



Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2021 to 2022 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Hitchin Girls' School
Number of pupils in school	1009 (Years 7-11) 312 (Sixth Form)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	119 (Years 7-11) 11.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2021-2024
Date this statement was published	December 2021
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2022
Statement authorised by	Mrs. F. Manning (Headteacher)
Pupil premium lead	Mrs. S. Mills (Assistant Headteacher)
Governor/Trustee lead	Mrs. M. King

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£104,000
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£16,820
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	£120,820

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

We wish to provide an exceptional experience for all of our students. We are a fully inclusive school and are aspirational for our young people, both academically and also in terms of personal, social, emotional and moral development. Our intention is that all students, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make excellent progress, achieve great outcomes and are supported to be lifelong learners.

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

The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged students to achieve these aims by identifying and addressing the challenges which may impact on their learning and development. We also recognise that barriers may be faced by other vulnerable students such as those with a social worker and young carers, so activities outlined in this plan are intended to support their needs too.

Our current plan considers the way in which we can have most impact on our disadvantaged students and is based on the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) recommended three tiered approach focusing on:

- Teaching strategies
- Targeted academic support
- Wider strategies

[EEF – Guide to the Pupil Premium – Autumn 2021](#)

Our ultimate objectives are to:

- To ensure high quality teaching for all.
- To recognise and address the challenges faced by disadvantaged students.
- To use evidence based research to guide intervention choices.
- To provide early intervention to meet individual needs.
- To regularly evaluate and review the impact of intervention programmes.
- To ensure all members of staff become champions for disadvantaged students in order to maximise their chances of success.

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	Closing the attainment gap, especially in maths. Evidence shows that there has been a disproportionate impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged students which is likely to widen the attainment gap.
2	To improve the attendance of our disadvantaged students to figures in line with the rest of the cohort.
3	Making sure that disadvantaged students have access to the necessary equipment and resources for learning, including technology and to increase their cultural capital.
4	Effectively supporting students where challenging circumstances may impact on wellbeing including social, emotional and mental health.
5	To secure improved parental engagement with the school in order to support progress and development.
6	Providing time and resources for staff professional development to enable best practice regarding the teaching and supporting of disadvantaged students.

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
<p>1. To continue to close the in-school attainment gap between the disadvantaged students and their peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To close the Progress 8 gap with a focus on improving the maths element outcomes and the progress of students with high prior attainment. ▪ For the percentage of disadvantaged students securing a grade 5+ in English and maths to be at least in line with the figure for the national non-disadvantaged cohort. ▪ For the disadvantaged EBacc entry rate to be more in line with the school non-disadvantaged entry figures.
<p>2. To achieve improved levels of attendance for all students, especially those who are disadvantaged and in particular reduce the number of persistent absentees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved attendance figures for disadvantaged students in comparison to historical data. ▪ A reduction on the number of persistent absentees. ▪ The gap in attendance between disadvantaged students and their peers is narrowed/diminished.
<p>3. To provide disadvantaged students with access to the equipment and resources to support their learning and give opportunities to extend their cultural capital.</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 disadvantaged students.
<p>4. Students are supported where challenging circumstances may impact on 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 and benefit from the input through Learning for Life lessons and the Headstrong programme. ▪ Student records such as CPOMS show the support that students have accessed including external agencies that have been involved.

<p>5. Parental engagement is strong and trust is built through a supportive and professional relationship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased and faster responses from parents/carers of disadvantaged students when accessing key information such as reading progress reports and responding to letters/surveys. ▪ The Attendance and Pupil Premium Admin Assistant is increasingly involved with emailing/speaking to parents/carers. ▪ Attendance at key events such as Parents' Evenings increases for disadvantaged families.
<p>6. Staff feel confident to deliver high quality teaching that allows teachers to identify students' gaps 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.

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: £25,000

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 disadvantaged students.	<p>“The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils”.</p> <p>High Quality Teaching - EEF</p>	1, 6
The development of feedback techniques to support student progress towards intended curriculum outcomes.	<p>Feedback studies tend to show high effects on learning.</p> <p>Feedback - EEF</p>	1
Developing literacy across the curriculum through a variety of teacher training opportunities (CPD) in line with our ‘Literacy for Learning’ policy.	<p>All teachers should be supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.</p> <p>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools - EEF</p> <p>Summary of Recommendations - EEF</p> <p>National Literacy Trust</p>	1, 6
To start the process of reviewing the delivery of maths at KS3.	<p>Teaching Mathematics at KS3 - DfE</p>	1

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

Budgeted cost: £20,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>To provide small group or one to one tuition to support progress in both English and maths at both KS3 and KS4 (please note that for 2021-2022 this will also be funded through the School-led tuition funding).</p>	<p>One to one tuition and small group tuition are both effective interventions when targeted at students' specific needs.</p> <p>Small Group Tuition - EEF One to One Tuition - EEF</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>To ensure every disadvantaged student has suitable access to technology (device and access to the internet) for their studies.</p>	<p>Providing access to technology (Chromebooks) was introduced at the time of the first national lockdown and shift to remote learning. It was an invaluable intervention that meant students could continue to access their learning. The school has moved to a blended learning approach so supporting disadvantaged students to purchase and own a device is of paramount importance.</p>	<p>1, 3</p>
<p>To provide every 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 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.</p> <p>The importance of relationships is highlighted in this book: Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges – The Essex Way (Marc Rowland, 2021)</p>	<p>1 - 6</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £75,820

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To retain and expand the pastoral support team.	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.	2, 3, 4, 5
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.	The recruitment of a Pupil Premium and Attendance Admin Assistant in December 2020 has seen an increase in communication and therefore parental engagement. Student attendance monitoring has also become increasingly efficient and effective. Parental Engagement - EFF A clear link has been established between attainment and attendance. Improving School Attendance - DfE	2, 3, 4, 5
To effectively monitor attendance and Behaviour for Learning (BfL) data.	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.	1, 2, 3, 4
To offer the Penn Resilience programme to disadvantaged students in KS3.	This is an evidence-based programme that has been demonstrated to improve resilience and wellbeing. Penn Resilience Programme	1, 2, 3, 4
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.	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. HfL – Great Expectations Programme Parent/carer voice around this ongoing strategy is always complimentary.	3, 4, 5

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.	1, 2, 3, 4
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.	3, 4
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.	All

Total budgeted cost: £120,820

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 2020 to 2021 academic year.

Covid-19 undoubtedly had a detrimental impact on some areas of our pupil premium strategic plan for 2020-2021 but there are also aspects to celebrate.

While the outcomes for the disadvantaged students in school at GCSE level exceeded those nationally for disadvantaged students across the performance measures, the in-school gap between the progress made by disadvantaged students and their peers widened when comparing 2019 outcomes with those from 2021. Closing the attainment gap therefore remains central to our current plan.

School closure meant that disadvantaged students were not able to benefit as intended from some of the priority areas that had been identified. However, a key success during the period of lockdown was to ensure that every disadvantaged student had access to the relevant technology (a device and the internet), in order to benefit fully from our high quality remote education provision. As a result, they were able to fully engage in live-streamed lessons and interact with their teachers and form tutors.

The school has now moved to a blended learning approach to build on the benefits of using technology to enhance learning. A proportion of funding last year was used to support disadvantaged families to purchase devices for their children to use both in school and at home. This will also be offered in 2021-2022 as the roll out continues for students in both Year 8 and 9 and for our September 2022 Year 7 cohort.

Attendance during the pandemic has been lower overall compared to 2018-2019 but the in-school gap between disadvantaged students and their peers has increased. The decision to fund pupil premium and attendance support has proved invaluable, not only in terms of monitoring and supporting attendance but also to increase parental engagement and encourage more regular communication. Securing improved attendance for disadvantaged students is a focus area over the coming year.

Increasing the available pastoral support through the allocated funding has meant that we have been able to respond more effectively to the increased needs of students in terms of wellbeing and mental health needs. Our observations show that issues have often been Covid-19 related, especially for our disadvantaged families. Targeted interventions using external agencies have also been put in place where required. Further expansion of our pastoral team is a priority for this academic year.

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 difference. Helping to support attendance at outside clubs and activities, access external tuition and topping up smartcards to purchase additional snacks are examples of the requests received. Feedback is overwhelmingly positive and we are looking to get increasing numbers of disadvantaged families to take up this offer of support over the coming months.

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
n/a	n/a

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?	n/a
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	n/a