



Pupil premium strategy statement 2025-26

This statement details our schools use of pupil premium funding for the financial year 2025 to 2026 to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

This outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this financial year after reviewing last year's financial budget and spending in this area.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	The Acorns School
Number of pupils in school September 2025	NOR 82
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils (Jan 2025)	62%
Academic Years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	January 2026
Statement authorised by	J Hodson
Pupil premium lead	J Hodson
Governor lead	B Harrison

Funding overview

Detail	Data
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£72,420
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forwards from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£72,420

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At The Acorns School we focus on **‘Learning to Achieve’**

We aim to support our young people to learn to make steps to improve and enjoy achieving success.

Together we strive to provide a caring, structured learning environment in which all pupils can develop academically, socially and emotionally and in which pupils and staff feel safe, secure and valued.

We offer an enriching, educational environment for pupils who have experienced difficulties in school. In our school pupils are accepted, valued and feel safe. We assess pastoral and learning needs and plan for progress. We give time to pupils. This is so they can reflect on and reassess their difficulties, build self-esteem and develop meaningful relationships.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum designed to capture pupils’ interests and prepare them for life. We aim to improve each pupil’s academic performance, ability to learn and social and emotional skills so that pupils are able to return to school, further education or enter the world of work.

We work productively and collaborate with parents, carers, other schools, training organisations and other appropriate agencies for the good of all pupils.

We want our young people to ‘learn to achieve’

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Literacy and Numeracy concerns. Many PP pupils have missed periods of primary and secondary education and have fallen behind in literacy and numeracy development.
2	Social, Emotional and behavioural concerns. PP pupils often present with a variety of social and emotional and mental health difficulties; such as low self-esteem, anxiety, self-harming and other avoidance behaviours. Other pupils may have experienced trauma.

3	Attendance. There are significant challenges in actual attendance for FSM pupils compared to non-FSM. The pupil support team is working closely with hard-to-reach families to increase attendance and engagement.
4	PP pupils are more likely to arrive at The Acorns with unidentified learning needs.
5	Some pupils do not have their basic needs met and consequently struggle to make progress with basic learning and acquiring skills. Many PP pupils at The Acorns School are at levels 2, 3, or 4 on the Continuum of Need.
6	Some pupils struggle to access a totally academic curriculum in school, including some PP pupils and those with EHCPs. This requires Alternative Provision to increase engagement.

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
PP pupils to achieve in line with non PP pupils in English and Maths. PP pupils to improve learning and thinking skills to improve outcomes.	PP pupils to make expected progress in line with other pupils and interventions put in place as soon as required. This will be measured via baseline assessments, termly in house and external provider tracking, observations in lessons inclusive of work scrutiny and through feedback systems. Pupils will be successful in making small steps of progress as well as larger steps inclusive of external accreditation/qualification.
Pupils' mental health and well-being will improve because of a trauma informed approach in school.	Social and emotional qualitative assessment (SEW) will improve from baseline when they start school. Pupils will engage with ELSA, Counselling and keyworker support on offer. EP input will be commissioned, and strategies used if needed. This will be reflected in pupil and parent voice.

Increased attendance rates measured through attendance tracking and absence monitoring systems.	Pupils will attend at the same rate as non-PP pupils.
Assessment on admission and through needs led teaching will identify previously unassessed learning needs.	Needs are identified and acted on in school, with EP input and strategies as required. Each pupil will have a Learner passport identifying needs and suitable strategies to support them.
Pupils are safeguarded effectively, working with other agencies as required.	Daily contact with parents by pastoral teams. Parents are offered additional support via family hubs, TAFs, support is signposted by Family Support Team. Additional support is offered to pupils at levels 3 and 4 on the Continuum of Need.
To ensure that all PP pupils are encouraged and engage with activities which promote wider learning opportunities, including opportunities for an alternative vocational provision.	PP pupils will have an opportunity to engage in a wide range of activities and opportunities beyond the classroom. PP pupils will gain qualifications in vocational provision and will engage with sports qualifications with Liverpool FC.

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)

Budget £4,910

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Trauma informed CPD	Continued focus for CPD on Relational Approach to Behaviour Management, ELSA, PACE, Childhood ACES and Emotion Coaching.	2
Needs Led Teaching CPD.	Teachers adapt their teaching to meet the needs of each individual pupil, so that each pupil makes progress in their learning. Additional TLR to support CPD from September 2024.	1, 4
Increase partnership working	Consultancy support from LCC for English, Maths, Science and PHSE agreed for 2025/26 to support specialist staff do ensure academic aspiration for PP pupils. Partnership and collaboration discussions being held with local schools for 2025/26 to ensure a strong curriculum is being offered to all pupils including PP.	1

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

Budget £66,280

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Specialist teachers to plan and implement targeted interventions.	1-1 teachers will be targeted for those pupils who do not attend within the formal timetable. PP pupils will be prioritised to include lower ability pupils who need further support and able pupils who need further challenge. Additional TLR to support Literacy and Reading from September 2023.	1, 2, 4
Full assessment of all pupils to identify unmet learning needs	On admission a Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) baseline is carried out with each pupil, using a tool developed for the school by an Educational Psychologist. This SEW is used to identify support required for each pupil. Once the pupil has been in class for a few weeks the pupil and their pastoral team create a Learner Passport which includes classroom strategies and emotional or behavioural support needed. Other assessments on admission include screening for dyslexia and dyscalculia, CATS and reading diagnostic reading age tests. SENCO liaises with classroom staff to ensure that appropriate interventions and scaffolding are in place to support PP and other pupils.	1, 2, 4

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

Budget £202,022

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
PP pupils will have the opportunity to participate in vocational education to avoid NEET post 16.	We have investment in vocational provision. Several learners have been provided with bespoke AP off site, which should lead to qualifications in Mechanics, Beauty Therapy or similar. SLA in place and LCC approved Quality Assurance undertaken by The Acorns for all providers used.	2, 3, 6
To ensure all PP pupils engage with activities which promote wider learning and cultural opportunities.	PP pupils are given opportunities to complete a sports award in school with Liverpool FC. Theatre trips are offered and paid for by school. Drop down enrichment days are held once a term, including STEM and Forest School events. PP pupils are taken to visit local colleges and universities, to raise aspirations.	2, 5, 6
PP Pupils are provided with taxis to school or vocational provision.	Provision of transport to encourage good attendance. Attendance is an area of concern in AP nationally and is always the main factor in disadvantaged and “hard to reach” pupils making progress. This mirrors the experience at The Acorns and subsequently is a priority development area in all planning processes.	3
Continuing to provide free breakfasts as it enables pupils to start the school day in a positive frame of mind and ready to learn.	Many pupils arrive at school without having a basic meal due to “food poverty”. Parent’s report use of food banks. Morning hunger causes apathy, emotional instability and consequently lack of engagement in learning. School pays for breakfast items to be provided for all pupils and have now entered into an agreement with “Magic Breakfasts” School has also invested in additional cookery lessons and provide ingredients, so PP pupils are allowed to eat what they cook but also learn to budget and cook economical meals.	3, 5
EP Contract with	The Acorns School has also invested in a contract with an	2, 4

independent EP.	independent EP (Educational Psychologist), not just to provide support with EHCPs but to also work with and suggest strategies for other pupils.	
Family Support Team established.	Many of the pupils who attend The Acorns have previously had low levels of attendance. Attendance at The Acorns is improving, attendance for 2025 is 8% higher than the previous year. The majority of young people improve their attendance. 82% of pupils attend school or off-site provision on a regular basis. There are robust attendance policies and procedures. We are relentless in our approach to attendance. Pupil Support Manager and dedicated Family Support worker carry out home visits if there are safeguarding concerns. The Pupil Support Team work very closely with the Local Authority to ensure that best practice is followed.	2, 3, 5
Senior Mental Health Lead ELSA School Counsellor	In addition to a named Key Adult, pupils may also be offered ELSA, Emotion Coaching, Social Stories and Social skills support or access to an in-school counsellor. The Senior Mental Health Lead is a member of SLT and ensures that PP pupils are given the support that they need.	2

PPG/FSM Funding = £72,420

Cost PPG/FSM =£273,212

Overspend PPG/FSM = £200,792

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 our pupils in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Academic Year 2024-2025

Information in relation to previous objectives.

1. Continuing to provide free breakfasts as it enables pupils to start the school day in a positive frame of mind and ready to learn.
 - a. £1000 whole school breakfast (71% PPG/FSM =£710)
2. Specialist teachers to plan and implement targeted interventions.
 - a. £80,224 High support teachers (71% PPG/FSM = £56,959)
3. PP pupils will have the opportunity to participate in vocational education
 - a. £160,000 Allocated for AP for whole school (71% PPG/FSM = £113,600)
4. Provision of transport to encourage good attendance.
 - a. £78,212 Allocated for whole school transport (71% PPG/FSM = £55,530)
5. Invest in additional EP time and in enhancing the staff structure to cope with increased complexity of learners.
 - a. EP time Whole school £15,500 (71% PPG/FSM = £11,005)

J Hodson

16.6.25