

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil 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

Detail	Data
School Name	Mersham Primary School
Number of pupils on roll	141
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	31.2%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023/24 to 2026/27
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Mrs Cheryl Chalkley (Headteacher)
Pupil Premium Lead	Mrs Katy Jackson (SENDCO)
Governor/Trustee Lead	Ms Charlotte Francis (Chair of Governors)

Funding overview

Detail	Amount	
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	Pupil Premium	£62115
	Pupil Premium +	£2630
	Pupil Premium (Armed Forces)	£700
	TOTAL	£65445
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0	
Total budget for this academic year	£65445	
Total spend for this academic year		

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Mersham Primary School our aim is to provide an inclusive learning environment that enables our disadvantaged pupils to have equal entitlement and equal opportunities where all children develop a wide range of knowledge and skills alongside an inquisitive mind and a love of learning, that prepares them for the next phase in their education as well as enable them to become effective citizens of the future. Whilst socio-economic disadvantage is not always the primary challenge our pupils face, our ultimate aim is that no pupil is left behind socially or academically due to disadvantage. It is our intention that all pupils in our care will flourish at our school and that the provision of enabling environments and effective teaching and learning assure this. Our firm belief is that pupil need is what drives strategy and this is at the heart of every professional conversation.

The school receives funding from the Government to support it in trying to meet this aspiration. This is known as Pupil Premium. It is allocated for schools to:

- improve the academic outcomes of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities
- close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers across the country

Pupil Premium is additional to main school funding and it will be used by this school to address any underlying inequalities between children eligible by ensuring that funding reaches the pupils who need it most. This strategy period strives to raise lifelong aspirations and focus on removing the barriers to learning so we can breed an environment that does not limit any pupil's potential. The key challenges that prevent our disadvantaged pupils from attaining well are key; low self-esteem and well-being, language development, early reading skills and opportunities to experience activity that enriches learning.

An inclusive and student-led approach and supportive school environment will enable all students to thrive. In order to ensure that our approach remains responsive and relevant to student need we will endeavour to:

- Listen carefully to the voices of our disadvantaged children and families and act upon their feedback.
- Ensure early identification of any need and review this periodically.
- Continue to provide professional development to all colleagues in order to be accountable for the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and recognise the challenges that they may face and most importantly, the potential that they have.
- Commit to inclusive and adaptive learning environments and pedagogical approaches and be able to tailor them to the variable learning needs of our pupils.

- The pupil premium funding will create opportunities for pupils to develop our school values of high expectations, working collaboratively, independence, respect, widening horizons and taking care of our physical and mental health. We use the funding to build all these qualities through quality targeted and bespoke pastoral care for our pupils.

-The Pupil Premium will be used to provide additional educational support to improve the progress and to raise the standard of achievement for these pupils via high quality teaching practices, support and resources.

-The Pupil Premium funding will be used to narrow and close the gap between the achievement of these pupils and their peers.

-Mersham Primary School ensures funding provides a range of experiences in order to raise aspirations and an enjoyment for education via targeted therapeutic, nurturing intervention.

-Pupil Premium has helped to fund our Nurture Provision from April 2023. Nurture provisions provide a more bespoke and personalised, empathetic approach to education ensuring that students who face emotional or behavioural challenges are given the support to enable them to succeed both emotionally and academically. This will allow for our most vulnerable and often disadvantaged students to be supported by our Pastoral Team to aid the development of their emotional and social skills, provide support to accelerate progress, improve behavioural outcomes, provide holistic support/role modelling, improve self-esteem, confidence and building resilience.

Challenges

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

Challenge Number	Details of Challenge	Review of Challenges (Are these challenges still relevant?)
1	<u>High percentage of children with SEND/AEN who are in receipt of Pupil Premium</u> Our early identification of need has shown that 43% of the students who have specific Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or Additional Educational Needs (AEN) are also in receipt of Pupil Premium.	There are currently 12 children on our SEND Register with a further 10 children on our AEN Watchlist. 42.3% of children with SEN/AEN are also in receipt of Pupil Premium.
2	<u>Increased and significant % of students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Need who are in receipt of Pupil Premium</u> Our assessments, discussions and observations show that there has been increased numbers of children experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties. 33% of children receiving Pupil Premium are on the SEN/AEN register as having an SEMH need or are at risk of having SEMH needs. The well-being and emotional regulation of our disadvantaged pupils continues to be significantly affected with a continued rise in referrals and the support of external professionals. The additional	SEMH isn't always the primary need of our children. Many of our children have SEMH as a result of their SEN. There continues to be an increased number of children experiencing SEMH difficulties. 48% of children in receipt of PP have identified SEMH needs as their primary need. The well-being and emotional regulation of our disadvantaged pupils continues to be significantly affected with a continued rise in referrals and the support of external professionals. The additional

	pressures of the cost of living has presented as an additional area of challenge and anxiety.	pressures of the cost of living has presented as an additional area of challenge and anxiety.
3	<u>Under-developed Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) skills impacting on reading ability</u> Some pupils have an increased likelihood of underdeveloped oral language, reduced vocabulary and underdeveloped early reading skills alongside poorer communication skills (assessments of disadvantaged pupils in KS1 not achieving the same rate of progress as their non-disadvantaged peers). SLCN can have a profound and lasting effect on a child's life and outcomes and research has shown that if unresolved, these are likely to create long lasting social, emotional and academic difficulties in adult life. SLCN encompasses many areas of difficulty that impact on a child's development and ability to make progress across the curriculum; making sounds, understanding language, expressing themselves across a range of contexts. SLCN has been identified through pupil conferencing, internal and external assessments and Teacher and pupil conferencing	SLCN continues to be a key area of need. We are seeing an increase in numbers in EYFS of children displaying delayed speech and language. We have a robust development plan in place via The Balance System which is created in evaluation with our Link SaLT, Christina Eakins. 75% of children with identified SLCN are in receipt of PP.
4	<u>Limited access to extra-curricular activities</u> Disadvantaged pupils have limited opportunities to access a wide range of enrichment activities and access the wider curriculum which is needed to provide a rounded, aspirational education.	This continues to be an issue. Extra-curricular activities outside of the school setting are becoming increasingly costly. We aim to provide a variety of extra-curricular opportunities which have either little or no cost to parents.
5	<u>Difficulties surrounding poor socialisation post COVID-19</u> There is a continued knock-on effect from the COVID-19 Lockdown. Children in both Key Stage 1 & 2 are likely to not be as well socialised as in previous years and have an increased likelihood of under developed speech, language and communication and higher levels of anxiety due to limited socialisation opportunities during early childhood. Anxiety leads to lost learning time.	The difficulties now lie more with a shift in parenting styles rather than lack of socialisation in our cohort.
6	<u>Poor progress made by students with PP in Reading</u> 48.8% of students with Pupil Premium funding are NOT on track for expected progress in Reading.	46.5% of students with Pupil Premium funding (Y1-6) are NOT on track for expected progress in Reading.
7	<u>Poor progress made by students with PP in Writing</u> 58.5% of students with Pupil Premium funding are NOT on track for expected progress in Writing.	75% of students (Y1-6) with Pupil Premium funding are NOT on track for expected progress in Writing.

,8	<u>Poor progress made by students with PP in Maths</u> 51.2% of students with Pupil Premium funding are NOT on track for expected progress in Maths.	46.5% of students (Y1-6) with Pupil Premium funding are NOT on track for expected progress in Maths.
9	<u>Attendance of disadvantaged students is marginally lower than their peers</u> Whole school attendance last year was 95.3%. For students with PP, the statistic for attendance was lower at 93.81%. We continue to work closely with identified families and external professionals in order to support rapid and sustained improvements.	Whole school attendance last year was 95.4%. For students with Pupil Premium, the statistic for attendance was 93.6%. We continue to work closely with and challenge identified families and external professionals in order to support improvements.

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 Outcomes	Success Criteria	RAG Rating – has this outcome been achieved.
Raised levels of attainment achieved in Reading.	Disadvantaged students will make increased progress year on year in reading as demonstrated in the end of year assessments.	
Raised levels of attainment achieved in Writing.	Disadvantaged students will make increased progress year on year in writing as demonstrated in the end of year assessments.	
Raised levels of attainment achieved in Maths.	Disadvantaged students will make increased progress year on year in maths as demonstrated in the end of year assessments.	
In order to measure positive impact around improving student SEMH and well-being our intention is to measure this using Boxall Profiling and increase developmental score/decrease diagnostic score.	Disadvantaged students will make increased progress and maintain this over a significant period of time. Disadvantaged children demonstrate better learning behaviours, engage in school life and their families	
Improve speech, language and communication skills for disadvantaged pupils to enable better progress, confidence and the quality of social interactions	Assessments/observations show improved Speech, Language and Communication skills.	
Attendance rate across the school are improved for	Attendance rate for disadvantaged pupils is improved to be broadly in	

disadvantaged students so that their access to learning and readiness to learn is improved.	line with non-disadvantaged pupils. Attendance rate for all pupil will remain above Local Authority and National target of 95%.	
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Activity in this academic year (2024/25)

Tier 1 – Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Tier 2 – Targeted support/structured intervention

Tier 3 – Wider strategies (for example, behaviour, attendance and well-being related)

Pupil Premium (PP) used for:	Brief summary of the intervention & evidence supporting this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed	Tier	Review
Teaching and Learning focus on evidence based strategies to support Quality First Teaching and use of the Mainstream Core Standards	Supporting the Attainment of Disadvantaged Pupils (DFE, 2015) suggests high quality teaching as a key aspect of successful schools. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/supportforschools/school-improvement-planning/1-highqualityteaching We enable this through *Assessments 3 times a year with careful tracking of progress. *Audit quality first teaching approaches used across school and differentiated resources/strategies available to support children below age related expectations (ARE) *Monitor teaching and learning across the school, sharing good practice.	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8	1	Prioritises high-quality teaching in line with DfE/EEF evidence; uses regular assessment and data to guide support; provides differentiated, responsive classroom provision; and fosters a whole-school culture of continuous improvement and shared effective practice.
Use of Little Wandle (phonic programme)	‘It is possible that some disadvantaged pupils may not develop phonological awareness at the same rate as other pupils, having been exposed to fewer words spoken and books read in the home. Targeted phonics interventions may therefore improve decoding skills more quickly for pupils who have experienced these barriers to learning.’	6, 7	1	Little Wandle provides a consistent, systematic approach to phonics that supports disadvantaged pupils to develop strong decoding and early reading

	The EEF toolkit states that 'The average impact of the adoption of phonics approaches is about an additional five months progress over the course of a year.' EEF			skills. Regular assessments help staff identify gaps quickly and give targeted support, while matched decodable books build fluency and confidence. Overall, the programme offers an effective, evidence-based foundation for early reading progress.
Provision of high quality CPD experiences for senior leaders, teachers and support staff	Quality CPD will ensure that all staff have the skills and confidence to develop skills for improved learning behaviours to impact progress – as discussed in reliable evidence directed by the EEF 'What Works, What Doesn't By Jon Dulonsky et al.	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8	1	All staff received AET Phase 1 & Phase 2 training delivered by STLS. All staff received ProACT Scipr training delivered by STLS. 2 members of staff are now trained in the "Team Teach" approach.
Breakfast Club	Financial support to parents with low income by providing a free Breakfast Club placement for their child to enable parents more flexibility around their working hours. Free breakfast is also provided to ensure pupils are fed a wholesome meal to start their day as it improves cognitive function, memory, attention and executive function which thus improves academic performance and concentration.	5, 9	1	Providing subsidised Breakfast Club places for Pupil Premium pupils supports families financially while ensuring children start the day well-nourished. A wholesome breakfast improves cognitive function, memory,

				attention, and concentration, contributing to better academic performance and readiness to learn.
Falconry	Off-site environmental therapy provision provided by Wide Eyes Falconry where pupils are able to engage in animal care and develop outdoor learning skills. Research suggests that learning outside the classroom in natural environments offers children the opportunity to increase their knowledge of themselves, and their self-awareness. This is followed by an increased sense of responsibility towards others, increased confidence, and high levels of enjoyment and engagement in learning.	1, 2, 4, 5, 9	3	We have continued to provide this provision and it is something innovative that we have been able to provide for our students through PP. From April 2026, we will no longer be able to continue with this provision as staffing is a significant barrier. The HT, DHT and SENDCo are staffing this on a weekly basis to enable TA to remain in KS2 on a Wednesday afternoon.
Sports Therapy	Participation in Sports Therapy sessions encourages pupils in areas such as self-belief/esteem, develop emotional resilience and students who participate in sport generally have higher levels of emotional well-being as well as better physical health. Sports Therapy sessions are run by external providers.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9	3	Sports Therapy continues to have a significant impact upon participants.
Nurture Provision	Embedding and development of a Nurture Room to offer an inclusive space for pupils to regulate and deescalate, learn strategies to manage their emotions and to develop resilience for learning. Whole School support with embedding of The Boxall Profile so that there is a whole school approach to Nurture and Inclusive Practice.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9	3	78% of children accessing our Nurture Provision are in receipt of PP. Following a review of the provision in December 2024, we now have a robust provision which has had

	Implementation of a Pastoral Team made up of a Pastoral Lead member of staff plus 1 further member of staff to implement Nurture Principles and provide training around social, emotional and mental health support via Mental Health First Aid, Drawing & Talking, sensory circuits etc www.nurtureuk.org			many successes. We have 3 children who were barely accessing the classroom who have had daily Nurture intervention who are now spending their time successfully in the classroom.
Play Therapy/ELSA	Identified pupils are signposted to specialist intervention for SEMH support. Pupils with identified SEMH needs evidences significant improvement in emotional development through the effectiveness of Nurture approaches. Research is extensive; showing improvement in the social and emotional development of children. In a systematic review, Hughes and Schlosser (2014) Those identified with SEMH needs evidences between 77% and 84% of children show a positive change through the use of play and creative arts therapies when delivered to PTUK standards	1, 2, 3, 9	3	We have 2 places for Play Therapy funded by PP. There have been significant improvements in the emotional well-being of both children. We have a need for 1 more place for Play Therapy to be funded via PP.
Forest School	Continued provision of environmental therapy led by a qualified Forest School Practitioner and specialist teacher. Research indicates that Forest School has a positive impact on young children in terms of confidence, social skills, language and communication, motivation and concentration, physical skills and knowledge and understanding. Students identified via graduated approach.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9	3	Successful use of PP funding as evidenced via Boxall Profiling
Parental financial support for educational visits	Continued financial support provided to the parents of disadvantaged pupils. For residential trips, parents asked to make a minimal contribution which is then subsidised.	4	2	This funding has enabled several pupils in receipt of PP to attend school visits.
Continued subscription to a range of	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the academic profile and areas of	1, 2, 6, 7, 8	2	GL Assessment used to screen for:

standardised diagnostic assessment platforms Training for staff to ensure assessments are administered and interpreted correctly	need for each pupil so that the correct support and intervention may be delivered.			Dyslexia Dyscalculia Access is also available to screen for processing difficulty. SENDCo is trained to deliver and interpret these screeners in GL format.
Speech & Language Link subscription for Infants/Juniors Widget Online Subscription.	Utilisation of these subscriptions to assess and target pupils speech, language and communication skills. The EEF Toolkit states that oral language interventions have a high impact on pupil outcomes of 6 months additional progress' and that 'approaches to speaking, listening and a combination of the two all show positive impacts on attainment'	2, 3	2	Crucial subscription which is used to assess SaL needs and provides an intervention package for children identified as needing this provision.
Additional adult-led tuition for Literacy and Numeracy application providing class based support for literacy and maths to increase engagement and achievement.	Some students need targeted support to catch up. Small group and 1:1 interventions with highly qualified staff have been shown to be effective, as discussed in reliable evidence sources such as Visible Learning by John Hattie and the EEF Toolkit. Quality teaching practices using manipulatives and mathematical tools can be a powerful resource alongside teaching of mathematical links and concepts as evidenced in Improving Mathematics in the Early Years and KS1 EEF guidance report https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/early-maths	6, 7, 8	1	We have chosen not to allocate Pupil Premium funding to 1:1 tuition for maths and English because our current assessment evidence and strategic priorities indicate that alternative approaches deliver greater impact for disadvantaged pupils. Internal monitoring shows that the majority of identified gaps in attainment can be addressed more

				effectively through high-quality whole-class teaching, targeted small-group interventions, and in-class support. These approaches enable pupils to benefit from collaborative learning, guided practice, and consistent reinforcement of skills within the classroom environment.
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Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
Little Wandle	Wandle Learning Trust
Speech and Language Link	Speech Link Multimedia
White Rose Maths	White Rose Maths
Widget Online	Widget Software
Testwise Assessment	GL Assessment
SPAG.com	SPAG.com
Purple Mash	Too Simple

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

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

Falconry sessions allocated to 1 child who has eligibility.

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
<i>Improved Boxall Profile outcomes</i> <i>Positive extra-curricular experiences</i>