premium fund will contribute, along with whole school intervention plans, to diminish the difference in progress and attainment between Pupil Premium students and their non-Pupil Premium peers.

We deliver a well-designed, balanced and engaging curriculum, which meets the needs and aspirations of each student and inculcates a culture of high standards and expectations. Students are carefully monitored and supported by a range of academic and pastoral staff if they fall behind their non-disadvantaged peers. We have many strategies to do this, maximising home/school engagement and the use of technologies to be efficient and impactful.

Fortis is committed to a rich co-curricular and extra-curricular offer for Pupil Premium students. We aim to instil a thirst for learning in all of our students so that enthusiasm, hard work and individuality are fostered along with the best possible life chances for

all. The Pupil Premium funding aims to remove any potential barriers to participation and support families in gaining access to additional opportunities for their children.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance – is the biggest barrier and challenge that we have for our disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged students are more likely to miss school compared to their peers. In 2023-2024, attendance to school for disadvantaged students was 86.2 compared to, 92.7%. While this is an improvement on previous years the gap and whole school attendance remains too low.
2	Behaviour – disadvantaged pupils at Fortis have a higher rate of poor behaviour and have more of need for school intervention than compared to their peers. Suspensions were higher last academic year with 96 being disadvantaged students compared to the 30 that were issued. All three permanent exclusions were disadvantaged students. Out of the negative points issued across the academic year 6575 were for students who were disadvantaged compared to 4153.
3	Attainment Gap – Even though results are improving in all areas in the academy the attainment of students who are disadvantaged perform worse than their peers. 2024 data shows the overall P8 score as -0.32 and disadvantaged as -0.57.
4	Reading Ages – Reading for pleasure is a challenge for a large number of pupils at Fortis. The gap between disadvantaged and non is not significant, but the significant factor for reading ages and our students are the lower reading ages compared to their chronological ages.

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
Attendance to school amongst all students to improve, with the gap between disadvantaged students and others trending towards 0.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less disadvantaged pupils achieving below national average - Reduced gap - Disadvantaged pupils to hit whole school 95% target for attendance
Behaviour of students in school becomes more constructive, with fewer instances of negative, disengaged or dysregulated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in suspensions - Reduction in permanent exclusions

behaviours. Students take a more active role in their progress and development as people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More rewards given to students compared to negative points - Increased involvement in extracurricular activities - Success of the mentoring programme from the MAD team and SSO team.
Improved outcomes for students at the end of key stage four to ensure they have the best possible results to move onto their desired next stage of education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue the work to ensure that all students are achieving well and the P8 is 0 and A8 gets higher year on year in line with national average. - Ensure that all buckets for students are in line with the national averages - Increased number of disadvantaged students staying for key stage five.
Improve literacy and reading skills of disadvantaged pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading ages improve to chronological reading age with interventions planned - Students use of the library increases - Students use of online platforms increase to support them with their reading.

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: £ 1,070,854

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Membership of PiXL	PiXL is designed to support schools in improving their practice through offering a wide range of resources and networking opportunities, covering many aspects of quality delivery across subjects and at leadership level.	3
Senior Leadership Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 Assistant Headteachers - 2 Deputy Headteachers 	Disadvantaged students are more likely to fall behind if teaching is less than good. To support with the development of high-quality outcomes in all areas Fortis uses part of the funding to have assistant headteachers at the leadership level to support with	1, 2 and 3

	attendance and raising standards in behaviour and progress. From the recent Ofsted report in 2023 – “Leaders have significantly improved the school, including in the curriculum, behaviour and attendance. They have successfully built a new culture at the school.”	
Attendance Officers and VIP	<p>“This new research is further evidence that missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can be a damaging effect on their life chances.” (DfE – 2016)</p> <p>Therefore, the use of this money to support the growth of our attendance team is vital. The attendance officers adopt timely interventions to reduce lost learning time for our pupils. First day absence interventions are put in place as part of the tiered system to reduce the number of students who fall below national average. The officers collaborated with colleague to give our disadvantaged pupils the support they need. We use the funding also to use an external company called VIP who support the school with following our tiered approach and work with families.</p>	1
Pastoral Leaders	There are 5 pastoral leaders in the school’s structure. Each of which works with all students, but with a particular focus on key groups of disadvantaged students who have been identified as underperforming or vulnerable, potentially due to issues with behaviour or attitudes.	1, 2
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Our DDSL ensures that our students are mentored and kept safe within the school and works with a number of students on a range of issues.	1, 2
Music teaching, including peripatetic.	The new national plans for music and the EEF’s research suggest that investment in music teaching can have benefits which spread beyond straightforward improvements in music. A strong offer can have benefits to students in their development, enjoyment and engagement in school.	1, 2 and 3
EAL teaching assistants	As a school we have a large intake of students who have English as an additional language. These students	3 and 4

	have the use of EAL teaching assistants and an EAL programme to support their transition into lessons and to the country. They aid with reading and other academic routes.	
iPads	iPads are used for all students in lessons, which allows all students including disadvantaged students to have the best access to platforms to support their learning as part of our digital strategy.	1, 2, 3 and 4

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

Budgeted cost: £ 257,630

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Tutoring	This is targeted according to the assessments during the school year and applied to disadvantaged students where necessary. We invest in English and maths academic mentors. This was to combat the gaps in knowledge and are instrumental in providing support to our students and contribute positively to their outcomes.	3
Sparx	Sparx is used to support our students through an online platform that targets interventions for English, maths and science based on their homework and assessments. This has been particular useful for our disadvantaged pupils to use their iPads at home as part of our digital strategy.	3 and 4
GCSE Pod and Exam Pro	We have been using GCSE Pod effectively for several years in line with the guidance. GCSE Pod allows students to access high quality resources in accordance to their needs. Couple with the provision of technology to do so at school, GCSE Pod appears to be an effective adjunct to the strategies above. We also use Exam Pro which allows subjects to have access to past papers for GCSE and A-Level which then support students with their preparation for examinations.	3

Flash Academy – EAL	A large proportion of EAL students in the school and flash academy is an important intervention for student new to English	1, 2, 3 and 4
EduKey Provision	As with all other groups, a large proportion of SEND students at Fortis are also disadvantaged. The software allows for provision mapping for the needs of individuals, but also clear communication to members of staff about effective strategies inside the classroom and beyond.	1, 2, 3 and 4
Librarian	The library is a welcome space for learners who enjoy reading or who want to take out books. We have seen an increased use of the library and is now being used to champion reading further. There has been an increase in the number of books in the library as well as the books taken out.	4
Exam Invigilators	Having our own exam invigilators is important for our disadvantaged students as it allows the pupils to have the same person in front of them when they are sitting their pre public and public examinations. This supports with attendance during exam periods as students know who they are coming to see as part of their exams.	1 and 3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 420,305

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>School Transport</i>	The academy looks at reducing the numbers of pupil's absence from school and each day pick up a selection of disadvantaged students who are struggling to get into school. This has helped with the increase of attendance from last year.	1
<i>Duke of Edinburgh</i>	The school is aware that there are a wider range of activities and schemes accessible only with financial backing. The school assesses these programmes on merit, with the intention that they meet the guidance on	1, 2, 3 and 4

	behaviour, extra-curricular participation, metacognition and self-regulation or similar.	
<i>Rewards</i>	Rewards are an important part of the culture within Fortis. We have seen a record number of students attend community and after school events. There has been a record increase of prizes given to student for attendance which has improved attendance. A record number of prizes given for behaviour and attitude. Leading to students being entered into a prize draw. Students have also had the opportunities to have discounted tickets for reward trips and educational trips which enhances their cultural capital.	1, 2, 3 and 4
<i>Educational Psychologist</i>	Certain disadvantaged students are in need of additional individual interventions which they would not otherwise receive. The Educational Psychologist works closely with school and the pupils as appropriate	1, 2, 3 and 4
<i>MAD Mentoring</i>	Making a Difference (Birmingham) provides us in the school with onsite mentoring for some of our most vulnerable students to support them making right choices inside and outside of the academy. A large proportion of these students are disadvantaged students.	2

Total budgeted cost: £1,748,789

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

As mentioned in the previous sections the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is behind their peers, but it is an improving picture. The P8 score last year for the whole school was -0.32 and disadvantaged was -0.57. Further work with subject leads and leaders in the academy have been undertaken to ensure the gap shortens but also both figures continue to move to 0.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider

