

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement: Fortis Academy

This statement details our school’s use of Pupil Premium (and Recovery Premium for the 2022 to 2023 academic year) 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	Fortis Academy
Number of pupils in school	1443
Proportion (%) of Pupil Premium eligible pupils	52%
Academic year/years that our current Pupil Premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2022/3 to 2024/5
Date this statement was published	September 2022
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2023
Statement authorised by	A Williams, Headteacher
Pupil Premium lead	S McAusland, Assistant Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	L Barber, Chair of Interim Executive Board

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil Premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 732,870
Recovery Premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 211,070
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	£ 943,940

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.

52% 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	<p><u>Performance</u></p> <p>Disadvantaged students in the school perform worse than their peers on average (2022 data shows a P8 gap of 0.55 and an A8 gap of 0.53); in some areas, disadvantaged students perform in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. The average P8 gap for English was 0.66; Maths 0.38; EBacc 0.66; Open 0.55. Pupil Premium students are therefore half a grade below their non-PP peers.</p>
2	<p><u>Attendance and Punctuality</u></p> <p>Disadvantaged students at Fortis are more likely than their peers to miss school and be persistently absent. In 2021-22, attendance to school for PP students was 85.2%, compared to 90.8% for non-PP. The Attendance Team use a wide range of strategies to respond to student absence. Meanwhile, the pastoral teams and teachers work to reduce likelihood of future absence by making the school a place that students want to be and feel valued whilst here. A comprehensive rewards system underpins the intervention strategies to encourage all students to attend. A difference remains between disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers.</p>
3	<p><u>Behaviour</u></p> <p>Disadvantaged students have a higher rate of poor behaviour in school and have needed in school interventions to a greater extent than non-Pupil Premium students. We have invested in a strong and effective pastoral team, aligned by year group and these work with a range of external agencies to support students who make poor choices.</p>
4	<p><u>Opportunities for Developing Cultural Capital</u></p> <p>The 2020 pandemic affected disadvantaged students' access to opportunities such as school trips and outreach events. Pupil Premium students will be encouraged to participate as part of this strategy and funding will be diverted to support with this. The academy offers a comprehensive suite of extra-curricular provision utilising a range of external partners and school staff.</p>
5	<p><u>Attainment gap between disadvantaged students and the national average</u></p> <p>Performance of students over the last few years has been impacted by the pandemic, and the outcomes of disadvantaged students remain behind those of other students and the national average. This gap will primarily be addressed by working for high quality teaching at all times and implementing systems to ensure it is effective for all students. We will also be identifying</p>

	barriers to individual disadvantaged students and guiding them to the offers we are funding through the Premium.
6	<p><u>Reading Ages</u></p> <p>This is included in the strategy as part of the whole school literacy strategy. Reading for pleasure is a challenge for all students, particularly boys. However, the gap in reading ages between PP and non-PP students are not statistically significant but they are lower than their chronological ages: Year 7 (11.16 PP; 11.29 non) Year 8 (10.60 PP, 10.55 non) Year 9 (11.87 PP, 11.59 non) Year 10 (12.11 PP, 12.58 non).</p>
7	<p><u>CEIAG Opportunities</u></p> <p>Disadvantaged students were affected by the Pandemic and so there is a real need to ensure that they are receiving the statutory CEIAG opportunities as well as access to opportunities with apprenticeships. Programmes such as Unifrog which rely on internet access and high levels of literacy pose a risk of widening the gap for disadvantaged students.</p>
8	<p><u>Access to Online Platforms</u></p> <p>Disadvantaged students are less likely to have parents engaged with our online platform which supports home/school liaison. Year 7 students will be provided with iPads as part of our Digital Transformation Policy. Increasing numbers of parents/carers are engaging with our online services and work is being done to further improve this.</p>

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 and punctuality to lessons amongst all students to improve, with the gap between disadvantaged students and others tending towards nil.	Attendance to school improving consistently over time, with the gap between disadvantaged and other students closing more rapidly. Attendance of PP students is 95% (85.2% in 2021-2022) in line with the school's high expectations, and Persistent Absence reduces by 10%.
Behaviour of students in school becomes more constructive, with fewer instances of negative, disengaged or dysfunctional behaviours. Students take a more active role in their own progress and development..	<p>Staff and other adults are seen to consistently abide by the Pivotal model of behaviour expectations, including the recording of behaviours according to policy.</p> <p>Ensure that PP students are not disproportionately affected by detentions and suspensions.</p> <p>Number and intensity of negative behaviours decreases over time, and the gap between disadvantaged and other students closes at a faster rate.</p> <p>Our Thrive programme for students aged 11-16 will seek to provide timely interventions with a higher proportion of students who require it.</p>

	<p>Engagement in voluntary activities increases amongst all students, with the proportion of disadvantaged students participating being <i>higher</i> than that of other students.</p> <p>Engagement with offers of school-led CEIAG increases, with <i>greater</i> involvement from disadvantaged students than others.</p>
<p>Improved progress and attainment for disadvantaged students at the end of KS4</p>	<p>Increase in disadvantaged students' academic grades with the difference between PP and non-PP diminishing.</p> <p>In 2021-2, Attainment 8 for PP students was on average 37 versus a national 53 and a school 43.</p> <p>P8 scores for disadvantaged students as close to 0 as possible. From 2021-22 data, the average P8 gap for English was 0.66; Maths 0.38; EBacc 0.66; Open 0.55. Pupil Premium students are therefore half a grade below their non-PP peers.</p> <p>Outcomes for PP students in line with the National Average as well as improved progress and attainment in English, Mathematics, the EBacc and Open buckets, with P8 measures in line with non-PP students.</p> <p>Increase in proportion of disadvantaged students going on to further study in academic and technical studies, and a decrease in disadvantaged students becoming NEET as per RONI indicators.</p>
<p>Increase in the amount of engagement in reading, literature and the arts.</p>	<p>Reading ages improve up to chronological reading age, with the interventions planned including those for reading need rather than reading age.</p> <p>Borrowing from the library / virtual library increases, especially amongst disadvantaged students.</p> <p>Increased engagement in creative disciplines, such as reading, music, art, performing arts, especially amongst disadvantaged students.</p>
<p>The close-knit team of Student, School and Family are a powerful, mutually supportive team for enriching students' lives.</p>	<p>Family engagement in home-school communication increases to 95+%.</p> <p>Final school reports in 2021-22 were viewed by the following proportions of families:</p> <p>Y7: 16%</p> <p>Y8: 18%</p> <p>Y9: 15%</p> <p>Y10: 12%</p> <p>Y11: 10%</p>

	<p>Attendance at parents' evenings increases above 50% (2021-22).</p> <p>Families regularly logging into GO 4 Schools to view messages, homework etc is improves to above the 30% (2021-22) in every year group.</p> <p>Home/school invitational events occur frequently and are well attended.</p> <p>A parent council is formed to contribute to the governance of the school with parents/carers of PP students encouraged to attend.</p> <p>Success celebrations occur for each year group at least once a year.</p> <p>Numbers of family members receiving chaperone training and volunteering for school events increases.</p> <p>Increase in the proportion of disadvantaged students representing the school in competitive events.</p> <p>Increase in the number of disadvantaged students participating in community and out-of-school events.</p>
<p>Effective systems are in place to measure progress, identify underperformance and to embed interventions relating to academic progress.</p>	<p>The proportion of all students identified as below track in all years decreases, with the proportion shrinking faster amongst disadvantaged students.</p> <p>The number of recorded interactions with families increases (more rapidly amongst disadvantaged students).</p>

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: £380,000

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. This source discusses how the PiXL offer supports schools to meet criteria that have proven results.	5
Pupil Premium Peer Review	The School recognises the importance of an independent review on identifying its strengths and areas for improvement. The Shaw Education Trust has engaged the services of the DfE in training several members of staff as Pupil Premium Reviewers.	5
Associate Assistant Headteacher x6 (Academic)	Disadvantaged students are more likely than others to fall behind if teaching is less than excellent. To support the development of high-quality curricula, driven by empowered expert leaders, Fortis has created six Faculties, each led by an Associate Assistant Headteacher tasked with improving and sustaining the quality of learning, aiming to apply the research-based findings in this document	5
Assistant Headteacher in charge of Pupil Premium Funding	Fortis recognises the importance of strategy and appropriate decision-making in achieving the best value from the Pupil Premium. Hence, Fortis has	5

	nominated one Senior Leader to carry out research and to have oversight on the school's strategy for disadvantaged students. This leader is informed by guidance included in this document	
Short-term Administrative support to support implementation of systems (e.g. cleaning and checking contact database)	There is secure and abundant evidence that parental engagement and student attainment are interrelated. Fortis recognises that parents of its disadvantaged students are more likely not to interact with the school. By investing in administrative support for outreach and communication, Fortis will increase uptake of parental engagement.	8
Music teaching, including peripatetic and co-curricular	The new national plans for Music , and the EEF's Arts Participation research suggest that investment in Music teaching can have benefits which spread beyond straightforward improvement in those areas. A strong co-curricular offer (whilst worth the investment in its own right) can also have benefits to students in their development, enjoyment and engagement in school.	1, 3, 4, 8
EEF Embedding Formative Assessment programme	By improving the quality of teaching and effective assessment in class, disadvantaged students are more likely to succeed as well as other students, as shown in this EEF research .	5
Subsidised sporting club membership, including transport subsidy	Some disadvantaged students find their strengths and satisfaction lie in sports. Others would benefit from the discipline, decision-making, problem solving and competition inherent in sport, as described in this EEF research strand . Sports involvement may also allow disadvantaged students interaction beyond the geographic or social settings they would normally be confined within.	3, 4, 8
Pre- or post-school homework club leader	Homework and independent study are found to be correlated with higher performance in students. By investing in a safe, productive location for disadvantaged students to work within the school, it may also address some attendance and punctuality issues.	2, 3
Complete Maths (Classroom)	Complete Maths provide clear guidance for teachers in their delivery of the curriculum, and also provides the necessary support for non-specialists in the event that they were required in the school. Complete Maths is built on a	1, 5

	Mastery model and actively encourages the use of multiple representations and concrete manipulatives for the delivery of maths. In line with this guidance , this has been shown to benefit disadvantaged students very strongly.	
--	---	--

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

Budgeted cost: £ 150,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
GCSEPod revision platform	Fortis has been using GCSEPod effectively for several years, in line with this guidance . GCSE Pod allows students to access high quality resources in accordance to their needs. Coupled with the provision of technology to do so at school, GCSEPod appears to be an effective adjunct to the strategies above.	5
Renaissance Learning (reading support package)	Reading for pleasure and academic development are a core part of Fortis' development plan. The Renaissance package facilitates both, and allows the school to measure improvement in line with this guidance .	6
Complete Maths Tutor	Complete Maths provides an important platform for individual support of students' learning. Relating to the guidance below, it allows students to receive individualised support based on their prior learning, using a mastery model for reinforcement of prior knowledge https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/mathematics https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/digital/EEF_Digital_Technology_Guidance_Report.pdf?v=1635355216	5

	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mastery-learning	
Edukey Provision mapping (SEND package)	As with all other groups, a large proportion of SEND students at Fortis are also disadvantaged. The Edukey 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, which is supported in this guidance .	5, 1
Librarian to provide additional opportunities for students outside school hours and literacy support provision.	Reading and literacy are recognised as a key area for improvement to allow disadvantaged students to access the curriculum. By investing in a strong offer through the library, we are able to develop a continuity between the school's development plan and the implementation with the students who need support. These two sources demonstrate some evidence for this approach: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/summer-schools https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/literacy	2, 4, 6
Aspire and OuRZone (internal alternative provision support units) leader Plus Teaching Assistant	Fortis Academy follows a trauma-informed and relational approach to behaviour management, which is supported through the Thrive approach. The evidence to support this strategy also supports our work with students for whom the regular school environment does not work. Our internal adapted curricula for these students – who are disadvantaged in the majority – are intended to identify and remove the barriers faced by these students in successful planning for their future.	1, 2, 3, 8
Year 7 and 11 Disadvantaged Tutoring for Maths and English	For this financial year, Fortis is in receipt of significant funding for tutoring. This is targeted according to the assessments during the school year and applied to disadvantaged students where necessary. This guidance supports this strategy . We will be using the Pupil Premium funding to facilitate this. Access to National Tutoring Programme as required.	5

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

Budgeted cost: £ 415,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Support from the Educational Psychologist team	Certain disadvantaged students are in need of additional individual interventions which they would not otherwise receive. The Educational Psychologist works closely with the school and students as appropriate to this guidance .	1, 2, 3
Thrive programme membership and implementation	As described above, the OurZone and Aspire alternative curricula are supported by the Thrive programme, in turn supported by guidance such as linked here .	1, 2, 3
Birmingham Centre of Arts therapies	Certain disadvantaged students are in need of additional individual interventions which they would not otherwise receive. The Birmingham Centre of Arts therapies is one such intervention, as referenced in this guidance .	1, 2, 3
GO 4 Schools data platform and parental engagement module	GO 4 Schools is an integral platform to the school's ability to monitor attendance, behaviour, progress and parental engagement. It provides an important interface with families and allows information to be shared securely within the school. In line with these two sources of evidence, this is intended to address many areas of the school's plan: https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/digital/EEF_Digital_Technology_Guidance_Report.pdf?v=1635355216 https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/supporting-parents/EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report.pdf?v=1635355222	2, 3, 5, 8
Flash Academy (EAL package)	A large proportion of EAL students in the school have No Recourse to Public Funding and are therefore eligible for Free School Meals and the Pupil Premium. Flash Academy is an important intervention for students new to English (in line with this evidence base).	1, 4, 6
Associate Assistant	The behaviour and attitudes of students in the school are key to their success, especially amongst disadvantaged students. The school has invested in six Associate Assistant Headteacher posts,	1, 2, 3, 8

Headteachers (and supporting pastoral roles)	supporting the different year groups and working with their teams to raise performance, plus Pastoral Support officers. A large part of this involves parental interaction (supported by this guidance) to praise good performance and to respond to underperformance.	
Student Welfare team (attendance hub)	There is a tendency for students with poor attendance to be also disadvantaged, and the Students Welfare Team (including the Attendance team) are key to getting students into school and learning. For students who need additional assistance in attending, the welfare hub provides a modified timetable and a safe place for them to transition back to class. The attendance team's work regularly involves parental engagement, especially of disadvantaged children, following guidance here: https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/supporting-parents/EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report.pdf?v=1635355222	1, 2, 8
CEIAG leader	The school understands the importance of raising aspirations and facilitating access to high quality careers advice, in line with this guidance . Pupil Premium students will be eligible for additional support for CEIAG opportunities.	7, 8
"Clubs and Events" and "Parents' Evening System" software to monitor uptake of co- and extra-curricular activities	Where the school invests in providing opportunities to engage in extra-curricular and co-curricular events, it recognises the importance of engaging disadvantaged students. This tool allows the school to monitor and respond to the situation. The benefits of extra-curricular and co-curricular participation are described here: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation	4, 6, 8
Student Support Officers x 6	There are six Student Support Officers 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. This is in line with this guidance .	1, 2, 3, 8
Suite of interventions to support	Support package for year 11 low effort low progress boys based on large-scale research study of 16,000 UK secondary school students. Package to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and academic mentoring 	1, 2, 3, 7

disengaged and underachieving boys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trips & incentives • Enhanced careers support • Motivational form group <p>Understanding the Response to Financial and Non-Financial Incentives in Education: Field Experimental Evidence Using High-Stakes Assessments IZA - Institute of Labor Economics</p>	
Breakfasts	Students who eat a healthy breakfast (at school) are more likely to attend on time and engage with learning more effectively, as in these findings . Disadvantaged students are least likely to eat a healthy breakfast at home, so this addresses educational engagement as well as wellbeing.	2, 3, 5
Subsidised access to Duke of Edinburgh or similar schemes	The school is aware that there are a wide 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 behaviour , arts participation , metacognition and self regulation or similar.	1, 3, 4, 8

Total budgeted cost: £ 945,000

Part B: Review of Outcomes in the Previous Academic Year

Pupil Premium Strategy Outcomes

This details the impact that our Pupil Premium activity had on pupils in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

The 2021-2 academic year was still heavily impacted by the covid-19 pandemic, and disadvantaged students had engaged at a lower rate with the remote learning. As a result, exam performance of disadvantaged students in 2021-22 was impacted from historic issues despite catch-up and recovery spending in earlier years. In 2021-22 the unvalidated Progress 8 figure returned an in-school gap of 0.5 grades, with average total P8 for disadvantaged students at -0.60 (which is still above the 2019 pre-pandemic -0.77). This suggests that use of the Pupil Premium is having an impact on closing the gap between our students and the national average, although in-school differences remain.

Attendance to school hindered the progress of disadvantaged students in all years in 2021-2, with greater levels of absence correlating with age. The investment in supporting the pastoral teams and the attendance teams is designed to give all students strong support in attending school. The comprehensive rewards systems we have in place aim to further encourage attendance.

Investment into the Attendance Hub also supports students being able to better transition to full timetables and addresses one of the key causes of recurrent or persistent absence.

Reading ages amongst disadvantaged students are, on average, lower than those of others. There is a lot of variation in both groups, but in-class interventions such as the Everybody Reading In Class (ERIC) are changing the culture in reading. Literacy and reading for pleasure remain an important component of the new plan.

Students' mental health was identified as a significant barrier to many students' success; the investment in the Thrive programme and a trauma-informed model for behaviour support resulted in multiple cases where disadvantaged students were able to regulate their behaviours in the long term and avoid the need for alternative provision. In addition, this approach assisted with reducing behaviour

issues across the year groups where it was applied. We are continuing with the Thrive model of support and trauma-informed actions into the next year.

Pastoral staff remain a key interface with families and to rapidly resolve behaviour or attitude issues in school. Pastoral managers contribute significantly to the upkeep of standards during lessons, but also provide important support for vulnerable disadvantaged students. This reduces absence and raises attainment for our students.

Additional funding specifically allocated from the Covid catch-up Premium in 2021-2: £83,400.91

To support reading and literacy: Shakespeare Schools: £14,186.97
--

To support high quality teaching: Maths Equipment: £1,719

To provide enriching opportunities: Music, D of E. arts therapy: £25,479
--

Targeted tutoring, to support the academic attainment of students: £29,501
--

Mentoring and Attendance support work: £10,800
--

To raise aspirations and provide opportunities: Trips and Visits: £1, 715
