

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Willows School

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	193
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	52% (101 pupils)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023//2024 to 2026/2027
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026
Statement authorised by	Rachael Booth
Pupil premium lead	Cath Martin
Governor / Trustee lead	Ann Gyte

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£139065
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>	£139065

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our Pupil Premium Strategy aims to use our pupil premium funding to maintain at least the same level of progress of Pupil Premium children as non-Pupil Premium children in school.

Our strategy relies heavily on the quality of teaching and learning across school so that our Pupil Premium children access the broad and balanced curriculum that they deserve. Whilst not all our children are disadvantaged in terms of their socio-economic background, they still perform below their peers of the same age and so high-quality teaching and learning for all pupils is paramount. Our funding is allocated so that all our pupils in school benefit.

Our strategy also relies on top quality interventions in English and Maths alongside bespoke interventions from our Pupil Support Team. These strategies work well to ensure the gap between Pupil Premium children and non-Pupil Premium children is as narrow as possible. Our strategy is based on research by the EEF and involvement with the making a difference project. Our tiered approach is summarised on our website.

Our Pupil Premium budget also supports our children in preparing for adulthood and raising their cultural capital along with growing into an independent young person ready for life post The Willows.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Literacy skills Reading assessments show that reading and overall literacy levels are lower for disadvantaged children, not allowing access to simple text, affecting engagement and restricting independence across the curriculum. Poor language and communication skills also act as a barrier to learning for many of our pupil premium children.
2	Numeracy skills Low levels of basic number skills restricting independence and application of numbers in real life contexts.
3	Social and emotional wellbeing Observations and discussions show that our disadvantaged students may have poor social and emotional well-being which affects behaviour, health and engagement across the curriculum.
4	Attendance Low parental engagement may affect attendance and this in turn impacts learning along with social interaction and development.
5	Cultural capital Through general discussions with our disadvantaged students, it is noticeable that they tend to have less opportunities to develop their cultural capital than their non disadvantaged peers.

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.

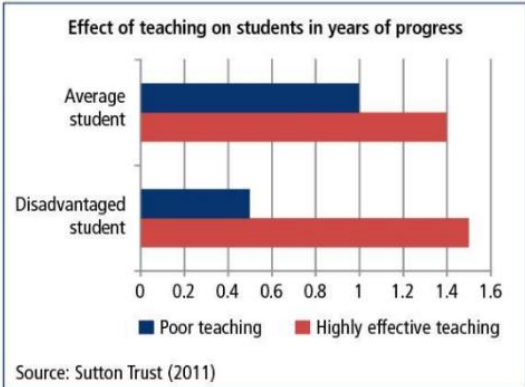
Intended outcome	Success criteria
Literacy Improved attainment in literacy in line with non-pupil premium children. Improved attainment in literacy which is in line with their starting points. Improved social speaking, a development of different ways to communicate across subjects and in the community.	Pupil premium children will have made a similar number of steps of progress in English as non-pupil premium children. An improvement in reading levels of pupil premium children.
Numeracy Improved attainment in numeracy in line with non-pupil premium children. Improved attainment in numeracy which is in line with their starting points.	Pupil premium children will have made a similar number of steps of progress in Maths as non-pupil premium children.
Social and emotional wellbeing Despite being difficult to measure, an improvement in self-esteem and social interaction for our most disadvantaged students. The development of independent skills.	Improved behaviour and wellbeing of pupil premium children throughout school. Pupil Premium children have a similar number of behaviour events on CPOMS to non-Pupil Premium children. This is difficult to measure due to the nature of our children and the many factors that influence their behaviour.
Attendance Increased attendance for pupil premium children	The attendance of Pupil Premium to be level with that of non-Pupil Premium children.
Cultural capital Opportunities for Pupil Premium children to attend after-school clubs, holiday clubs and other enrichment activities (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, forest schools, dog therapy and outdoor learning) and interventions that are delivered through the Pupil Support Team.	Improved behaviour and wellbeing of pupil premium children throughout school. Raising cultural capital will help raise self-esteem and confidence along with social skills.

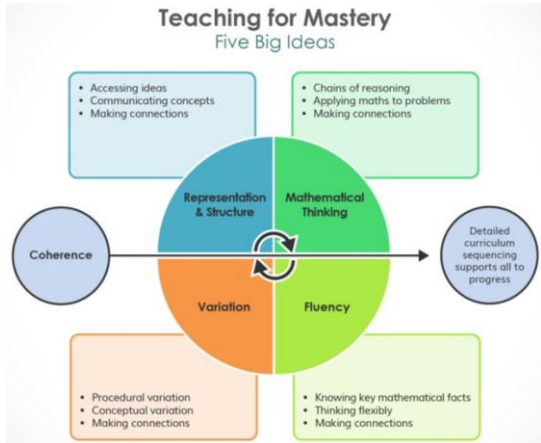
Activity in this academic year

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: £ 60000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
High quality Teaching and Learning throughout school	From the DfE research report: ‘supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice’ “The most popular strategies, and those that schools considered to be the most effective, focused on teaching and learning, especially paired or small group additional teaching; improving feedback; and one-to-one tuition. These strategies are all supported by evidence of effectiveness in the Sutton Trust/Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Teaching and Learning Toolkit2”  Source: Sutton Trust (2011) Metacognition and self-regulation EEF	1-3
Regular Teaching and learning/curriculum CPD delivered to all teachers and HLTAs. TAs to be given time within school to complete personalised CPD along with half termly CPD on teaching and learning. Maths, English and Science CPD shared half termly with TAs that they can use in lessons.	As above. This will contribute to maintaining a high standard of teaching and learning across the school. Cognitive science approaches in the classroom - A review of the evidence.pdf Deployment of Teaching Assistants EEF	1-3

English and Maths curriculum incorporating applied lessons	From the DfE research report: 'supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice' Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice (publishing.service.gov.uk) This document highlights the different way learning styles have an impact on attainment of disadvantaged pupils.	1 and 2
Reading for pleasure and parental engagement will be a focus, particularly in lower school.	Preparing Literacy Guidance 2018.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net) The above guide by the EEF highlights the importance of developing communication and language through storytelling and the recap/discussion of books being read. Many of the approaches mentioned are incorporated into reading for pleasure lessons. Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1
Ongoing phonics training for all staff through half termly meetings including HLTAs and TAs. Fully embedded Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme (Rocket phonics)	Phonics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Rocket Phonics Create a Confident Reader Preparing Literacy Guidance 2018.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net) All the above documents show that there are huge amounts of evidence that incorporating a successful phonics programme links to improved attainment.	1
Implementation of Maths mastery across school. Maths subject lead launched and provided training	 The diagram illustrates the 'Teaching for Mastery' framework, centered around 'Five Big Ideas'. At the core is a circle divided into four quadrants: 'Representation & Structure' (top-left, blue), 'Mathematical Thinking' (top-right, green), 'Variation' (bottom-left, orange), and 'Fluency' (bottom-right, green). Surrounding this central circle are four boxes, each containing specific ideas: Top-left (blue box): Accessing ideas, Communicating concepts, Making connections. Top-right (green box): Chains of reasoning, Applying maths to problems, Making connections. Bottom-left (orange box): Procedural variation, Conceptual variation, Making connections. Bottom-right (green box): Knowing key mathematical facts, Thinking flexibly, Making connections. To the left of the central circle is a blue circle labeled 'Coherence', and to the right is a blue circle labeled 'Detailed curriculum sequencing supports all to progress'. Arrows indicate a flow from 'Coherence' through the central ideas to 'Detailed curriculum sequencing'.	2

	Supporting Research, Evidence and Argument NCETM Mastery learning EEF The above documents summarise Maths mastery learning and the evidence that teaching for mastery in Maths allows a deeper understanding of number.	
Retention of staff and professional development. Quality HLTA staff supported to complete teacher training to enable high quality teaching. TA professional development to progress to HLTA.	Evidence shows the importance of continued professional development. Through recognising quality staff and allowing development of their skills staff will remain and contribute to the high quality of teaching and learning that is essential for our pupils. Teacher quality, recruitment and retention EEF	1-5

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

Budgeted cost: £ 40000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Reading interventions	From the EEF one to one tuitions document: 'Evidence indicates that one to one tuition can be effective, delivering approximately five additional months' progress on average.' Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1
S and L interventions Students will continue to have high quality speech and language intervention where necessary. Experienced HLTA for English will lead small group/individual	Speech and language are developed throughout school and promoted across the curriculum. However, children that need it the most are offered interventions as evidence suggests this is effective in raising the attainment (and self-esteem) of children who struggle.	1 and 3

interventions where necessary. Reading for pleasure and parental engagement will be a focus, particularly in lower. Reading for pleasure lessons throughout school	Oral language interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Communication and language approaches EEF Several documents highlight the importance of developing the love of reading throughout school: Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Maths interventions Assessment data reviewed by maths lead and students highlighted for intervention Experienced HLTA for Maths will lead small group/individual interventions where necessary.	Several documents highlight the importance of developing basic numeracy skills for all children so that they can function in adulthood: Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Early years and Key Stage 1 mathematics teaching EEF Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3 EEF	2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 39065

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance to be in line with non-pupil premium children	Schools with higher levels of pupil absence had lower performance among disadvantaged pupils than schools with otherwise similar characteristics. Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)	4
Pupil support team for behaviour support	Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Although a higher cost, the evidence for behaviour support from the EEF shows that ensuring an ethos of positive behaviour across school will aid learning for all pupils. Evidence at The Willows shows that behaviour support from out PST has a huge positive impact on all our children.	3
Bespoke interventions from pupil support teams and other staff in school such as forest schools, therapy dog etc	We offer several different interventions such as dog therapy, forest school etc. The importance of a range of these in raising self-esteem and teaching children how to regulate can be seen in the following documents: Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Social and emotional learning EEF Metacognition and self-regulation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Behaviour EEF	3, 5
EHCP target reviews once a week/coaching programme for staff to work together around EHCP Preparing for adulthood lessons	Our children have their own targets on their EHCP, many link to social and emotional wellbeing/health and their communication and independence skills. Evidence to support the importance of these can be found in the following document: Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Essential life skills EEF Part of our preparing for adulthood lessons involved road safety and travel training. These will enhance their social	1 - 4

	interaction along with independence. This document outlines the importance of travel training for children that are safely able to do so: Department for Education (publishing.service.gov.uk)	
With me in mind membership and staff training	Students referred to with me in Mind and can access support alongside staff training. With me in mind – Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH)	3
Parent/carer engagement Reading for pleasure and parental engagement will be a focus, particularly in lower and middle school. PST will run parent/carer chat groups and engagement evenings	Parental engagement has an impact on the attainment of disadvantaged pupils as shown in the following document. Parental engagement EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) This importance of supporting families is highlighted here by the NSPCC, something we prioritise at The Willows Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) NSPCC Learning	3 and 4
After school clubs, music lessons, summer school activities	Evidence shows that attending an after school club/summer school gives students an increased sense of belonging and can support SEMH difficulties. It also promotes parental engagement. Summer schools EEF Parental engagement EEF	3, 5

Total budgeted cost: £ £139065

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

During 2024-2025 we continued to develop our curriculum to ensure all our children have access to a high-quality curriculum that allows progression at all levels. Subject leads will continue to review and adapt their curriculum to keep them up to date and relevant for our students. Students are currently assessed using our own assessment tool. Our data shows that pupil premium children perform at a similar level to non-pupil premium children.

Throughout 2024-2025 all staff have been given high quality training on teaching and learning, looking at evidence for this and support to implement the teaching and learning cycle across school. This has allowed for consistent high-quality lessons delivered to all students across school and will continue in 2025-2026.

Reading levels have been assessed towards the end of last academic year and data shows that pupil premium pupils have made similar progress to non- pupil premium pupils.

Our attendance data for last academic year also shows that there is no difference in attendance for our pupil premium and non-pupil premium children. Showing that the strategies in place are working.

Social and emotional wellbeing is difficult to evidence. Pupil Support Team intervention lists, and evidence show the positive impact that these have on all students that access them – all Pupil premium children accessed an intervention of some sort last academic year, this was bespoke to their needs.

Overall Pupil Premium children have a similar number of behaviour events on CPOMS to non-Pupil Premium children.

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