

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Abbey School

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1124 (1026 excluding sixth form)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	37% (382)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2024/2025 – 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025
Statement authorised by	Rowland Speller, Principal
Pupil premium lead	Jackie Lucas, Vice Principal Alyce Le Brunn-Healey, Assistant Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Edd Withers

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£365,400
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£365,400

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

What are your ultimate objectives for your disadvantaged pupils?

Our intention is for all pupils, regardless of their background or the challenges they face, to make strong progress and achieve their full potential. We are committed to meeting their pastoral, social, and academic needs within a nurturing and supportive environment, with a focus on improving outcomes for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils.

Our ultimate objective is to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive the tailored support they need to thrive. Through a comprehensive approach that includes high-quality teaching, targeted academic support, and strategies to address non-academic barriers, we aim to provide every disadvantaged pupil with the opportunity to reach their full potential.

How does your current pupil premium strategy plan work towards achieving those objectives?

There has been significant progress made at The Abbey School for our Pupil Premium learners. We have seen some improvement in attendance, likely due to the appointment of new members to the attendance team. The team has been actively incentivising attendance and carefully following a robust attendance strategy. Nevertheless, we recognise that there is still room for further growth in this area.

Furthermore, we have seen increased progress in Maths, despite the attainment levels of pupils when they join us remaining consistently low. The high expectations in this area, coupled with the cohesive delivery of lessons, have empowered students to become more independent and motivated in their learning, and as a result, their performance has improved.

In the same way, the implementation and development of STEER, increased staffing in our pastoral teams, and improvements to the quality of our Personal Development programme have contributed to better supporting the emotional well-being of our pupil premium students. This approach is continually reviewed and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness.

What are the key principles of your strategy plan?

At the heart of our approach, we work hard to ensure that an effective teacher is in front of every class, with every teacher supported to continually improve. We recognise that this is especially important for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils, as high-quality teaching has the greatest impact on their progress. Investing in exceptional teaching for these pupils is, and will continue to be, a top priority for our Pupil Premium spending.

To support this, our strategies include providing professional development, targeted training and support for early career teachers, and investing in recruitment and retention efforts. These initiatives aim to ensure that our teaching staff have the skills, knowledge, and stability needed to deliver the best possible education for all pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Furthermore, we know from extensive evidence that targeted academic support can make a real difference in helping pupils, especially those who are struggling, to progress. Our Pupil Premium strategy focuses on how both classroom teachers and teaching assistants can work together to provide this support in the most effective way. This includes small-group interventions and after-school targeted interventions that are carefully linked to what's being taught in the classroom,

ensuring that disadvantaged pupils receive the personalised help they need to catch up and make lasting progress.

We understand that many of our pupils face non-academic challenges that can impact their academic success. At The Abbey School, we are committed to addressing these barriers with care as part of our Pupil Premium strategy. While such challenges are common nationwide, we tailor our approach to meet the unique needs of our school community, ensuring every pupil receives the support needed to thrive.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Our attendance data over the last two years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been between 6% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils.
2	Our data, including reading assessment results, observations, and both formative and summative assessments, reveals lower literacy, reading, and vocabulary skills in comparison to non-disadvantaged learners.
3	Our observations indicate that many lower-attaining disadvantaged pupils struggle with metacognitive and self-regulation strategies when tackling challenging tasks, particularly in monitoring and evaluating their answers, as well as in retention and retrieval of information. This trend is evident across the curriculum, particularly in science and English.
4	<p>Our assessments, including wellbeing surveys, along with observations and discussions with pupils and families, have highlighted social and emotional challenges for many pupils, such as anxiety and low self-esteem. These issues, which also impact aspirations, self-confidence, and overall welfare, are particularly prevalent among disadvantaged pupils and affect their academic attainment.</p> <p>Teacher referrals for support remain high, with 530 pupils (386 of whom are disadvantaged) currently requiring additional support for their social and emotional needs. Of these, 235 pupils (141 of whom are disadvantaged) are currently receiving small group interventions.</p>
5	Our destinations data and careers programme findings indicate that post-16 aspirations are lower than desired, especially amongst disadvantaged learners.

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>To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils</p>	<p>A steady and sustained decrease in overall absence rates and persistent absence figures, with the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students narrowing.</p> <p>Sustained high attendance by 2026/27 will be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall unauthorised absence rate for all pupils being in line with national, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers will be reduced. • The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being reduced in three years with the figure for disadvantaged pupils being in line with national.
<p>To show progress in reading comprehension, literacy, and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils, particularly across KS3.</p>	<p>Summative outcomes in reading and comprehension-based subjects (English, Science, MFL, History, Geography, R.E...) show an improvement in end of year data, with a reduced gap between their scores and those of their non-disadvantaged peers.</p> <p>This progress should be further evident through increased engagement in lessons, book scrutiny, and other assessments.</p>
<p>To improve metacognitive and self-regulatory skills, including retention and retrieval of information, among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects.</p>	<p>Class observations indicate that disadvantaged pupils are becoming more proficient at monitoring and regulating their own learning, with improvements in retention and retrieval of information, as reflected in the outcomes of summative assessments.</p> <p>This progress is further supported by their use of whiteboards and knowledge organisers as tools to aid development, along with strategies to reinforce key concepts.</p>
<p>To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2026/27, as demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data from student voice, surveys of students and parents, teacher

	<p>observations, and positive outcomes shown in the STEER program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, especially among disadvantaged pupils.
<p>To achieve tangible improvement in our destinations data, with a growing percentage of students progressing to higher education and high-level apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Sustained improvement in destinations data by 2026/27 will be demonstrated by working towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target of 100% in education, employment or training post 16 • 60% post 18 attending higher education with numbers from disadvantaged groups being in line with those not in disadvantaged groups

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: £170,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Pupil Premium First	<p>Taking a whole-school approach to Pupil Premium means prioritising disadvantaged students in all areas.</p> <p>This may involve placing a focus on disadvantaged students in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books and equipment: Check PP students have these ready first. • Date and heading: Ensure PP students have this done first. • Class questioning: Ask PP students first. • Understanding: Check PP students' understanding first. • Presentations: Ensure PP students present first. • Homework: Confirm PP students have recorded and submitted it first. • Book marking: Mark PP students' books first. • Rewards: Reward PP students first. • Volunteers: Choose PP students first. 	1,2,3,4,5

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent contact: Reach out to PP students' parents first. • Form tutor support: See PP students first. • Mentoring: Arrange for PP students first. • Trips: Ensure PP students have places first. <p>Evidence Link: The tiered approach to Pupil Premium spending Education Endowment Foundation</p>	
Low Stakes Testing	<p>Low stakes testing, including cold calling, turn and talk, mini white boards and use of visualisers, prompts students to retrieve information and allows teachers to track whether key aspects of knowledge has been retained</p> <p>Evidence link: Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	2, 3
The Abbey Lesson	<p>Consistent approach to pedagogy that follows the principles related to direct instruction with the teacher leading from the front and utilising their subject specific expertise. This allows the opportunity for the teacher to implement a range of AFL strategies that support this approach.</p> <p>Evidence link: A case for direct instruction - E-ACT</p>	2,3
Effective assessment training	<p>Training to ensure well-constructed assessments are in place to maximise information provided on completion to ensure effective use in linking progress to goals</p> <p>Evidence link: Assessment and feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	2,3
Regular planning and development – systems for cohesion	<p>Heads of subject work closely with their teams to ensure that their departments are driving towards common objectives.</p> <p>Evidence link: Supporting staff in curriculum planning for a phased return - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk), Secondary national curriculum (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	2,3
Training in the embedding and best use of KO	<p>School wide focus on most successful strategies for active use of KO. Department leads sharing techniques they use for retrieval practice of all condensed facts and concepts they have identified.</p> <p>Evidence link: Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	2,3
Sparks Maths/Science/English	<p>Software programme purchased to support home learning. This programme shows the gaps in student attainment and provides support to improve outcomes.</p> <p>Evidence link: Mathematics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	2,3

Departmental software packages	Additional licences to support teaching and learning and to engage parents in supporting students with their work outside of the classroom. Evidence link: https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/maths-ks-2-3/EEF-Improving-Mathematics-in-Key-Stages-2-and-3-2022-Update.pdf?v=1694046182	2,3
Additional teacher in English and Maths Completed August 2023 Seeking staff for this role for the academic year 2024-25	Providing extra staff in core departments seeks to close some of our gaps in English and Maths. This includes academic teaching assistants specifically used to support Evidence link: Staffing and employment advice for schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)	2,3,4
Appointment of LRC coordinator	New co-ordinator appointed to run library to support whole school reading, reading interventions and AR programme and in time developing use of analytics and narrative. Evidence link: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2
Appointment of larger Attendance team	A larger attendance team has been recruited to more effectively manage student absenteeism, with a clear focus and set of objectives specifically targeting disadvantaged students. Evidence link: Supporting attendance EEF	1
CPD to support cohesive delivery or reading improvement	Training on the reading ruler. Implementation of new reading strategy. Evidence link: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) , Reading at the transition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2
Purchase and utilisation of UniFrog	Evidence link: Aspiration interventions EEF	5

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

Budgeted cost: £ 113,700

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Academic mentors (coaching) Year 10 only	Mentoring programme reaching every year group to support PP students with academic studies and self-motivation. Evidence link: Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,4
Intervention	Early intervention in English and Maths in years 7-9 with department focused in-class support Focused P8 support for upper school students addressing individual subject needs as part of 'Raising Standards' (RSL60) for the disadvantaged. Evidence link: Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2,3
Reading challenge Completed 2021-22 New initiative for 2024 onwards in planning (PJ & SAF 'ReadingWise')	Reading programme to support literacy skills of all year 7 students Evidence links: Accelerated Reader EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) , Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) The Matthew Effect – why literacy is so important – David Didau Reading comprehension strategies EEF	2
Additional speech and language support	Speech and language intervention can have a positive impact on students' confidence, their vocabulary and their understanding. These are particularly helpful when delivered one-to-one and over a short period, Evidence link: Oral language interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2,3,4
Homework club – supported learning	Homework support can have a marked impact on students' wellbeing, self-regulation and structure as well as an improvement in their academic attainment. Evidence link:	1,2,3,4

	Homework EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Paired reading and reading buddies	Volunteer sixth form provide individual reading practice regularly each day Evidence link: Literacy and numeracy catch-up strategies (publishing.service.gov.uk)	2
TA support	Additional support in groups of the core with high numbers of vulnerable students Evidence link: Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,3,4
Tutor mentoring	Year 7 – 10 form tutor mentoring of students in areas self-identified as being a challenge to them maximise progress their own potential. Also, to provide support for students who have a lack of structure and ambition. STEER Project Evidence link: Mentoring EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk), Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	4
DEAR	Elevating importance of reading through dedicated weekly tutor session Years 7 – 10 to support close monitoring of reading skills (2024-25) Evidence link: Accelerated Reader EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk), Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2
Tutoring (CIC)	Tutors engaged to support specific LA children in care to reduce learning gaps and stretch to and beyond targets Evidence links: Individualised instruction EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
Renaissance Learning (End date 2025)	Reading and comprehension programme to improve students' literacy (years 7 and 8) Evidence link: Accelerated Reader EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk), Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 81,200

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance monitoring, intervention and visits. Plus, lots of incentives aimed at good attendance.	Home visits, calls and contact to push forward engagement with hard-to-reach families on a regular basis to reduce barriers. Breakfast club offered every morning. Evidence link: Attendance interventions rapid evidence assessment EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) , Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Strategies for improving attendance The Key Leaders Breakfast clubs work their magic in disadvantaged English schools Institute for Fiscal Studies	1
Training for staff lead on 'Creating champions for literacy difficulties' Completed 2023-24 New focus 2024-25	Targeted training to challenge our understanding of literacy difficulties, SEND and disadvantaged to reading, writing and communication. Evidence link: Driving Inclusion: Creating Champions for Literacy Difficulties (driveryouthtrust.com) , Literacy EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2
Funding to relaunch extra-curricular opportunities with specific drive to encourage participation of vulnerable students	Extra-curricular activities offer a break from study and homework, provide the chance to make friends, pursue an interest or simply relax and de-stress. They can also improve time management and boost self-confidence whilst broadening students' perspectives on the world. Evidence link: Life skills and enrichment EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
Pastoral team training in specific wellbeing strategies	Targeted training in areas identified as most needed: Drawing and talking therapies Anger management Girls on board For 2024-26 also adding My Communication, My Ideal Self, Zone of Regulation and EBSA.	4

	Evidence link: Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Year 6 Transition	Additional transition days, visits and activities with vulnerable students – both as identified by national parameters and as identified by feeder school Evidence link: EEF Blog: Getting transition right (part 1 of 2) – four... EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
Summer school	The Summer school programme 'supports effective transition' to The Abbey School and will introduce our new students to our attitudes, values and beliefs. Evidence link: Summer schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) , COVID-19 and the impact of school closure - Nuffield Foundation	4
Unifrog Relaunch – 2024-26	Unifrog is a destinations platform for whole-school careers guidance, KS3-KS5. Students should regularly use Unifrog to provide them with advice and support with university opportunities, apprenticeships and careers. Evidence link: Aspiration interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	5
Employment of RSL, CPD trips and visits and behaviour. Permanent additions to Leadership Team with this continued focus.	Increased leadership in RSL, CPD trip and visits and behaviour. Evidence link: Aspiration interventions EEF Behaviour interventions EEF	1,2,3,4,5
Student Champions (PP / attendance / EAL / SEN) School badge system launching 2025	Motivational recognition to promote engagement and pride in those making most progress from starting point Evidence link: Using pupil premium EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
School Intervention Therapist 2024-26	Professionally qualified therapist offering group and individual advice and support to students using a referral system to ensure the most appropriate intervention is given.	4
Pastoral staffing Ongoing – investment covered by 'Pastoral	Staff trained to support students in personal organisation, self-discipline and resilience to reduce stress and increase focus on learning	4

team training in specific wellbeing strategies' above	Evidence link: Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	
Alternative curriculum provision - PEC	Students withdrawn from some lessons to work in a more focused way without whole class distractions. Curriculum input from mainstream teachers in core and enrichment with art. The additional of Forest School for 2024-26 is in place and therapy dog visits 2 - 3 days a week. Sessions also include Cooking for Life, AQA awards and Superbloom project/ Evidence link: AQA Unit Award Scheme Our Units One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) , Individualised instruction EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,3,4,5
Alchemy – alternative curriculum provision off site	Therapeutic provision providing academic and personal development support for students needing personalised work before returning to mainstream or specialist provision Evidence link: Individualised instruction EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
Emergency uniform and equipment fund	Dignified provision (as needed) of basic items essential to make sure student can attend school in line with their peers. Evidence link: School uniform EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
Enhanced pastoral support Now supporting with emerging long-term impact and struggles - ongoing	Additional resources in creating, delivering and reviewing reintegration plans, referrals to agencies and family support to assist in confident return to school of most anxious and vulnerable Evidence link: Covid-19 EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
STEER From 2022-24 Working towards Nurture School status.	Ongoing training for staff to recognise, teach and support progress of students (particularly PP) where trauma and attachment issues impede engagement, focus and progress. STEER 2024-26 Evidence link: Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4

Total budgeted cost: £365,400

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year 2023/24, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments.

The data shows an improvement in our A8 which is better than currently indicated by FFT for national data (source: FFT Data), where the gap is 12.6 for 2024 ($50.4 - 37.6 = 12.6$). The Abbey's A8 gap of 8.99 is 3.61 better than this national figure, despite ongoing challenges with attendance and engagement post-Covid. This improvement can be attributed to our comprehensive approach, which includes high-quality teaching, targeted academic support, and strategies to address non-academic barriers.

To help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils we compared their results to those for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at national and local level and to results achieved by our non-disadvantaged pupils (though we know that pupils included in the performance data will have experienced some disruption due to Covid-19 earlier in their schooling, which will have affected individual pupils and schools differently). The data demonstrates that there are marked improvements in our attendance for our disadvantaged students. We acknowledge there is still work to be done with students who are disadvantaged and persistently absent.

We have also used school data and observations to assess broader factors affecting the performance of disadvantaged pupils, such as attendance, behaviour, and wellbeing. The data indicates that our range of wraparound provisions is positively impacting disadvantaged students, as reflected in student and parent feedback, among other factors.

Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils met expectations, and we are at present on course to achieve the outcomes we set out to achieve by 2026/27, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above.

Our evaluation of the approaches implemented last academic year shows that our STEER and reading programmes, despite being in their preliminary stages, are having a direct and measurable impact on our disadvantaged students. Additionally, the growth of our attendance provision is starting to yield positive results, and we anticipate these benefits will continue as the year progresses. We have adjusted our approach, shifting from before-school reading interventions to a more streamlined 'raising standards' programme after school. Moreover, we have scaled back the academic tutor programme that has been in place for several years. Following a review of our strategy plan, we have made adjustments to how we intend to allocate our budget this academic year.

The Further Information section below provides more details about our planning, implementation, and evaluation processes.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
Unifrog	Unifrog
Sparks Maths/Science/English	Sparks
Bronze and Silver Award	Duke of Edinburgh
STEER Education	STEER
SMSC/PSHE/RSE/PD tracker	Gridmaker

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<i>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</i>
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils