

Pupil premium strategy statement

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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Willow Bank Primary School
Number of pupils in school	182
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	55%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025/26 – 2027/28
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Julie Carson
Pupil premium lead	Abi Oldfield
Trustee lead	Nav Sanghara

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£197,253
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
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	£197,253

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, regardless of their background or the challenges they face, make strong progress and achieve highly across the full curriculum. Our pupil premium strategy is designed to enable every disadvantaged pupil to thrive, including those who are already greater depth, by ensuring access to challenge and opportunities to deepen their learning.

At the heart of our approach is a commitment to high-quality, inclusive education that embraces Universal Design for Learning principles. We utilise digital technology to personalise learning, enable adaptive teaching, and remove barriers to access. Through this, we foster learner agency, encouraging pupils to take ownership of their learning, make informed choices, and develop resilience and independence.

We take a holistic view of disadvantage, considering the diverse needs of vulnerable pupils such as those with social workers or who act as young carers. Our strategy is informed by robust diagnostic assessments rather than assumptions, enabling us to respond to both common challenges and individual circumstances with precision and care.

- Adaptive challenge: Ensuring all disadvantaged pupils experience stretch and ambition in their learning, supported by carefully designed scaffolds and digital tools where appropriate.
- Timely intervention: Acting early when a need is identified, with targeted support led by skilled staff including intervention teachers.
- Collective responsibility: Every member of staff plays a role in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, underpinned by a culture of high expectations and equity.
- Focus on the foundations: Embedding core knowledge and essential skills to secure long-term progress and deepen understanding.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Ensure our pedagogical approach consistently enhances pupil outcomes by being adaptive, personalised, and responsive to the individual needs of every learner. This approach incorporates professional recommendations and is informed by evidence-based practice, including the effective use of digital tools and UDL strategies.

2	Use diagnostic assessments to accurately identify gaps in knowledge, understanding, and skill development. These insights drive purposeful adaptations and responsive teaching, while ongoing Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques are embedded to address misconceptions, support metacognition, and secure long-term retention.
3	Embed high-quality, targeted interventions to develop oral language and vocabulary from the early years through to Key Stage 2, addressing the language gaps that disproportionately affect disadvantaged pupils and ensuring language-rich, inclusive classrooms across the school.
4	Assessment and observational data indicate that the attainment and social development of many disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 2 have been negatively affected by earlier partial school closures. These disruptions limited access to early education and professional support during key developmental stages.
5	Provide targeted social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) support for individuals and groups impacted by increased home-life challenges, including financial hardship and temporary housing. This need is supported by a rise in families receiving social care involvement, as evidenced in school data.
6	Improve attendance among disadvantaged pupils, whose overall attendance last year was 94.3%, slightly below pre-COVID national figures. Persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils was 19.3% significantly below national benchmarks. Our data confirms that absenteeism continues to limit academic progress and must be addressed as a strategic priority.

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 and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils from Reception to Year 6.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, work scrutiny, measurable outcomes within the Talk Matters project through the VRU project, individual care plans and ongoing formative assessment.
Improved maths and writing attainment and combined attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2.	KS2 maths, writing and combined outcomes in 2025/26 are at least in line with national average and are broadly in line with non-disadvantaged pupils.

To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2025/26 demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil voice groups • Pupil surveys • Increased number of children attending extra-curricular clubs • Reduced number of children supported through SEMH intervention groups
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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: £73,182

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Provide targeted and ongoing CPD to develop staff expertise in delivering high-quality, adaptive teaching aligned with our UDL approach, ensuring consistent practice that promotes learner agency, inclusion, and independent learning across the school.	<p>CPD for staff is pivotal in ensuring whole school improvement.</p> <p>Delivery of CPD, linked to the EEF Effective Professional Development Effective Professional Development EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1
Provide ongoing, high-quality CPD with planned opportunities for staff to observe and refine effective teaching strategies—such as responsive questioning, feedback, direct instruction, and independent learning techniques—to ensure consistent, high-impact practice aligned with our whole-school vision.	<p>There is strong evidence which highlights the impact on pupil progress linked to marking and feedback and planning which meets the needs of individuals.</p> <p>Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1,2, 4

PT SENCO and SEND assistant to support early intervention of identified needs, modelling strategies and providing tailored CPD for EYFS staff and guidance for parents.	<p>Early interventions have a positive impact on low-income families and is effective in narrowing the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers.</p> <p>Oral language interventions Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	1, 2, 3
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £73,181

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Staff members providing targeted Maths and English interventions for specific pupil groups.	<p>The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: Maths guidance KS 1 and 2.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3</p> <p>EEF outline Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants for interventions. Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	2,3,4
Senior leaders deployed to deliver small group interventions for pupils identified through data analysis, pupil conferences and review of learning.	<p>Strong evidence outlays the positive impact on pupil progress through small group provision.</p> <p>Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1,2,3,4

Phonics groupings within Key Stages and Year Groups are designed to ensure pupils continue to make progress above national expectations and reduce gap between PPG and Non-PPG in Year 1.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils: Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1,2,4
Staff implement evidence-based individual and whole-class interventions to further enhance learning outcomes.	Strong evidence outlays the positive impact on pupil progress through small group provision. Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,3,4
Targeted small group interventions and 1:1 support is provided for specific groups identified through in-school data, with a focus on developing oracy skills within all aspects of the curriculum.	There is a strong evidence base indicating that oral language interventions such as dialogic activities and high-quality classroom discussions are cost-effective to implement and have a significant positive impact on reading outcomes. Oral language interventions Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1,2,3,4

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

Budgeted cost: £50,890

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Group and individual SEMH interventions support pupils' mental health and help to remove barriers to learning for all learners.	Extensive evidence links childhood social and emotional skills to improved outcomes both in school and later life, including enhanced academic performance, positive attitudes, better behaviour, and stronger peer relationships. Improving social and emotional learning. Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2,5
Local Authority Education Welfare Officer to support families with attendance and acute need to improve attendance.	Strong evidence highlights the impact of attendance on pupil outcomes and strategies available to schools.	2,4,5
Reduce suspension rates through the ongoing exploration and implementation of effective behaviour strategies.	The EEF outlines interventions to improve behaviour through interventions and strategies. Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	5

Total budgeted cost: £190,890

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 2023 to 2024 academic year.

There is a gap in attainment EYFS GLD data between PPG (56%) and Non-PPG pupils (88%).

Y1 PPG Phonics data (67%) is in line with National PPG (68%), although below our non PPG (88%)

Y2 Phonics data shows that PPG (87%) exceeds National and is in line with our Non PPG attainment (89%).

External KS2 data shows that Pupil Premium Pupils (PPG) have achieved in line or exceeded non PPG pupils in Reading GDS, Writing EXS and GDS, Maths EXS and combined (EXS and GDS):

	PPG	NPPG
Reading	72%	79%
Reading GDS	31%	25%
Writing	69%	50%
Writing GDS	14%	14%
Maths	66%	64%
Maths GDS	14%	17%
Combined	62%	50%
Combined GDS	10%	8%

Overall, disadvantaged pupils are performing at or above national averages for disadvantaged pupils across all subjects, demonstrating that our strategic interventions and teaching approaches are having a positive impact. Moving forward, continuing to improve outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and maths will continue to be our priority.

Our assessment of the reasons for these outcomes points primarily to several key factors. Consistency in the quality of education has ensured that pupils receive high-quality teaching across all subjects. Continuous professional development (CPD) for staff, tailored to address specific needs identified through data analysis, has equipped teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to support all pupils more effectively. The involvement of outside professionals has brought in additional expertise and perspectives, further enhancing our educational provision. The robustness of our early identification of needs has allowed timely interventions, ensuring that pupils receive the support they require from the outset.

Our pedagogical approach, grounded in the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), has contributed to the removal of barriers to learning and provided equitable access for all pupils. This inclusive model supports a wide range of learning needs while encouraging independence.

These combined efforts have supported the improved outcomes observed for our disadvantaged pupils.

Attendance in 2024/25 (94.6% for disadvantaged) improved but remains a key focus for the school, with analysis revealing it is primarily linked to families with children with EHCPs as well as children with traveller heritage. Persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils was higher than that of their non-disadvantaged peers (14.3% compared to 9.5%) although this has improved significantly year on year.

We utilised pupil premium funding to provide wellbeing support for all pupils and implemented targeted interventions as needed, including access to targeted therapies. This year, we are continuing to build on a similar approach.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	N/A
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	N/A

Further information (optional)

Additional activity

- Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activity that is not being funded by pupil premium or recovery premium. That will include:
- offering a wide range of high-quality extracurricular activities to boost wellbeing, behaviour, attendance, and aspiration.

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

- We triangulated evidence from multiple sources of data including assessments, engagement in class book scrutiny, conversations with parents, students, and teachers to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils.
- We looked at several reports, studies, and research papers about effective use of pupil premium, the impact of disadvantage on education outcomes and how to address challenges to learning presented by socio-economic disadvantage. We also looked at studies about the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged pupils.