

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	919
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	39%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	3
Date this statement was published	31/12/2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	31/10/2026
Statement authorised by	Ashley Weatherhogg
Pupil premium lead	Sarah Austin
Governor / Trustee lead	Melvyn Kershaw

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£393,024
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	£393,024

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. Internal evaluation indicates that variability in classroom practice, attendance and literacy access—rather than a lack of intervention—has been the primary barrier to improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

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 achievement / 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 2025-26 and national trends, disadvantaged students are more likely to be persistently absent than other students. They are also less likely to be in Band 1 or Band 2 for their attendance. Our observations and assessments of these students indicate that attendance is having a significant detrimental impact on disadvantaged pupils' achievement and 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 Wordsley School with a historically lower percentage of disadvantaged pupils engaging in extracurricular activities, additional trips/visits and other school opportunities.
7	Aspirations - The socio-economic context of the community we serve creates identifiable challenges in raising pupils' aspirations. Limited access to enrichment opportunities and reduced exposure to a variety of post-16 and career pathways can restrict pupils' confidence in pursuing ambitious goals. Strengthening aspiration and awareness of future opportunities therefore remains a key focus.

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, increase the number of pupils in bands 1 and bands 2 and a reduction in the percentage of pupil premium students who are persistently absent 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>Increase the number of pupil premium pupils in Bands 1 and Bands 2 compared to the previous year.</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 2024/25 data.</p>
<p>Reduction in the number of negative behaviour referrals for pupil premium pupils.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of pupil premium pupils who are suspended from school</p>	<p>The total number of negative referrals given 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: £190,000

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 that sit within our teacher expectations.	1, 4, 6
To improve the quality, consistency, engagement and impact of feedback so that disadvantaged pupils consistently respond to feedback and demonstrate improvements in their work.	Feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,3,4
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 and the quality of teaching	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
Review and amend where appropriate the whole school assessment and feedback policy and ensure there is a professional development focus placed on members of staff checking for understanding in classrooms and	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 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.	1, 4

ensuring pupils engage with effective feedback.		
Structure change within the Senior Leadership Team to encompass the PP agenda and to ensure it is given the priority to ensure support and impact is seen.	Pupil Premium Guidance.pdf (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	All
A whole-school Literacy Leader to lead the strategic development of literacy provision across the school. Working alongside 2 learning champions with Literacy as their main focus.	Literacy EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 4
Over staffed core subjects to ensure pupils always have high quality English, maths and science teachers.	EEF – <i>Improving Secondary Science</i> https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/science EEF – <i>Improving Secondary Literacy</i> https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-secondary EEF – <i>Quality Teaching Toolkit</i> https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development DfE – Teacher Workforce & Recruitment Strategy https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-recruitment-and-retention-strategy	1, 2, 3, 4, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £43,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Reciprocal reading intervention programme (Reader Leaders) to support pupil premium	Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4

pupils in their comprehension.	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'	
Purchase of LEXIA which is a reading programme to support Literacy.	Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) EEF – Small group tuition https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition	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 MGNT 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.	EEF – Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/assessment EEF – <i>Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3</i> https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/maths-ks2-3	1
Maths intervention package to support identified gaps in foundational skills.	EEF – <i>Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3</i> https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/maths-ks2-3 EEF – Small group tuition https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition	1
Glass Cone Centre alternative curriculum allows for a more personalised accessible curriculum for specific KS4	EEF – Behaviour interventions https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	1, 3, 6, 7

pupils to reduce suspensions/permanent exclusions and give them qualifications to take to their preferred post 16 pathway.	<p>EEF – Mentoring https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mentoring</p> <p>DfE – Behaviour in Schools Guidance (2022) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2</p>	
Out of class support and intervention from the staff in both 'The Sanctuary' and RnR (Reflect and restore)	<p>EEF – Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p> <p>EEF – Behaviour interventions https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions</p> <p>DfE – Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2</p>	2, 3, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £160,000

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</p>	2

	<p>significantly reduced persistent absence levels.</p> <p>National Foundation for Educational Research briefing for school leaders identifies addressing attendance as a key step.</p>	
Deployment of a Family Liaison Officer to drive improvements in attendance, build stronger relationships with families and reduce the social, emotional and practical barriers that limit pupil engagement.	<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 experiences of similar schools, we have adopted Class Charts this academic year to help facilitate more effective communication with parents.</p>	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
Purchase of a software package to enable online Parents' Evenings to take place.	<p>Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>	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
Purchase of UNIFROG; a destinations platform aimed at raising aspirations of pupils in KS4	<p>Aspiration interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	7
Contingency fund	A small sum of funds is necessary to retain in reserve, to provide an effective and rapid	All

	response to urgent issues that often arise without warning.	
Appointment of an Assistant Headteacher with a dedicated strategic focus on attendance, overseeing the Attendance Team and Family Liaison Officer (FLO), and separating this responsibility from the Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour & Attitudes) to allow for specialist, data-driven leadership in attendance improvement.	<p>DfE – Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2022) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance</p> <p>DfE – Behaviour in Schools Guidance (2022) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2.</p> <p>EEF – Working With Parents to Support Learning https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-parents</p> <p>The demands of behaviour and attitudes leadership already encompass suspension management, behaviour systems, culture and climate oversight. National guidance stresses that attendance requires daily, specialised monitoring, rapid response systems, and dedicated family engagement. By distributing responsibilities, both areas receive focused leadership and improved capacity for strategic improvement.</p>	2, 3, 5,

Total budgeted cost: £393,024

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 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Intended outcome 1 - To achieve and sustain improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

For 2025, there were no progress 8 measures. The attainment of pupil premium pupils continued to fall and was lower than their peers. Pupil premium attainment 8 for 2025 was 27.45 compared to 30.29 in 2024.

There were a number of outliers within the data some of which attended alternative provision.

Intended outcome 2 - Improved levels of attendance and a reduction in the percentage of pupil premium students who are persistent absenteeism from school.

The attendance of pupil premium students rose from 78.8% in 2023/2024 to 84.9% in 2024/2025. Whilst the overall rate of persistent absence (41%) 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. Year 11's percentage of PA (23%) is better than the national average of 24%.

Intended outcome 3a - Reduction in the number of negative behaviour referrals for pupil premium pupils.

The total number of negative behaviour referrals for Pupil Premium pupils in the year 2024/25 was 21547. In the first half-term of this academic year, we had 4919 referrals, this number has dropped significantly in the second half-term to 2336.

Intended outcome 3b - Reduction in the number of occasions and days that pupil premium pupils who are suspended from school

We have seen a decrease in suspensions overall this academic year, with internal interventions and work being done to support pupils and educate as well as sanction.

Intended outcome 3 - Improved levels of aspiration amongst PP pupils

The NEET rate for leavers in 2024 at The Wordsley School (0.6%) was lower than our local area (1.8%) and only marginally higher than the wider Dudley borough (0.9%). The 2025 data will not come out until January 2026 so we are unable to provide a comparison at this moment in time.

Intended outcome 4 - 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 number of pupil premium pupils who are either on or above their chronological reading age differs slightly per year group, but remains around ⅓ of each year group's pupil premium pupils.

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

Although we do not currently have precise baseline or comparative attendance data for PP families, qualitative evidence from staff logs indicates increased engagement. This has been supported by proactive phone calls to parents/carers to encourage bookings, confirm attendance, and provide reminders about dates and times.

Moving forward, we have identified the need to capture consistent attendance data for all parent-facing events to allow for more accurate measurement and evaluation in the next review cycle.

Intended outcome 6 - To increase and sustain numbers of pupil premium students taking part in Extracurricular and enrichment activities

In 2024/25, pupils were offered over 50 extra-curricular clubs per week. From the information collected so far, 537 unique pupils attended at least one club during the year, with 32% of attendees identified as pupil premium. This is broadly in line with the overall proportion of PP pupils in the school.

However, this figure does not yet provide a full picture, as the tracking systems used at the time did not capture all club attendance consistently or comprehensively. As a result, the data should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive.

Moving forward, improved tracking processes are already in place for 2024–25 to ensure more accurate recording of pupil participation across all enrichment activities. This will allow for more reliable analysis and targeted strategies where needed.

Intended outcome 7 - Ensure pupil premium pupils are aware of the career paths and college options which are available to them

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.

While investment was made in a range of interventions, impact was limited where classroom practice and attendance remained inconsistent. This strategy therefore prioritises staff practice, consistency and accountability as the primary lever for improvement.

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