

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our academy's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 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 academy.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Mercia Academy
Number of pupils in school	598
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	40% Y7: 38% Y8: 44% Y9: 44% Y10: 34% Y11: 40%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023-2026
Date this statement was published	November 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2024
Statement authorised by	Jackie Cooper Head Teacher
Pupil premium lead	Nick Holmes Vice Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Dr. Alan Jones Chair of Academy Council

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£235,980
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total funding	

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Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across the curriculum, enabling them to make a successful transition to the next stage in their education or training.

The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers. We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker and young carers. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the core subjects is generally lower than that of their peers. Teacher diagnostic assessments suggest that many pupils particularly struggle with problem solving tasks and extended writing.

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2	Assessments, observations and discussion with KS3 pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils generally have lower levels of reading comprehension than peers. This impacts their progress in all subjects.
3	<p>Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families suggest that the education and wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged pupils have been impacted by partial school closures to a greater extent than for other pupils. These findings are backed up by several national studies.</p> <p>This has resulted in significant knowledge gaps resulting in pupils falling further behind age-related expectations.</p>
4	Our observations suggest many lower attaining disadvantaged pupils lack metacognitive / self-regulation strategies when faced with challenging tasks, notably in their monitoring and evaluation of their answers. This is indicated across the curriculum, particularly Maths and Science.
5	<p>Our attendance data indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils (82.5%) has been 5.5% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils (88%), with no difference between boys and girls.</p> <p>51% of disadvantaged pupils have been 'persistently absent' compared to 36% of their peers. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.</p>
6	Current figures suggest that 82% of PP students are in education or in employment 2 terms after leaving school (2020). We are ambitious to move this to 100% for Disadvantaged students.

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 attainment among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of KS4, with a focus on the core subjects.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Measure</th> <th>2023 National</th> <th>2023 School</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>P8</td> <td>0</td> <td>-0.86</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A8</td> <td>46.3</td> <td>32.35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Basics 5+</td> <td>45%</td> <td>28%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>2023/24 KS4 outcomes demonstrate that disadvantaged pupils achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P8 better than -0.3 • Attainment 8 score of above 40 	Measure	2023 National	2023 School	P8	0	-0.86	A8	46.3	32.35	Basics 5+	45%	28%
Measure	2023 National	2023 School											
P8	0	-0.86											
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 10% of national others in Basics 5+
Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across KS3.	Star Reader tests demonstrate improved comprehension skills among disadvantaged pupils and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers. Teachers should also have recognised this improvement through engagement in lessons and book scrutiny.
Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects.	Teacher reports and class observations suggest disadvantaged pupils are more able to monitor and regulate their own learning. This finding is supported by homework completion rates across all classes and subjects.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	<p>Sustained high attendance to 2024/25 demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 5% (95% currently 91.5%), and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced, with PP attendance increasing to at least 92%. • the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 15% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 5% lower than their peers, using the 92% threshold.

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: £73,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Salary contribution to Deputy Head Teacher – Quality of Education £60,000	Ensuring an effective teacher is in front of every class, and that every teacher is supported to keep improving, is the key ingredient of a successful school and should rightly be a top priority for pupil premium spending.	1, 2, 3

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	The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium - Autumn 2021	
Additional staffing to help reduce class sizes, particularly at KS3 £80,000	Developing high quality teaching, assessment and a broad and balanced, knowledge-based curriculum that responds to the needs of pupils, The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium - Autumn 2021	1,2,3
Purchase of further GL Assessment Progress Tests Training will be provided to ensure assessments are interpreted correctly £9,000	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction: Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1, 2, 3
Membership of National College to provide a range of CPD which improves quality of teaching £2,000	Spending on improving teaching might include professional development, training and support for early career teachers The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium - Autumn 2021	1, 2, 3
Visits to schools with a similar PP cohort who have good practice – cover costs £2,500	Taking an evidence-informed approach to Pupil Premium spending can help schools to: • Compare how similar challenges have been tackled in other schools The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium - Autumn 2021	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £50,000

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Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Funding for trips and materials for PP students £15,000	The causes and consequences of disadvantage are varied: Pupil Premium students are not a homogeneous group. Funding will be used to support access to the full curriculum, including experiences that seek to build cultural capital	1, 2, 3
Engaging with the National Tutoring Programme to provide school-led tutoring in En/Ma for pupils whose education has been most impacted by the pandemic. A significant proportion of the pupils who receive tutoring will be disadvantaged, including those who are high attainers. £35,000	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1, 2

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

Budgeted cost: £75,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE's Improving School Attendance advice. Contribution to Deputy Head Teacher salary. Role has responsibility for	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.	5

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attendance, transition and behaviour £40,000		
TLR funding to support lead for the TAP initiative £6,500	Wider strategies relate to the most significant non-academic challenges to success in school, including attendance, behaviour, and social and emotional support, which also may negatively impact upon academic attainment. The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium - Autumn 2021	4, 6
Funding for PP lead on SLT £16,000	A pupil premium strategy is more likely to be effective if school leaders plan how to sustain it from the outset and monitor practice in an annual cycle. School leaders should not assume that strategies which have been effective in one year will continue to be effective in another. The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium - Autumn 2021	4
Y6 Transition Programme £2,500	Schools put significant effort into sharing information and making new, positive connections, so that pupils start confidently in their new setting. We know that transitions between classes, year groups and settings are likely to be of significant importance in the lead up to the new academic year. EEF School Improvement Planning – 3. Wider Strategies	All
Contingency fund for acute issues. £10,000	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	All

Total budgeted cost: £278,500

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

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

	2019 All	2019 PP (Gap)	2022 All	2022 PP (Gap)
Attainment 8	41.47	32.03 (9.44)	38.7	34.3 (4.4)
Attainment 8 En	9.49	7.43 (2.06)	9.3	7.97 (1.33)
Attainment 8 Ma	7.87	6.11 (1.76)	7.2	6.06 (1.14)
Attainment 8 EBacc	10.60	7.63 (2.97)	8.7	7.26 (1.44)
Attainment 8 Open	13.61	10.86 (2.75)	13.5	11.99 (1.51)

The comparison between pre- and post-pandemic gaps shows that the gap has closed for all above measures. This would suggest that the actions taken during the pandemic and as part of the school's recovery strategy for Disadvantaged students. In fact the overall A8 score, as well as A8 En and A8 Open improved, with the other two indicators remaining essentially static.

The pandemic has had an impact on attendance, with this currently affecting disadvantaged students more than other students:

Attendance	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Pupil Premium	90.1%	90.7%	87.6%	82.5%
Non-Pupil Premium	93.9%	94.5%	95.1%	91%

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All	93%	93.4%	92.7%	88%
PA 92%	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Pupil Premium	40.6%	32.6%	39.7%	51%
All	26.6%	22.6%	23%	36%

Our assessments demonstrated that pupil behaviour, wellbeing and mental health were significantly impacted last year, primarily due to COVID-19-related issues. The impact was particularly acute for disadvantaged pupils. We used pupil premium funding to provide wellbeing support for all pupils, and targeted interventions where required.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
N/A	

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

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

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