

Pupil premium strategy statement – Verulam 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	1000
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	11.1% (113 students)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2024- 2027
Date this statement was published	October 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	Fergal Moane
Pupil premium lead	Kate Thackray
Governor / Trustee lead	Mike Nisbet

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£131,250
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
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>	£131,250

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

As an inclusive school, our intention is to provide an aspirational teaching and learning environment for all of our pupils, regardless of their background or the challenges they face. Our intent is that all pupils will make outstanding progress and achieve successful academic outcomes enabling them to move into a career of their choice.

Our ultimate goal is that no child is left behind socially, or academically because of disadvantage they may face. We strive to raise lifelong aspirations and focus on removing barriers to learning and achieving excellence. Equity is at the heart of our strategy – offering support and scaffolds to ensure that pupils have the same opportunities as their peers. We embed a robust pastoral system and support networks in order to meet the individual needs of our pupils, enabling them to flourish during their time at Verulam.

Challenges such as attendance, literacy, access to opportunities and pupil wellbeing will be further explored in this document and contribute to the development of our Pupil Premium strategic plan. Our core values of *Excellence, Character and Respect* are at the heart of all our strategies.

High quality teaching, including adaptive teaching practices is key to our approach to raising academic outcomes for our pupils. We have invested and continue to invest in evidence led professional development for staff in order to become experts in our fields and have the most impact on the pupils we teach. We intend for disadvantaged pupils to make progress in line with or even exceed that of their non-disadvantaged peers. Our response is both strategic at a whole school level whilst also considering the individual needs of pupils. Through early intervention, we intend to address potential barriers as soon as possible to ensure that all pupils have high aspirations and a strong sense of school belonging.

Challenges

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



Challenge number	Detail of challenge												
1	<p>Attainment gap at GCSE</p> <p>An attainment gap exists at GCSE between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Provisional data for 2024 KS4 outcomes; P8 for PP v non-PP: -0.07/0.53</p> <p>We are most concerned about pupils achieving grades 4+ and 5+ in English and maths as this is most important for securing future pathways.</p>												
2	<p>Attendance</p> <p>The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is lower than their non-disadvantaged peers.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="360 669 1407 826"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2021-2022</th> <th>2022-2023</th> <th>2023-2024</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pupil Premium</td> <td>84.29%</td> <td>87.42%</td> <td>85.07%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-Pupil Premium</td> <td>91.18%</td> <td>92.32%</td> <td>91.82</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This gap is a concern as it will have a direct impact on attainment and outcomes for a group of young people, especially where persistent absenteeism is a concern.</p>		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	Pupil Premium	84.29%	87.42%	85.07%	Non-Pupil Premium	91.18%	92.32%	91.82
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3	<p>Literacy: Fluency and comprehension in reading</p> <p>Data from multiple sources in year 6 and 7 (KS2 SATS, reading age tests and CATS scores) indicates that there is a higher proportion of PP pupils with below standardised scores than the average for the year group.</p> <p>Pupil Premium students will need extra support to increase their reading fluency and comprehension in order to access the full curriculum and make progress. Continuing support will also be a priority for disadvantaged KS4 pupils, to ensure that we close the attainment gap at GCSE.</p>												
4	<p>Mental wellbeing concerns</p> <p>Our pastoral data (counselling/ mentoring/ engagement with LINKS and VISTA) indicates that some disadvantaged pupils struggle with social and emotional issues such as anxiety, depression and low self-esteem. This can impact their attendance to lessons and in some cases result in school refusal. Some face one or more significant challenges in their home or personal lives which require school or external agency support in order for them to participate successfully in all aspects of school life.</p>												
5	<p>Lack of resources for learning</p> <p>Our behaviour data indicates that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to receive consequences linked to organisation. Discussions with pupils and families identified that some disadvantaged pupils lack appropriate space and resources at home, and can struggle to purchase school uniform which is essential in creating a sense of belonging to a school community. Some families cannot afford to send children on whole year group residential trips in KS3 which are key experiences to foster personal development, independence and belonging.</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
The gap in GCSE attainment is reduced.	All pupils achieve at or above their target grades, particularly in English and maths. The gap in P8 between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students has closed. All staff will be well trained and skilled in how to support children eligible for PP funding through the facilitation of high quality teaching and learning.
Successful transition for all PP pupils into Year 7, creating a sense of belonging and support to actively participate in all areas of school life	Robust and carefully planned systems in place to ensure these pupils are supported in their transition from Year 6 to Year 7. Pupils strengths and potential barriers will be known to us before they begin in September.
Pupil premium attendance levels to be in line with whole school attendance. Initiatives increase attendance across the whole school	The average % attendance between pupils eligible for PP and the overall % attendance will be reduced and will be above the national average for both groups. A robust plan of support is in place for pupils who are persistently absent which is reviewed every 3 weeks.
Literacy is supported intensively at KS3 with targeted students so that students can access the full curriculum	Reading age scores improve and are in line with chronological ages for pupils in intervention programmes between the beginning and end of Year 7 and then again at the end of Year 9. The improvement means that pupils can access the full curriculum. Teachers, parents and pupils can see a sustained improvement in reading comprehension and fluency after interventions.
Robust systems of support are in place for pupils who struggle with mental health or wellbeing concerns.	All pupils with wellbeing concerns are logged and appropriate support and provision is in place. Successful collaboration between school staff and external support agencies – pupils are supported in a timely manner and there is a joined up approach to interventions.

	Improved attendance, wellbeing happiness and sense of belonging for pupils.
All pupils have the resources necessary to be successful in school, including chrome book device, equipment, uniform and access to core residential trips.	<p>Pupils eligible for PP have minimal consequences for lack of equipment.</p> <p>PP coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the school is able to offer additional resources and uniform where needed.</p> <p>All pupils will experience a residential trip which builds personal development and a sense of belonging.</p>

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £45,291.76

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Whole school CPD</p> <p>Continue to raise the profile of pupils and their needs amongst all staff. Ensure departments are forensic in their analysis of data in order to identify gaps between PP and non-PP pupils. Ensure the use of evidence to inform best teaching and support of PP pupils, including adaptive teaching practices, is prioritised across the school</p>	<p>'The Verulam Way' -a bespoke developmental CPD programme aiming to ensure evidence-informed practice is at the heart of pedagogy and centred around the development needs that staff have identified through PMR.</p> <p>Whole school focus this year is on Adaptive Teaching, which will benefit PP learners as well as other groups such as SEND.</p> <p>Professional development which is both delivered 'in house' and in collaboration with the Alban Teaching School Hub and AET Collaboration.</p> <p>https://drive.google.com/file/d/1U-3VGVw70eB15Y-NfD8mftSvf_tZAABf/view</p>	1,3,5
<p>Additional CPD programmes.</p>	<p>Further bespoke training offered to all staff. Staff will be encouraged to engage with and collaborate with colleagues as</p>	1,3,5

<p>Utilising both 'in-house' professional development through 'The Verulam Way', alongside the Alban Teaching School Hub and Ambition Education Trust collaboration</p>	<p>part of the wider trust as a means of sharing best practice and finding innovative ways to support pupil premium pupils.</p> <p>All training is evidence based with the core-aim of reducing the impact of disadvantage.</p>	
<p>CPD for literacy. Continued whole school focus for literacy, including explicit teaching of vocabulary and delivery of literacy interventions.</p>	<p>'The Verulam Way' - Whole staff training in how to support literacy in the classroom - based on the Frayer Model of vocabulary instruction.</p> <p>https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/frayer-model</p> <p>EEF 'vocabulary in action' evidences the impact that explicit teaching of vocabulary has across all areas of the curriculum.</p>	1,3
<p>Mental wellbeing Continue to prioritise the emotional and mental health of pupils alongside pupil wellbeing. Support clearly built into each key stage, fully staffed and reviewed to meet whole school and individual needs of the child. Clubs and homework support available for pupils to attend to support social and emotional wellbeing as well as academic support.</p>	<p>Interventions which target social and emotional wellbeing are reported by the EEF to improve progress by an additional 4 months.</p> <p>Clubs are open to support pastoral and academic needs of pupils.</p> <p>Pupils signposted to relevant opportunities by the PP lead and Heads of Year.</p> <p>Priority for school counselling service and behaviour outreach support from LINKS.</p>	1, 2, 4, 5
<p>Resources for learning Funding available for families for core curriculum day trips and whole year group residential.</p> <p>Funding available to support pupils access the resources they need to be fully included and</p>	<p>Trips and visits are a vital part of school life and key to enhancing 'cultural capital' – both in terms of key learning experiences and personal development. These experiences also enhance our 'super curriculum' which is aimed at stretching pupils to develop a curiosity and love of learning beyond the classroom.</p> <p>We want to support all pupils to attend core learning experiences and use</p>	2, 5

<p>successful in all aspects of school life - this includes, equipment, texts and uniform.</p> <p>Continued training for staff to identify and support pupils who might not have access to resources, done in a discreet way to ensure full inclusion and equity across pupils.</p>	<p>funding to ensure that any barriers are removed.</p> <p>All pupils to have access to school resources, uniform and equipment to create equity amongst pupils and a clear sense of belonging.</p> <p>Support for students with access to music instrumental lessons, sport through providing equipment and outdoor education with co-funding and loan or provision of equipment.</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £17,384.75

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><i>The Brilliant Club - Year 9 pupils supported to raise educational outcomes and aspirations.</i></p>	<p>Develop key 'university readiness' skills such as critical thinking and meta-cognition.</p> <p>Developing understanding and aspirations to attend university</p> <p>Scholars programme graduates are almost twice as likely to progress to highly selective universities (UCAS evaluation 2019)</p> <p>https://thebrilliantclub.org/</p>	1,3,5
<p><i>KS3 Literacy interventions + Sparx reader</i></p>	<p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-review/s/secondary-literacy</p> <p>Sparx reader supports pupils' working memory and provides teachers with powerful insights about each individual pupil's reading ability</p>	1,3
<p><i>6th form reading buddies and mentoring programme</i></p>	<p>6th form students are paired with PP pupils to support reading confidence and fluency. Evidence suggests that reading out loud supports reading comprehension, confidence, fluency and love of reading.</p> <p>https://researchschool.org.uk/unity/news/10-reasons-why-reading-aloud-matters</p>	1, 3

	The buddy scheme also offers an opportunity to build cross- key stage relationships	
<i>Examination support and resources</i>	<p>Explicit delivery of revision material and support resources has a direct impact on pupil progress.</p> <p>Targeted intervention groups across GCSE subjects to close the attainment gap</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/supporting-revision-and-the-seven-step-model</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-guest-blog-building-study-habits-and-revision-routines</p>	5
<i>Supplies/ materials for PP pupils across subjects in KS3 & 4</i>	<p>Available resources and the way they are spent influence's pupil learning and sense of belonging.</p> <p>Pupils are supported with purchasing materials for practical subjects as well as ensuring disadvantaged pupils have full access to the relevant texts and resources as their peers.</p> <p>PP pupils who are identified as struggling with home-learning or access to resources and encouraged to attend homework club.</p> <p>www.oecd.org/education/school</p>	5
<i>Chrome book financial support</i>	Ensuring all pupils have their personal chrome book device – essential for accessing google classroom, completing homework, sparx reading and creating equity across pupils.	5
<i>Maths tuition - Years 7-11</i>	An external subject specialist delivers targeted intervention for PP pupils in maths - groups identified across KS3 & 4 in order to foster confidence and a love of learning in this subject.	1, 5

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

Budgeted cost: 68,573.49

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<p><i>Pastoral wellbeing officer - strategic support and analysis of pastoral interventions for PP pupils.</i></p>	<p>Evidence suggests that, on average, behaviour and pastoral interventions can produce moderate improvements in academic performance, wellbeing, along with a decrease in problematic behaviours.</p> <p>EEF</p> <p>Our wellbeing officer provides support for families and parents as well as young people.</p>	<p>1,2, 4</p>
<p><i>LINKS outreach support</i></p>	<p>LINKS outreach support works in collaboration with Verulam pastoral leads to enable children and young people to experience success in all elements of their school life, particularly where challenging behaviour is preventing them from accessing learning or places them at risk of exclusion from school.</p> <p>https://linksacademystalbans.co.uk/outreach/</p>	<p>1,2,4</p>
<p><i>Family support worker & VISTA behaviour mentors</i></p>	<p>School family support workers are skilled, experienced and trained to support families and offer a non-judgmental approach. By working with parents and carers in the home and teaching staff in the school, they can deliver a targeted programme of support or signposting to relevant services.</p> <p>https://www.vistastalbans.org.uk/about-us/</p> <p>Behaviour mentors work 1:1 with pupils to identify barriers to success and develop strategies to support young people in all areas of school life.</p>	<p>1,2, 4</p>
<p><i>Targeted PP attendance support officer</i></p>	<p>A designated member of the safeguarding and pastoral team supports the SLT attendance lead to ensure PP attendance is a whole school priority and the individual needs of pupils are met</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/leadership-and-planning/supporting-attendance</p>	<p>1,2,4</p>
<p><i>Extended pastoral team to support PP pupils</i></p>	<p>Each year group has dedicated pastoral staff who monitor and forensically analyse the progress, attendance and wellbeing of PP pupils in their year group.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/using-pupil-premium</p>	<p>1,2,3,4,5</p>

<i>Funding for Year 11 Prom and Year 11 Year book</i>	Every pupil in Year 11 should be able to attend their prom and enjoy celebrating this event. The Year Book is a key piece of 'Verulam history' for each pupil as they graduate from KS4.	1,2,4,5
<i>Forensic approach to data analysis : pastoral and academic</i>	TAC meetings to manage vulnerable student needs, HoY review of attendance behaviour, SLT analysis of quadrants (academic progress) and pastoral data, reporting to governors	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<i>Breakfast club - funding available for all PP pupils</i>	All PP eligible pupils will be given a financial allowance to ensure all have the opportunity to have breakfast before school on a daily basis. No pupil will be hungry as they start their school day.	1,2,3,4,5

Total budgeted cost: £131,250

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

In 2023-24 the attainment for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium demonstrated a gap between our PP and non-PP pupils. The average grade for non-Pupil Premium pupils was 5.2, whereas for PP pupils this was 3.91

Overall Progress 8 for non-Pupil Premium pupils was 0.63, compared to -0.08 for disadvantaged pupils.

The attendance for this group remains below their non-disadvantaged peers.

The Brilliant Club continues to have successful outcomes with a number of pupils who took part showing increased engagement with school life and their academic achievement. We are continuing to invest in this programme for this academic year and specifically target PP pupils to take part.

We worked closely with our pastoral leads and wellbeing team to prioritise behaviour and a decrease in negative behaviour points for PP pupils. This has had a positive impact on school wide behaviour and pupil self-image and self-esteem – as captured in pupil survey data. This model of support and pastoral provision will continue into 2024-25

The purchasing of resources on an individual basis when requested by staff, external agencies and at times families, continues. This approach sits alongside our whole school approach to funding for these pupils which includes ensuring all PP are able to attend a residential trip experience. These trips and residential provide social and cultural experiences that enrich lives and widen horizons and encourage pupils to be more aspirational.

We measure the impact of our initiatives in a number of ways including focus groups, pupil voice, analysis of behaviour, progress and attendance as well as engagement with school life.

Key to supporting pupils is the partnership between parents/carers and the school. Internal monitoring of parental engagement at school evenings and information evenings continues and we call parents in advance to prioritise attendance and support appointments at parents' evenings. Relationships and belonging are at the heart of our strategies to support pupils and families.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
The Brilliant Club	https://thebrilliantclub.org/

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:
How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils



Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.

