

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement: Highfields Academy

At Highfields, we strive to inspire a love of learning in our pupils, fostering confidence in their unique identities and equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed for the next stage of their educational journey. Our core values—respectful, resilient, rewarded, responsible, and rounded—reflect this commitment. We are dedicated to providing every pupil with the opportunity to achieve their full potential through excellent progress. We firmly believe that social disadvantage should never be a barrier to a child's future success. The Pupil Premium Grant is additional funding given to publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers.

Our primary aim in using the Pupil Premium Grant is to diminish the differences between pupil groups.

This statement details our school's use of pupil 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 2024 - 2025

Detail	Data
School name	Highfields Academy
Number of pupils in school	243 Rec – Y6 - 204 Pre-school – Y6 - 243
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	13.7%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024 – 2025 2025 – 2026 2026 - 2027
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	LAB
Pupil premium lead	Vicki Hughes
Governor / Trustee lead	Lynsay Lawson

Funding overview

2024 - 2025

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£39,110
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	£0

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our approach for using Pupil Premium and Recovery Premium is based on a tiered approach:

- Investing in high quality teaching
- Targeted academic support
- Wider strategies

At Highfields Academy, our intention is to ensure all children are inspired and love learning and achieve their full potential. We provide a purposeful, inspiring and inclusive learning environment where children access high quality teaching and learning opportunities. This will prepare them with the knowledge and skills needed to take on the stage of their school journey.

At our school, we maintain high expectations and aspirations for all pupils, including those eligible for Pupil Premium funding. When designing our Pupil Premium Strategy, we carefully consider our school's unique context, the starting points of our pupils, and the specific challenges they face.

To ensure our approach is evidence-based and impactful, we use the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Guide to inform our decisions. Our spending is driven by current research and best practices, enabling us to provide targeted support that addresses the needs of every child and fosters their academic and personal growth.

Disadvantaged pupils may face various barriers to learning, such as limited support at home, weak language and communication skills, low confidence, behavioural challenges, and issues with attendance and punctuality. Complex family situations can also hinder their ability to thrive. We understand that these challenges are diverse, and there is no universal solution to address them all.

As highlighted by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), “good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students.” With this in mind, we are committed to enhancing the quality of teaching through targeted professional development (CPD) for our staff and robust recruitment practices.

We provide targeted support to help narrow gaps and enable pupils to achieve their full potential, not only academically but also by offering wellbeing support to ensure they are emotionally prepared to learn. This support is reviewed regularly to ensure it reaches the pupils who need it most. When a pupil no longer requires support, it is reallocated to benefit another child in need.

A significant barrier for our disadvantaged pupils is their limited access to wider experiences (cultural capital). To address this, we aim to enrich their opportunities through thoughtful curriculum design and an extensive range of extracurricular activities. Additionally, we value the importance of strong home-school partnerships and strive to work closely with parents, fostering collaboration to support and encourage their child’s progress.

Our Ultimate Objectives:

- To narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
- To ensure all disadvantaged pupils in our school meet or exceed the nationally expected progress rates.
- To support the health and wellbeing of our pupils, enabling them to engage with learning at an appropriate level.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Narrowing the attainment gap in maths and reading across all year groups within Key Stage 2
2	Narrow the attainment gap in writing
3	Barriers to learning which may be related to SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) or SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health).
4	Some pupils have limited life experiences and some families may struggle to finance wider school opportunities that support understanding in different subject areas

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
Disadvantaged pupils who are not on track to meet their age-related expectation in maths, reading and writing will make accelerated progress. The gap between their expected attainment level and current attainment level will close.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An increased percentage of pupils will reach the expected standard in Maths, Writing and Reading from their current assessment level ● Gap will reduce in attainment made between PP and non PP ● Where a child has complex SEND needs, they will make progress towards their long term EHCP outcomes.
Pupils access appropriate interventions to meet their learning needs and gaps in knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As the children’s learning needs are analysed and addressed, PP pupils make at least expected progress or exceed the targets set
Achieve and sustain improved mental wellbeing for all pupils in school, particularly those identified as disadvantaged	<p>Improved wellbeing for those identified will be evaluated using different tools and resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupil Voice ● Staff Voice ● Parent voice ● ELSA programme ● Feedback of impact of Mental Health Monday ● Reduced incidents of dysregulated behaviours due to emotions as logged on CPOMS
All children, including those eligible for pupil premium will be settled and secure in school	<p>Pupils will have their emotional needs met and will be happy and ready to engage and learn.</p> <p>Identified pupils will show improved attendance of 95% +</p> <p>Pupil wellbeing survey results will have increased percentage of pupils reporting they feel safe and happy in school.</p> <p>The percentage of pupils eligible for pupil premium participating in extra curricular activities will be increased.</p>
All children, including those eligible for pupil premium will have access to educational trips and visits	<p>Pupils will have enriched life experiences and the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom to experience what they may not outside of school</p>

Achieve and sustain improved attendance particularly for those who have historical low attendance and are disadvantaged	Increase the percentage of disadvantaged pupils who have above 95% attendance
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Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £17, 949

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Quality First Teaching across all classes	<i>The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them.</i> EEF High Quality Teaching	1, 2, 3
Teaching and support staff reorganised to allow more targeted support of pupils in years 3-5. (Staffing cost combined) £12, 499	We have analysed the needs of our year 3-5 children and have identified that making a small group of pupils with identified needs and catering for them would allow teachers to increase the amount of attention each child will receive. <i>Reducing class size is an approach to managing the ratio between pupils and teachers, as it is suggested that the range of approaches a teacher can employ and the amount of attention each student will receive will increase as the number of pupils per teacher becomes smaller.</i> EEF Reducing Class Size	1, 2, 3
CPD opportunities for all subject leads:	<i>Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children's outcomes. Indeed, research tells us that high quality teaching</i>	1, 2, 3

<p>Release time for subject leaders</p> <p>National College £1600</p>	<p><i>can narrow the disadvantage gap. Effective professional development (PD) plays a crucial role in improving classroom practice and pupil outcomes.</i></p> <p>EEF Effective Professional Development</p>	
<p>All pupils can evidence that they know more and remember more in all subjects, embedding concepts in their long term memory.</p> <p><i>Teachers promote opportunities for discussion and check pupil understanding routinely and systematically in all lessons – use of Flashback Four at the start of Maths lessons</i></p> <p><i>Knowledge organisers for some foundation subjects are used to support pupils to know more and remember more</i></p> <p><i>Knowledge organisers are adapted for SEND pupils and tailored to their needs and learning</i></p> <p><i>Pre and post topic assessments</i></p>	<p><i>Subject matter is broken into blocks or units with predetermined objectives and specified outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>A high level of success should be required before pupils move on to new content – it is crucial to monitor and communicate pupil progress and to provide additional support for pupils that take longer to reach the required level of knowledge.</i></p> <p>EEF Mastery Learning</p> <p><i>Organising information visually can support pupils’ understanding of content, making abstract learning more concrete and reducing reliance solely on the verbal.</i></p> <p><i>Examples might be a Frayer model, a Venn diagram, a knowledge organiser, a T-chart of pros and cons, a mindmap or a timeline. It’s clear how this visual representation of information might support understanding for a child who struggles with their executive functioning, or who has a delay in language.</i></p> <p>EEF Cognitive Strategies</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Enhancement of our reading curriculum planning and assessment in line with DfE and EEF guidance</p> <p>£1000</p> <p>Staff CPD from Reading Lead</p> <p>Subject Leader time</p>	<p><i>After analysis of reading across KS2 at the end of last year, it was identified that children were not always reading texts that matched their reading ability. Some of the books pupils were choosing were not varied in genre or author. Promoting a love of reading was also an identified priority.</i></p> <p><i>Phonics approaches have been consistently found to be effective in supporting younger pupils to master the basics of reading, with an average impact of an additional five months’ progress. Research suggests that</i></p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

	<p><i>phonics is particularly beneficial for younger learners (4–7 year olds) as they begin to read. Teaching phonics is more effective on average than other approaches to early reading (such as whole language or alphabetic approaches), though it should be emphasised that effective phonics techniques are usually embedded in a rich literacy environment for early readers and are only one part of a successful literacy strategy.</i></p> <p>EEF Phonics</p>	
<p>Consistent use of DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme. Deliver Little Wandle Phonics and Early Reading in EYFS, KS1 and struggling achievers in KS2 (Rapid Catch-up). £850</p> <p>Training and support for all staff and for parents</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading, particularly for the disadvantaged.</p> <p><i>“Early literacy approaches typically increase children’s learning by about four months. Approaches that develop literacy skills and knowledge can have an important effect on early reading. The evidence for the positive impact of early literacy approaches is extensive.</i></p> <p><i>Careful monitoring of progress in reading is particularly important to target approaches effectively. For example, moving from knowledge of letter names and sounds to early phonics.”</i></p> <p>EEF Early Literacy Approaches</p> <p><i>Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive similar or slightly greater benefit from phonics interventions and approaches. This is likely to be due to the explicit nature of the instruction and the intensive support provided.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>

	<p><i>Targeted phonics interventions may therefore improve decoding skills more quickly for pupils who have experienced these barriers to learning.</i></p> <p>EEF Phonics</p>	
<p>Implementation of new assessment resource: NFER £2000</p> <p>Staff training</p>	<p><i>Any consideration of curriculum should be inextricably bound to understanding quality diagnostic learning assessments. If you want to use assessments to tell you whether students have learnt something, you need to be clear what it is you wanted them to learn in the first place. Clarity about the intended learning (ie, the curriculum) is crucial if we want to create or select questions for an assessment that will tell us what has been learnt.</i></p> <p><i>Ideally, this includes thinking about the sequencing and anatomy of that learning. When a learning aim or task is complex, clarifying the curriculum includes identifying sub-skills or components on which the whole performance depends, specifying prerequisite knowledge and competencies that must be in place, and knowing how to combine these elements to build up the whole. If we understand this anatomy, we can create assessments that are much more diagnostically helpful.</i></p> <p>EEF Use Of Assessment</p>	1, 2, 3

Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions) Budgeted cost: £15, 207

EYFS and KS1 reading intervention £182 x 39 = £7098, TA interventions £8109

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Magic Maths Year 4 Multiplication Tables Club (focused on PP children)</p>	<p><i>We know from a wide body of evidence that targeted academic support can have a positive impact on learning, particularly for those Pupil Premium pupils who are not making good progress. Considering how classroom teachers and teaching assistants can provide targeted academic</i></p>	1

	<p><i>support—including through structured small-group interventions that link to classroom teaching and the curriculum—is an essential part of an effective Pupil Premium strategy.</i></p> <p>EEF Guide to Pupil Premium</p>	
<p>Pupil Progress meetings track progress of PP pupils and appropriate, timely interventions are put in place</p>	<p><i>Targeted deployment, where teaching assistants are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals has a higher impact.</i></p> <p><i>It is particularly important to ensure that when pupils are receiving support from a teaching assistant, this supplements teaching but does not reduce the amount of high-quality interactions they have with their classroom teacher both in and out-of-class.</i></p> <p><i>The average impact of the deployment of teaching assistants is about an additional four months’ progress over the course of a year.</i></p> <p>EEF Teaching Assistant Interventions</p>	1, 2, 3
<p>Keep Up Phonics – Little Wandle Scheme (Rapid Catch-up groups)</p>	<p><i>“All children appear to benefit from early literacy approaches, but there is some evidence that certain strategies, particularly those involving targeted small group interaction, may have particularly positive effects on children from disadvantaged backgrounds”</i></p> <p>EEF Early Literacy Approaches</p>	1, 2
<p>TA delivers learning interventions 3 days a week to targeted pupils identified as in need in order to accelerate progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing intervention – Pathways to progress • ELSA programme <p>£8,109</p>	<p><i>Targeted deployment, where teaching assistants are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals has a higher impact, whereas deployment of teaching assistants in everyday classroom environments has not been shown to have a positive impact on learner outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>The average impact of the deployment of teaching assistants is about an additional four months’ progress over the course of a year.</i></p> <p><i>Research which focuses on teaching assistants who provide one to one or small group targeted interventions shows a stronger positive benefit of between four and six additional months on</i></p>	1, 2, 3

	<p><i>average. Often interventions are based on a clearly specified approach which teaching assistants have been trained to deliver.</i></p> <p>EEF Interventions</p>	
<p>Priority readers with reading volunteers and TAs throughout the day as often as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lowest 20% focused on PP children 	<p><i>Effective diagnosis of reading difficulties is important in identifying possible solutions, particularly for older struggling readers. Pupils can struggle with decoding words, understanding the structure of the language used, or understanding particular vocabulary, which may be subject-specific.</i></p> <p><i>A wide range of strategies and approaches can be successful, but for many pupils they need to be taught explicitly and consistently.</i></p> <p><i>It is crucial to support pupils to apply the comprehension strategies independently to other reading tasks, contexts and subjects.</i></p> <p>EEF Impact of Consistent Approaches to Reading</p> <p><i>Evidence has consistently highlighted that both decoding (the ability to translate written words into the spoken the sounds of spoken language) and comprehension (the ability to understand the meaning of the language being read) skills are necessary for confident and competent reading, but neither is sufficient on its own.</i></p> <p>EEF Reading Fluency</p>	1

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

Budgeted cost: £7,748

ELSA £91 x 39 = £3549 x2 = £7098, Life Education Bus £650

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<p>ELSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum to be fully accessed and disruption/distraction in lessons to be limited because of use of self-help strategies and increased self-esteem of learners • Children’s social and emotional health will be supported through targeted sessions focused on their individual needs 	<p>EEF (+4)</p> <p><i>Social and Emotional Learning – interventions which target social and emotional learning seek to improve pupil’s interaction with others and self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly on the academic or cognitive elements of learning. SEL interventions might focus on the ways in which students work with (and alongside) their peers, teachers, family and community. These include specialised programmes which are targeted at pupils with particular social or emotional needs.</i></p> <p>EEF Social and Emotional Learning</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Life Education Bus</p> <p>- designed to help pupils develop essential life skills and knowledge. The programme covers key topics such as emotional well-being, healthy lifestyles, relationships, and safety, providing age-appropriate activities and lessons. By engaging in discussions, role-playing, and interactive activities, pupils learn to navigate social situations, make informed choices, and understand the importance of physical and mental health.</p> <p>£650</p>	<p><i>Research suggests that teacher-child relationships and interactions are an important tool to model pro-social behaviour (behaviour that aims to help others) to children. Evidence also suggests that role-play and the use of puppets might be useful activities to model pro-social behaviour and support the development of relationship skills. Similarly, joint problem solving and collaborative activities can enhance children’s opportunities to develop and practise their relationship skills.</i></p> <p>EEF Life Skills and Social Interaction</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>
<p>Support to ensure inclusion: pupils are supported in all educational trips and visits</p>	<p>Studies of adventure learning consistently show positive benefits on academic learning and wider outcomes such as self-confidence. <i>On average pupils who participate in adventure learning appear to make approximately an additional four months’ progress.</i></p>	<p>3, 4</p>

	<p>Outdoor Adventure Learning</p> <p><i>The overall impact of sports participation on academic achievement tends to be positive but low (about two additional months' progress). However, there is recent evidence from the UK that sports participation can have a larger effect on, for example, mathematics learning when combined with a structured numeracy programme (with one study showing an impact of up to ten months' additional progress).</i></p> <p>Sports Participation</p>	
<p>Lateness and absence for disadvantaged pupils is minimised through effective tracking and parental engagement.</p>	<p><i>Establishing good attendance patterns from an early age is vital for social development. The more time a child spends with other children in the classroom and as part of broader school-organised activities, the more chance they have of making friends, of feeling included, and of developing social skills, confidence, and self-esteem.</i></p> <p><i>We also know that extended absence from school is linked with behavioural and social problems. These effects can be long lasting and affect a young person's mental health and their long-term life chances.</i></p> <p><i>Parental communication interventions aim to increase awareness of the consequences of absenteeism or target commonly held parental misbeliefs that undervalue the importance of regular attendance. The aim of these interventions is that greater awareness of the misconceptions will lead to guardians taking a more active role in improving their child's attendance.</i></p> <p>EEF Supporting Attendance</p>	1, 2, 3
<p>Attendance Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual targets set for each identified pupil 	<p><i>Pupils' attainment can only be improved if they are attending school. NFER briefing for school leaders identifies addressing attendance as a key step.</i></p>	1, 2, 3, 4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of punctuality and attendance • Meet with parents of families identified • Analyse attendance over time (including morning club) to identify PP pupils and evaluate improvements 	<p><i>As many as 1.8 million school age children in the UK are at risk of hunger in the morning. A hungry pupil cannot concentrate.</i></p> <p>Sutton Trust</p> <p><i>Persistent absence is an immediate issue facing schools across the country. According to the most recent data, almost one in four pupils missed more than 10 per cent of sessions in the autumn term of 2021, and 1.4 per cent of pupils missed at least 50 per cent of sessions.</i></p> <p><i>We know these pupils are disproportionately more like to come from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. So tackling persistent absence is an important part of improving education outcomes for this group.</i></p> <p>EEF Improving Attendance for Disadvantaged Pupils</p>	
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Total budgeted cost: £ 40, 904

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 2023 to 2024 academic year.

We have conducted a detailed analysis of the performance of our disadvantaged students over the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data alongside our internal summative and formative assessments. To contextualise our findings, we have compared the outcomes of disadvantaged students with both national benchmarks for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, as well as with the performance of their non-disadvantaged peers within our school.

Key Findings

- **Reading:** Disadvantaged students generally underperformed compared to their non-disadvantaged peers across most year groups. The attainment gap was particularly pronounced in Year 1 and Year 3, where the majority of disadvantaged students were working below the expected standard. However, in Year 6, a proportion of disadvantaged students achieved at or above expectations, though still attaining slightly behind their non-disadvantaged counterparts.
- **Writing:** The attainment gap persists in writing, with notable underperformance in Year 3 and Year 4. While some disadvantaged students in Year 1 and Year 6 met expectations, many continued to work below the expected standard, highlighting the need for targeted support, particularly in early and middle primary years.
- **Mathematics:** Disadvantaged students in Year 3 and Year 4 performed significantly below expected levels, with a majority not meeting the standard. However, the gap narrowed in Year 6, where a proportion of disadvantaged students met expectations.

Overall Trends and Next Steps

Our analysis reinforces the persistent attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, across key year groups. To address these challenges, we will implement:

- Targeted interventions in core subjects, particularly in early and middle primary years.
- Early identification of learning gaps to provide timely and structured support.
- Tailored teaching strategies that address the specific needs of disadvantaged students.
- Regular monitoring and review of progress to ensure the effectiveness of interventions and adapt strategies as needed.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Data analysis/demographic analysis/assessment	Insight £820
Times Table Rockstars	Times Table Rockstars £95
Accelerated Reader	Renaissance Learning £2135
Aim	Outcome
Quality First Teaching, individualised pre-teaching, same day, targeted and challenge interventions with instant feedback to provide all children with the best chance to achieve their full potential.	<p>Interventions target gaps in learning from previous lessons- linked to basic skills in English and maths.</p> <p>Pre teaching, where appropriate, provide opportunities to rehearse skills in advance.</p> <p>Effective gap tasks and next steps that are reviewed.</p> <p>Termly pupil progress meetings for all vulnerable groups (PP/ SEND/ EAL/ lower 20%) between pupil premium lead and teachers.</p> <p>High involvement with parents over course of the year – Reading Meetings EYFS and KS1, Parent Consultations, Showcase of work</p>
Ensure that all school adults access high quality CPD. This will provide effective interventions, assessments mentoring, transitions and well-being support	<p>In house training and support from senior members of staff and subject leaders.</p> <p>English and Phonics Leads: Pathways to Read, Little Wandle Phonics</p> <p>Assessments of pupils, Pupil progress meetings</p> <p>The National College accessed, used and actions shared and implemented with staff</p>
Ensure pupils are given equal opportunities to fully engage with the curriculum	<p>Learning walks/monitoring</p> <p>Curriculum review</p>
Phonics and Early reading support in EYFS and KS1	<p>Daily, 1:1 intervention seen to have greatest impact.</p> <p>Phonics rapid catch-up in KS1 and KS2</p>

