

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	The Wordsley School
Number of pupils in school	944
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	36%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	3
Date this statement was published	31/12/2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	31/10/2025
Statement authorised by	Ashley Weatherhogg
Pupil premium lead	Emma Burgess
Governor / Trustee lead	Melvyn Kershaw

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£337,674
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	£337,674

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At The Wordsley School, the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) is used to improve the educational outcomes of pupils eligible for this funding. Our aim is to ensure strong teaching in all our classrooms. Our overarching goal is for disadvantaged pupils to achieve excellent outcomes and make exceptional progress, in line with their peers both within the school and nationally, while enhancing their personal development through access to a range of enrichment opportunities.

Our budget allocation and strategy are guided by the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) extensive, research-based approach. The EEF guidance recommends a three-tiered approach:

Teaching - Investing in High-Quality Teaching

At The Wordsley School, we are committed to developing our teaching staff through a comprehensive professional development programme that is followed by all staff. Ensuring that there is an effective teacher in front of every class, and that every teacher is supported to continuously improve, is the cornerstone of a successful school. This focus is our top priority for pupil premium spending.

Targeted Academic Support - Addressing Pupils' Specific Needs

Evidence consistently shows the positive impact that targeted academic support can have, particularly for pupils who are not making good progress across the achievement spectrum. At The Wordsley School, we ensure that classroom teachers and teaching assistants provide targeted academic support through structured one-to-one or small-group interventions that are closely linked to classroom teaching. These measures allow us to intervene promptly when students fall behind, ensuring they receive the support needed to succeed.

Wider Approaches - Supporting Non-Academic Barriers

Wider strategies address significant non-academic barriers to success in school, including attendance, behaviour, and social and emotional support. At The Wordsley School, we strive to maximise attendance, as we firmly believe that regular attendance is essential for pupils to achieve their full potential. Our pupil premium spending supports initiatives to encourage and maintain high attendance levels.

We also prioritise creating a positive learning environment in every classroom, ensuring that all pupils can focus on their studies. Pupil premium funding is used to foster a school climate where learning thrives.

Finally, through our wider strategies, we ensure that all pupils have access to extra-curricular activities and cultural enrichment opportunities. Our pupil premium funding provides financial support for any pupil who might otherwise be unable to participate due to financial constraints. This ensures that no pupil misses out on valuable experiences because of their financial circumstances while they are at our school.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Academic progress - To improve the outcomes of all pupils by ensuring the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning.
2	Attendance - Attendance data for the last three years indicates a clear attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students According to attendance data in Autumn 1 of 2024-25 and national trends, disadvantaged students are more likely to be persistently absent than other students. Our observations and assessments of these students indicate that attendance is having a significant detrimental impact on disadvantaged pupils' progress
3	Behaviour and suspensions - The proportion of negative behaviour referrals and suspensions is disproportionately higher for pupil premium pupils compared to non – pupil premium pupils.
4	Reading – Research suggests that lower reading ages will have a negative impact not only on performance in English, but across the curriculum. Our pupils join us with reading skills that are well below the national average.
5	Parental engagement - There is a high proportion of pupil premium pupils whose parents/ carers are difficult to reach and as a result engagement with school and their child's education is low.
6	Personal Development - National research suggests that socio-economic status is a significant factor in determining participation in extracurricular activities. Children from more wealthy households are much more likely to take part in every type of activity, but especially music classes and sport. Barriers to taking part in extra-curricular activities for those from low-income households include their high cost, a lack of confidence, and difficulties in access. This is seen in the context of the The Wordsley School with a historically lower percentage of disadvantaged pupils engaging in extracurricular activities, additional trips/visits and other school opportunities.
7	Aspirations - With the 'pupil base' falling into the fourth quintile for deprivation nationally, we face significant challenges in raising pupil aspirations and inspiring them regarding the wide variety of career pathways and college options available to them.

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
To achieve and sustain improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils	Improved attainment data in all subjects for pupils who are identified as pupil premium.
Improved levels of attendance and a reduction in the percentage of pupil premium students who are persistent absenteeism from school.	<p>The overall absence rate for pupil premium students and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being no more than national average</p> <p>The percentage of all pupil premium students who are persistently absent will be lower than 25% and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers to have narrowed when compared to 2023/24 data.</p>
<p>Reduction in the number of negative behaviour referrals for pupil premium pupils.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of occasions and days that pupil premium pupils who are suspended from school</p>	<p>The total number negative referrals give to pupil premium students will reduce compared to previous years.</p> <p>A reduction in the number of occasions and total days lost to suspension for pupil premium students when compared to previous years.</p>
To improve the reading ages of pupil premium students and increase the number of pupil premium students who can read at a level comparable to their chronological reading age.	The proportion of PP pupils in each of Year 7, 8 and 9 in stanine 1-3 (NGRT) will be at least in line with all pupils of a similar age, nationally.
Improved attendance of pupil premium parents/ carers at school events.	The proportion of pupil premium parents/carers attending a school event will be at least in-line with the equivalent proportion for non-pupil premium parents/carers.
To increase and sustain numbers of pupil premium students taking part in Extracurricular and enrichment activities	<p>The proportion of pupil premium pupils attending extra-curricular activities will be at least in-line with the equivalent proportion for non- pupil premium pupils.</p> <p>Every pupil premium pupil will be offered the opportunity to attend at least one school trip/visit every academic year.</p>
Ensure pupil premium pupils are aware of the career paths and college options which are available to them	<p>Each KS4 pupil premium child will receive a careers interview over the academic year.</p> <p>The NEET (Not in education, employment or training) rate for PP pupils will be at least in-line with the NEET rate for all pupils in both Brierley Hill district and the wider Dudley borough.</p>

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: £217,674

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
A high-quality professional development programme to ensure all teaching staff deliver quality first teaching in the classroom to ensure engagement and progress of ALL students	In order to diminish the difference for our disadvantaged pupils we are working on delivering quality first teaching and equity between ALL – strategies sit within our teacher expectations.	1, 4, 6
Purchase of walkthroughs to enable evidence informed teaching strategies.	Evidence-informed Teaching Strategies	1, 4
Ensuring the retention of key members of teaching staff to ensure Quality First Teaching	What happens in the classroom makes the biggest difference: improving teaching quality generally leads to greater improvements at lower cost than structural changes. There is particularly good evidence around the potential impact of teacher professional development; but the supply of high quality training is limited – EEF ‘Closing the gap: Key lessons in the EEF’s first 6 years’	1, 4, 6
Focused CPD on behaviour management / curriculum	CPD is focusing on establishing clear behaviour routines which are strategically mapped. This equips staff and students with consistent and shared expectations for behaviour for learning. This will help students who find self-regulation a challenge.	3
Retaining a low pupil:staff ratio, to ensure that teachers have high levels of flexibility with regard to organising pupils and have the time to provide high quality feedback, which has a high impact on academic pupil progress.	Reducing class size EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 4, 6
Review and amend where appropriate the whole school assessment and feedback policy and ensure there is a professional	Research reviewed in the Teaching and Learning Toolkit suggests that the provision of high-quality feedback can lead to an average of six additional months’ progress over the	1, 4

development focus placed up members of staff checking for understanding in classrooms and ensuring pupils engaging with effective feedback.	course of a year. This ensures that students receive consistently high levels of teacher feedback and have the opportunity to respond in dedicated improvement time.	
A non-teaching Pupil Premium Leader, whose sole responsibility is to work with a member of the school's Senior leadership team to lead and monitor Pupil Premium provision across the school.	Pupil Premium Guidance.pdf (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	All
Two whole-school Literacy Leaders to lead the strategic development of literacy provision across the school.	Literacy EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 4
Purchase of NGRT reading tests for pupils in year 7-10 to complete on a bi-annual basis (year 11 once a year), coupled with training to support relevant staff in administering and using the assessment data.	Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Education Endowment Foundation EEF Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 4
Purchase of UNIFROG; a destinations platform aimed at raising aspirations of pupils in KS3	Aspiration interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	7

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

Budgeted cost: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of Accelerated Reader programme to support identified groups of pupils in their development of literacy	Phonics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 4
Reciprocal reading intervention programme (Reader Leaders) to support pupil premium pupils in their comprehension.	Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) <p>According to the EEF: 'Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+6 months). Alongside phonics it is a crucial component of early reading instruction'</p>	4
Purchase of LEXIA which is a reading programme to support Literacy.	Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4

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

Budgeted cost: £90,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Financial support for pupil premium pupils, to provide access to opportunities.	<p>Support pupils with opportunities and facilities they might not have outside of school.</p> <p>Arts participation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>School trips help schools succeed Education Business (educationbusinessuk.net)</p>	6
Restructuring of roles in the school's attendance team to ensure that the attendance of pupil premium pupils is prioritised.	<p>Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.</p> <p>National Foundation for Educational Research briefing for school leaders identifies addressing attendance as a key step.</p>	2
Role of Family Liaison Officer to improve attendance, engagement of families and break down barriers so that the attendance of pupils improves.	<p>Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>	2, 3, 5
<p>Purchase of a software package, to track behaviour and communication home called Class Charts.</p> <p>Use of Class Charts to promote positive behaviours between staff and students and improve communication with parents.</p>	<p>Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Treorchy Comprehensive School - ClassCharts</p> <p>Parental engagement EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>EEF research suggests Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. Based on the</p>	1, 3, 5, 6, 7

	experiences of similar schools, we have adopted Class Charts this academic year to help facilitate more effective communication with parents.	
Purchase of a software package to enable online Parents' Evenings to take place.	Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	1, 3, 4, 5
Careers interview for all pupil premium pupils in KS4	To ensure that pupil premium pupils remain in education, employment, or training post-16.	7
Funding for Trips and celebrations.	A sum of funds set aside to ensure that PP pupils can access opportunities through trips and reward celebrations.	1, 3, 6, 7
Contingency fund	A small sum of funds is necessary to retain in reserve, to provide an effective and rapid response to urgent issues that often arise without warning.	All

Total budgeted cost: £337,674

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 2022 to 2023 academic year.

Intended outcome 1 - PP pupils with high levels of attainment make significantly better academic progress than has been the case in recent years

For 2024, the Progress 8 score (which is a measure of how much progress pupils at this school made across 8 qualifications between the end of KS2 and the end of KS5, compared to other similar pupils nationally) for our disadvantaged students -088. There were a number of outliers within the data some of which attended alternative provision.

Intended outcome 2 - Improved levels of persistent absenteeism (PA), punctuality and unauthorised absence, amongst PP pupils

Whilst the overall rate of persistent absence (40%) is still higher than the benchmark we have set for the end of our three-year plan (25%), we are pleased to see some progress in this area, amongst pupils in KS3, which is a result of the focus we have placed on this aspect of our strategy with these year groups. Specifically, the rate of PA in Year 7 and 8 is currently 29% and 34%, respectively.

Intended outcome 3 - Improved levels of aspiration amongst PP pupils

The NEET rate for leavers in 2023 at The Wordsley School (1.2%) was lower than our local area (1.8%) and only marginally higher than the wider Dudley borough (0.9%).

Intended outcome 4 - Improved reading and comprehension amongst PP pupils in KS3

At the outset of 2022/23 the proportion of pupils in KS3 with overall stanines of 1-3 (below average) was 38%, compared to 23% nationally. At the end of 2023/24, this proportion had fallen to 32% (Year 8) and 28% (Year 9).

Intended outcome 5 - Improved attendance of PP parents/ carers at school events

The proportion of parents/carers of PP pupils attending school events has increased. At last year's Year 11 Parents' Evening, 27% of the pupils attending were parents/carers of PP pupils, compared to the 32% of PP pupils in the cohort. At the following Year 9 options evening, 25% of the pupils attending were parents/carers of PP pupils, compared to the 35% of PP pupils in the cohort.

Intended outcome 6 - Improved rates of engagement of PP pupils in extracurricular activities, additional trips/ visits and other school opportunities

Pupils are offered 59 extra-curricular clubs per week. In 2023/24 537 unique pupils attended clubs with 32% of those being pupil premium, which is broadly in-line with the proportion of pupil premium pupils in our school. This continues to be the trend in the starting term of the 2024-25 academic year.

Intended outcome 7 - Improved rates of aspirations and access to opportunity

Pupils in each year group now receive aspirational and motivational talk about Further Education, careers and the working world as part of our 'Careers and Character Education' in form time.

All years now have access to 'careers & croissants' every month. This is an event where a person from different careers comes into school and talks about their career and opportunities in the workplace.

Our careers advisor is in the process of collating KS4 aspirational information following the external speakers Year 10 and 11 have seen this year. Due to the new PAL (Provider Access Legislation) pupils in Years 8-11 will now receive talks with companies or placements that provide jobs, further education and apprenticeships.

Intended outcome 8 - Eliminating low level safeguarding concerns for PP children, by offering more rapid initial intervention

The proportion of safeguarding referrals from PP pupils is (41.5%) for the academic year of 2023-2024.

Intended outcome 9 - Decrease rates of suspensions amongst PP pupils

The proportion of suspensions for PP pupils has reduced marginally, from 70% (2022/23) to 62% (2023/24), however, this continues to remain a priority for us.

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
Online parents' evening platform	School Cloud
Seating Plans	Class Charts
Behaviour	Class Charts
Academic data platform	SIMS
Provision Mapping	Edukey
Pupil destinations platform	UNIFROG