



Pupil Premium strategy statement

This statement details how our school uses the Pupil Premium grant funding to; help raise the educational attainment of our disadvantaged pupils of all abilities, to help them reach their potential and provide support for children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces.

It outlines our Pupil Premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding this academic year and the impact that last year's spending of the Pupil Premium grant had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Hitchin Girls' School
Number of pupils in school	1052 (Years 7-11) 314 (Sixth Form)
Proportion (%) of Pupil Premium eligible pupils	102 (Years 7-11) 9.7% 2024/5 107 (Years 7-11) - 7.7%
Academic year/years that our current Pupil Premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023-2026
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Mr. J. Crowther (Headteacher)
Pupil Premium lead	Mrs. R. Cooper (Assistant Headteacher)
Governor/Trustee lead	Mr S. Mills (Headteacher Whitehill JM School)

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil Premium funding allocation this academic year	£115,000
Pupil Premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£16,000* 2024/25 £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	£115,000** 2024/25 £115,000 (Recovery Funding ended Aug 2024) 2023/24 £144,815 - £199,147 PP funding and £25,668 Recovery Funding 2022/23 £135,876 due to Recovery Funding

*This amount is due to receiving slightly more funding that we had predicted due to students joining us during the year + the fact that the Y7 chromebook invoice came through at a different time therefore being funded in the 2025/26 budget rather than 2024/25 as would have been the case if received on time.

**Budget based on current PP students - new Year PP students are not accounted for until autumn census. We have continued increased numbers in our new Year 7 cohort which may therefore see an additional £9,000 come from the government in April 2026. At such time this document will be amended to reflect any changes.

Part A: Pupil Premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Hitchin Girls' School aims to ensure that all students can reach their full potential by providing a calm, safe and supportive environment which students want to attend and where they can learn, thrive and fly. Central to this are our five core values - ***aspiration, perseverance, kindness, respect and positivity*** - with family, relationships and community underpinning and central to the creation of our caring and supportive atmosphere for all.

We provide an exceptional experience for our students as verified in our October 2025 Ofsted Report which judged us to be Outstanding in all 5 areas; commenting that '***Leaders have high ambitions for all pupils and strive to have any barriers to success removed***'.

We are a fully inclusive school and are aspirational for every student, both academically and in terms of their personal, social, emotional and moral development. Our intention is that every student, irrespective of their background, familial economic circumstances or the challenges that they might face, make exceptional progress, achieve great outcomes and finish their HGS journey with us

as confident young adults ready to face their futures with the skills and attributes needed to make them happy and successful.

We encourage and equip students to develop independence and resilience. We work hard and play hard by providing high quality learning experiences and a wealth of extra curricular and enrichment opportunities both in and outside the classroom. Our expectation is that everyone will try their very best in all that they do; that they embody and demonstrate our core values at all times and in so doing demonstrate the very highest standards of conduct, respect, effort and personal attainment that are our goal for all members of our school community.

The focus of our Pupil Premium strategy is to **‘tackle the barriers that stand in the way of pupil progress’** (EEF September 2023) thereby ensuring the educational attainment of our disadvantaged students of all abilities in order to help them reach their full potential and provide support for children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces. We are determined that every student will have the very best outcomes and life chances when they leave our school.

Our menu of approaches, which aligns with the DfE Pupil Premium strategy template, allows us to identify and address the challenges which may impact on a young person’s learning and development. We work tirelessly to ensure that any barriers that may exist within the family do not repeat with our students so that **‘today’s education inequalities’ do not become ‘tomorrow’s income inequalities’** (EEF November 2023) for any students in our HGS community.

We also recognise that barriers may be faced by other vulnerable students such as those with a social worker and young carers, hence the activities outlined in this plan aim to prioritise those most in need but are applicable to all students when a need arises - **‘schools must ensure that they focus on every child in their school and not just those who are eligible for PP funding’** (EEF September 2023).

In line with EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) guidance our strategy is underpinned by the principle that what is effective and meaningful for PP students will also be for other learners who do not fit into this category; thereby **excellent provision is provision for all** but with the strong focus on ensuring that PP students are always prioritised; ensuring that they never miss out on an opportunity or are missing a key element of their learning due to their families socioeconomic circumstances.

Our current plan considers the way in which we can have most impact on our disadvantaged students

Key to this is the three tiered approach which focuses on:

- High-quality teaching
- Targeted academic support
- Wider strategies

Our ultimate objective is to:

‘Improve outcomes for all socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils’ (EEF November 2023)

We will ensure this by:

- ***‘Working on a case by case basis in order to understand the barriers that some students face in school’ (EEF November 2023)***
To undertake all PP planning, strategies and implementations with a steadfast and purposeful understanding that PP students are not a homogenous group and therefore **each individual needs their own targeted and bespoke support system.**
- Focusing on and ensuring high-quality teaching for all in the classroom, is the best approach to ensure student learning and progress at all levels. **Teaching matters more than anything else; teaching is the most impactful activity and action that we can do to improve the outcomes for students.**
- Guaranteeing that the very best, specialist teachers lead intervention groups.
- Appointing our Second in Department for Maths who leads on PP/Disadvantaged student attainment and provision.
- Regularly and proactively using student and parent/carer feedback/voice to identify and address the challenges faced by disadvantaged students.
- Using evidence-based research to guide and inform intervention choices and their implementation and comparing our data with other similar schools both locally and nationally to identify any patterns that require attention and improvement and equally to recognise and celebrate our successes and achievements.
- Utilising Progress Check data and ongoing Assessment for Learning, to identify students who require early intervention to meet individual needs.
- Ensuring that all members of staff have PP/Disadvantaged students central to their teaching planning and execution in order to remove barriers and maximise their chances of success.
- Having a systematic focus on clear student feedback to enable all students to reflect on their own learning and understand how they can improve.
- Having a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team who has a clear overview of the PP strategic vision, funding and budget.
- Ensuring early, regular and robust monitoring and evaluation of the impact of all interventions to ensure that they are having the intended and needed impact for each student. If at any time they are not then we will not be afraid to tweak, adjust or stop an intervention if it is not working for the intended student/s and look to a better alternative/outcome.

It is important to note that implicit in the intended outcomes detailed in this plan is the intention that non-disadvantaged students’ attainment and development will be sustained and improved alongside their disadvantaged peers.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p><u>Closing the attainment gap</u></p> <p>Especially in reading, literacy and Maths, between PP/Disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers to ensure that there are no educational inequalities that prevent a child from reaching their potential.</p> <p><i>Evidence shows that there continues to be a disproportionate impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged students which is likely to widen the attainment gap, our core goal is to ensure that this is not the case for students at HGS.</i></p>
2	<p><u>Below age related expectations in reading, literacy and numeracy</u></p> <p>Ensuring that all students have the reading, literacy and numeracy skills needed to fully engage with, access and succeed with their full curriculum offer and are in line with or above the expected reading age for their chronological age and MEG for Maths.</p>
3	<p><u>Poor attendance</u></p> <p>Ensuring that students are in school, all of the time so that they are able to access their full curriculum and all available learning opportunities. Thereby improving the attendance of our PP/Disadvantaged students so that they align with that of their Non-PP/Disadvantaged peers and meet our school target of 97% or above.</p>
4	<p><u>Not having everything they need for school and their learning.</u></p> <p>Making sure that PP/Disadvantaged students have access to all of the necessary equipment, technology and resources they need in order to access their curriculum, blended learning and that done outside of the classroom.</p>
5	<p><u>Cultural capital and equity of access to enrichment opportunities.</u></p> <p>To proactively promote, support, encourage and enable cultural capital for our PP/Disadvantaged students by ensuring that any student wishing to attend an enrichment or education trip/visit has first priority for available spaces; supporting parents/carers through a systematic process that enables them to access HEF (Hitchin Education Foundation) financial support when relevant.</p>
6	<p><u>Complex personal development needs and feeling they have a 'voice'</u></p> <p>Effectively utilising our Personal Development Programme and</p>

	<p>Pastoral and Learning Support team to support students where challenging circumstances may impact on their wellbeing including social, emotional and mental health. Thereby ensuring that every PP/Disadvantaged child has their own advocate and 'voice'.</p>
7	<p><u>Improving parental engagement.</u></p> <p>To proactively seek, support and secure parental engagement with the school in order to support a child's progress, well being and development. This partnership is absolutely key and when done well will ensure that all parents/carers feel seen and heard in the HGS family and therefore able to engage with the school and be actively involved in their child's learning and progress.</p>
8	<p><u>Ensuring that PP/Disadvantaged students are the focus of all staff.</u></p> <p>Targeting SIP, Performance Appraisal and CPD time, resources and opportunities for all staff (especially for Core subjects) to ensure that these students <i>are front and centre in all that we do</i>; thereby rigorously promoting and implementing the highest aspirations for all regardless of their social class and economic circumstances - ensuring high quality teaching and best practice for all.</p>
9	<p><u>Students arriving at school without breakfast and being cold due to the cost of living crisis.</u></p> <p>To ensure that every child starts their school day warm, well fed and ready/prepared to start their learning via our Breakfast Club held every morning in Morbeans.</p>
10	<p><u>Parents/carers feeling actively involved in their child's PP funding.</u></p> <p>Empowering all parents/carers of PP/Disadvantaged students to feel part of their child's education and personal development through our Parental Bid system so that they are proactively involved in how a percentage of our Pupil Premium budget is spent.</p>
11	<p><u>PP/Disadvantaged students not aspiring to their desired careers/goals post school.</u></p> <p>To ensure that the stubborn link between family income and educational outcomes does not impact on student aspirations through our extensive and targeted CEIAG programme.</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
1. To have the same aspirational targets and goals for all students regardless of their socio-economic background thereby continuing to close the in school attainment gap between the disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To close the Attainment 8 gap (Current Year 11/10 do not have Progress 8 due to not having sat SATs due to Covid. This is currently under review by the DfE) Our key focus is on improving both English and Math outcomes at GCSE.• For the percentage of PP/Disadvantaged students securing a grade 5+ in English and Maths to be at least in line with the figure for the national non-PP/Disadvantaged cohort.• To extend and celebrate the progress of PP/Disadvantaged students of all prior attainments - LPA, MPA, HPA.• To ensure that PP/Disadvantaged students with HPA are inspired and supported to Thrive and Fly on their chosen educational journeys and that they aspire to reach their goals.• For the PP/Disadvantaged EBacc entry rate to be more in line with the school non-disadvantaged entry figures.
2. To achieve improved levels of attendance for all students, especially those who are PP/Disadvantaged and in particular reduce the number of persistent absentees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved attendance figures for PP/Disadvantaged students in comparison to historical data.• A reduction in the number of PP/Disadvantaged Persistent Absentees.• The gap in attendance between PP/Disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers is narrowed/diminished.

<p>3. To ensure that all PP/Disadvantaged students have access to the equipment and resources needed to support and extend their learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increased number of parental bids are received where parents/carers have a voice in how a proportion of the funding for their child should be used to support their development. • Attendance at extra-curricular clubs and trips shows an increase in participation, particularly amongst PP/Disadvantaged students.
<p>4. To proactively support and encourage cultural capital for our PP/Disadvantaged students by ensuring that any PP student wishing to attend an enrichment or education trip/visit has first priority for available spaces and a systematic support process in place that enables them to access HEF (Hitchin Education Foundation) financial support. increase their cultural capital</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of PP/Disadvantaged students attending enrichment/educational trips/visits is proportionate. • Participation in these activities increases. • PP/Disadvantaged students are prioritised for first come, first served spaces on all trips and given sufficient time to confirm funding support required. • No PP/Disadvantaged student misses out on one of these activities because of their family's financial situation.
<p>5. Effectively utilising our Personal Development Curriculum, Pastoral and Learning Support teams to support students where challenging circumstances may impact on their wellbeing including social, emotional and mental health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student voice shows that students know how to access pastoral support, benefit from the input of our tutor programme and Learning for Life/Headstrong programmes. • Student records such as CPOMS show the support that students have accessed including external agencies that have been involved.

<p>6. Develop the way that we communicate and share key information with parents/carers in order to ensure strong parental engagement; in so doing trust is built through a supportive, professional partnership/relationship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/carers feel seen and understood in our school community. • Parental responses increase and are faster when accessing key information such as reading progress reports and responding to letters/surveys. • Parental voice confirms that our alternative forms of communication are supportive and effective ie short videos to explain important information/events. • Parental attendance at school events increases and when they do not
--	---

	<p>attend this is swiftly followed up on to ensure that they have everything they need to support their child's learning and progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Attendance and Pupil Premium Admin Assistant is increasingly involved with emailing/speaking to parents/carers.
<p>7. Staff feel confident and equipped to deliver high-quality teaching allowing them to identify students' knowledge and skills gaps; receive relevant, effective and timely Thrive and Fly interventions and make sure that all students regardless of any disadvantage meet the intended end points in the curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student voice and parental feedback reflects satisfaction with high- quality teaching for all. • Self-evaluation tasks such as learning walks and lesson observations completed at all leadership levels demonstrates high-quality teaching across the curriculum. • Departmental intervention packages are proactively used, monitored and evaluated with regular feedback to student/parent/carers and key staff in school ie HOY/Tutor.
<p>8. Targeting SIP, Performance Appraisal and CPD time, resources and opportunities for staff (especially for Core subjects) to inspire and enable best practice regarding the teaching and supporting of disadvantaged students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff are encouraged to have PP/Disadvantaged students at the centre of their Performance Appraisal objectives. • Our school improvement plan has disadvantaged students and their needs at the centre of everything we do as a community. • Key staff attend relevant high quality CPD to support and develop their teaching and learning of disadvantaged students.

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: **£74,200 (2025/26)**

(2024/25 actuals £75,000 including £35,997 Thrive and Fly intervention tutoring)

(2023/24 actuals £100,996 including £36,736 intervention tutoring)

(2022/23 £97,000 actuals including £5,119 for Intervention tutoring)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To retain key staff and provide time and resources for professional development in order to enable best practice when teaching and supporting PP/Disadvantaged students.	<p><i>“The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils”.</i></p> <p><i>‘Disadvantaged students with SEND have the greatest need to excellent teaching’</i></p> <p><i>“Focus on high quality teaching first rather than relying on interventions to compensate”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ LSAs are deployed in order to ensure that priority students are supported well.→ Input of LSAs should support, enhance and extend T&L rather than replace high quality provision from the class teacher. <p>High Quality Teaching - EEF</p>	1, 2, 3, 6, 8
<p>Identifying any students who are 2 or more years below the expected reading level for their chronological age and putting in place targeted, specialist Thrive and Fly intervention to build student confidence, skills and understanding/application and support them to make progress.</p> <p>Roll out Reading Fluency Programme to more students (focus on Y10 and Y7) using HGS staff expertise.</p>	<p>Reading Fluency Programme - Hertfordshire.</p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools.</p> <p>EEF National Literacy Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Annual NGRT (New Group Reading Test) test for all Year 7s in September.→ Historic annual NGRT testing for all Y7-10 students in September to provide baseline data.→ Implementation of the newly announced (17.10.25) government Year 8 annual reading assessments once programme details have been shared.→ Use of YARC (York	1, 2, 3, 7, 8

	Assessment of Reading and Comprehension) for all students at the start and end of the Reading Fluency Programme (Year 7 and Year 10)	
Further developing reading/literacy across the curriculum through a variety of teacher training opportunities (CPD) in line with our 'Literacy for Learning' policy (which is to be reviewed November 2024)	<p>All teachers should be supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Literacy for Learning Policy Review 2025 → HGS Reading Strategy 2025 launch <p>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools - EEF Summary of Recommendations -</p>	1, 2, 8
To identify those students who are not secure in the required skills at KS3 or meeting their MEG at KS4 in Maths and/or English; providing them with specialist, effective and timely <i>Thrive and Fly</i> interventions to build confidence, understanding and ability to apply skills in Maths.	<p>Students receive targeted/specialist support that enables them to <i>Thrive and Fly</i>.</p> <p>EEF Improving Mathematics at KS2/3/4.</p>	1, 4
To develop and embed TLR in Maths which focuses on PP/Disadvantaged students in order to address the gap both locally and nationally of Progress 8 results at GCSE.	<p>Teaching Mathematics at KS3 - DfE EEF Improving Mathematics at KS2/3/4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → This has evolved into the recently appointed Second in Maths who previously held the TLR and continues to do this work as part of the new role. 	1, 7, 8

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

Estimated budgeted cost: **£16,700 (2025/26)**

(2024/24 Budget £25,000 - actuals £34,997) (2023/24 budget £25,000 actuals £ 36,736)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><i>Thrive and Fly</i> academic interventions - to provide small group or one to one tuition to support progress in both English and Maths at both KS3 and KS4 for identified students.</p>	<p>Effective interventions must be timely, relevant and led by specialist staff. ‘Research shows that this can have a big impact when provided in addition to but also linked to normal lessons’ (EEF Guidance to Maximise the Pupil Premium) If intervention is to have an impact on a students’ learning it must be directly linked to their classroom teaching and curriculum. → EEF’s Making a difference with effective tutoring guide → EEF Selecting Interventions Tool Small Group Tuition - EEF EEF One to One Tuition – EEF</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 7</p>
<p>To ensure every PP/Disadvantaged student has the suitable access to technology (device and access to the internet) to enable and support their learning.</p>	<p>Ensuring availability and access to relevant technology ie Chromebooks to support students’ blended learning approach that is now the norm for all students at HGS after its initial inception during the pandemic.</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>
<p>To provide every PP/Disadvantaged student with a named link member of staff to champion their progress and wellbeing. As a mentor, they will look to understand and help to address their mentees’ individual barriers to learning.</p>	<p>To build confidence and relationships, to develop resilience and character and raise aspirations in addition to academic support. Historically in school, staff mentors for identified students have proved to be very effective in supporting them both academically and pastorally. The importance of relationships is highlighted in this book: Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges – The Essex Way (Marc Rowland. 2021)</p>	<p>3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 1/2</p>

The development of KS3 Assessment policy and related feedback techniques to support student progress towards intended curriculum outcomes.	<p>Students receive frequent advice on how to improve their learning/work</p> <p>Feedback studies tend to show high effects on learning - Feedback - EEF</p>	1, 8
--	--	------

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

Estimated budgeted cost: £24,100 (2025/26)

(2024/24 - £15,000 - actuals £20,000) (2023/24 actuals £22,240)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To provide breakfast, warmth and a calm start to PP/Disadvantaged students via breakfast club for any student who needs it.	EEF data shows that many students are still coming to school hungry, and with the cost of living crisis often cold. This inevitably impacts on their ability to approach their learning in the best way possible. Providing this opportunity also ensures that PP champions and other staff are able to informally 'check in' on students, identifying any issues and addressing them promptly and effectively.	9, 7
To provide relevant resources needed to support whole school Thrive and Fly interventions.	TT Rockstars subscription for use with Times Table Club every week for identified students.	1, 2, 4, 8
To retain our specialist pastoral support team so that students can receive proactive, targeted, relevant support to meet their needs.	There has been an increase in need for pastoral support in school in recent years and this has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Student, staff and parent/carer voice demonstrates the value of our pastoral team members in supporting both students and their families in times of need from Year 7 through to Year 13.	3, 6, 7, 9

<p>Retention of Pupil Premium and attendance administration support and to embed principles of good practice set out in the DfE's 'Improving School Attendance' advice.</p>	<p>The recruitment of a Pupil Premium and Attendance Admin Assistant in December 2020 has seen an increase in communication and therefore parental engagement. Last year this role was divided into Attendance Admin with the Pupil Premium Admin coming under the office manager's role to great effect.</p> <p>These 2 posts ensure that on a daily basis disadvantaged students are closely monitored and supported with both their attendance and Thrive and Fly programme.</p> <p>Student attendance monitoring has also become increasingly efficient and effective.</p> <p>Parental Engagement - EFF Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning.</p> <p>A clear link has been established between attainment and attendance. Improving School Attendance - DfE</p>	<p>3, 6, 7</p>
<p>To effectively monitor attendance and Behaviour for Learning (BfL) data.</p>	<p>Monitoring of attendance and Behaviour for Learning (BfL) data allows form tutors and Heads of Year to quickly identify where student intervention is needed in order to support progress either academically or on a SEMH level.</p> <p>Improving Behaviour in Schools</p>	<p>3, 6, 7</p>
<p>To continue with the parental bid system to allow parents/carers to have a voice in how a proportion of the Pupil Premium funding for their child should be used to support their development.</p>	<p>This strategy devised by Hitchin Girls' School staff was included as an example of good practice in the Herts for Learning 'Great Expectations' (Volume 1) which showcases initiatives implemented by Hertfordshire Schools to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged learners and their more advantaged peers.</p> <p>HfL – Great Expectations Programme Parent/carers voice around this ongoing strategy is always complimentary.</p>	<p>3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10</p>

To provide timely counseling for identified students using highly qualified and relevant providers.	Counseling provision in conjunction with our Pastoral Team for identified students.	6, 7
To provide external agency support for identified disadvantaged students as required.	Experience shows us that external agency support helps to develop resilience and coping strategies. This in turn means students are in a better place to access their learning.	6, 7, 10
Early intervention with targeted CEIAG support for identified students.	As a school we have found that early careers support gives students motivation, focus and a clear route forwards. As such disadvantaged students are prioritised to receive their CEIAG interviews in Y9 and Y11 ahead of their non-disadvantaged peers; with many receiving additional sessions/support on top of the statutory requirement. EEF Careers Advice and Guidance	11
Contingency fund for any acute issues that arise.	Each year situations arise whereby we need to respond quickly to meet the needs of individual students that have not yet been identified. Such as urgent counseling support for a non-disadvantaged student.	All

Total budgeted cost: 2025/26 £115,000*

*Budget based on current PP students - new Year PP students are not accounted for until autumn census. We have increased numbers in our new Year 7 cohort which might therefore see a small increase in the funding we received from April 2025. At such time this document will be amended to reflect any changes.

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 2024/25 academic year.

The strategic plan is now into its third year after some significant revisions made during 2023/24 building on the previous strategic plan that was begun in 2020/21. We have lots to celebrate.

Essential to a robust and meaningful Pupil Premium strategy however is an

unwavering focus on regular and systematic review, reflection and evaluation. From this, we must never simply continue to do something just because we have in the past, if it is no longer meeting the needs of our students. We must not be afraid to tweak, adjust and stop an intervention if it is no longer working and be open to adaptation and indeed introducing revised or new interventions within this strategy throughout the school year; and not merely wait until we review fully in July 2026.

Thrive and Fly

- In 2024/25 we provided **960 hours** of Thrive and Fly support with our 4 specialist tutors.
- 159 students took part with many attending both English and Maths based on their identified need.
- Of the 159 students, 42% were PP/Disadvantaged students.
- For context this figure for 2023/24 was 163 students - 22.6% of whom were PP/Disadvantaged.

For every Thrive and Fly session throughout the school year PP students were prioritised and allocated their places first to ensure that they received the swift, bespoke, specialist support that they needed. Student voice clearly shows that these sessions were a huge success in terms of the students' sense of progress, pride and achievement; student, tutor and parental feedback was overwhelmingly positive with the only 'even better if' often being *'I would love to have this every week rather than only every fortnight'*.

Every child identified in Y7 - Y11 who needed support with their reading/literacy or numeracy received it during the last academic year and will continue to do so for 2025/26 based on need and in conjunction with our whole school Reading Strategy focus.

With our Y11 cohort, we saw the impact of both the partnership of the Thrive and Fly and Steps to Success in their GCSE results. ***GCSE results will be updated here in December 2025 once estimated A8 scores have been validated.**

Those PP/Disadvantaged students who attended school, performed better than those who were absent. Therefore, as well as reviewing and tweaking the Thrive and Fly programme for 2025/26 based on what we learnt in 2024/25, the key focus is on ensuring that students are in school; ***When PP students attend school regularly, meeting our attendance expectations, they Thrive and Fly, achieving life changing outcomes that will positively impact and influence their next steps and life chances; often exceeding expectations.***

It is clear that working with the attendance team is of the utmost importance to improve PP/Disadvantaged students' attendance when it dips below our expected target of 97%. If we can get them into school to benefit from their high quality teaching in every lesson, participate when needed with targeted, specialist, bespoke tuition through our Thrive and Fly programme

and support them and their families via our wider strategies such as parental bids, chromebook subsidy etc then any attainment gap will close.

This is our steadfast aim, passion and commitment to every PP/Disadvantaged student and their family in the HGS community.

Context:

The number of students who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) remains reasonably low in comparison to the national average HGS = 9.7%, national 25.7%. We have seen an increase in the number of FSM students whose families are using the parental bid system to 'top up' their Parent Pay accounts in order to ensure that they can have both a break snack and lunch every day.

For 2024/25 this accounted for a total of 48.8% of all parental bids (61/125 bids made) which equates to £2805 in total. This is a clear illustration of the strong reliance of these families on the high quality, nutritious food we provide in school, especially in the colder months. In contrast our Breakfast Club, whilst used almost daily by a small number of PP/Disadvantaged students, was not used by as many students as we anticipated and remains a priority for us to promote and encourage students to attend this school year.

Outcomes:

All 9 of our (historic) PP students in Y13 passed their A Levels securing places at their chosen destinations:

Historic PP students Year 13 Destinations
University of Lincoln
University of Lincoln
University Liverpool John Moores
University place offered but did not take it up, following up with home.
Northumbria University
University of Leicester
Unknown, following up with home but no response so far
Foundation Course in Art and Design
Bath Spa University

Of particular note, one student achieved 4 A*s (including Fine Art) and a B which was a fantastic outcome and has gone on to study an Art Foundation Course before going to University in September 2026.

Chromebooks and equipment:

Once again we heavily subsidised Chromebooks for all PP students joining us in Year 7 to the amount of £8,350 thus ensuring that every child could start their Secondary school experience with the technology that they needed. In addition we supported families with nearly new uniform and PE kit. Parental feedback to this support has once again been overwhelmingly positive and humbling with one parent commenting

that *'this support has just saved our summer, thank you so much.'*

Parental Bids:

Our innovative parental bid system which allows parents/carers to have a voice in how a proportion of the funding for their child should be used to support their development continues to make a huge difference and is now an essential part of many family's annual budgets. Parental engagement with this system is increasing year on year with almost £8,106 being actioned last year for a huge range of resources and opportunities to best meet the needs of every PP student and their unique context. Examples of parental bids are: helping to support attendance at outside clubs and activities, access external tuition and purchasing essential resources to support literacy and reading and GCSE revision. Feedback is overwhelmingly positive from students and their families.

Our PP admin and finance team continue to ensure that bids are processed in a timely and appropriate manner with additional support available via external funding through HEF (the Hitchin Educational Foundation) as required.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
NGRT testing GL Assessment (February 2023 Y7-11 and September 2023 Y7-10)	GL Assessments
YARC diagnostic testing at the start and end of Reading Fluency Programme	YARC (York Assessment of Reading and Comprehension) administered and assessed in house using specialist English Tutor.
Reading Fluency Programme	HfL and in house established programme following HfL training in 2023
PiXL Annual Membership	PiXL

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?	Our PP strategy applies to all students including those from Service families - all of the provision above encompasses the very small number of students that we have who are SPP. Currently 2.
What was the impact of that spending	Both students are fully supported in their

on service Pupil Premium eligible pupils?	individual, identified needs in order to best support them and enable them to Thrive and Fly.
---	---