



Pupil premium strategy statement – The Sittingbourne 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	1575 (Y7-13) 1402 (Y7-11)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	563/1402 40%
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)	2024-25 2025-26 2026-27
Date this statement was first published	November 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025 / November 2025 / July 2025 / November 2025 / July 2026 / November 2027 / July 2027
Statement authorised by	Mr N Smith
Pupil premium lead	Mr N Smith
Governor / Trustee lead	Mrs L Lawrence

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£621,007
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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>	£621,007



Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

The Sittingbourne School is a large, oversubscribed school built on a strong sense of community, making us a warm and very special place to be part of. Our staff work tirelessly to ensure the wellbeing and happiness of every child. However, we are not a school where we allow ourselves to be defined or limited by the pastoral care we offer. We never forget that teaching and learning is our core business. Our motto is “Empowered through learning” because we believe that through excellent teaching and a fantastic curriculum every child can succeed, be happy and change their lives. Therefore, we are driving to ensure every child consistently receives high quality teaching and learning in every lesson and engages in a challenging and relevant curriculum.

As identified in the school’s Ofsted Inspection Data Summary Report in 2023, both the pupil base deprivation and location deprivation of the school are well above the national average. In turn, the proportion of students who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding is significantly above the national average. Consequently, this places barriers in the way of achievement and progress for many of our students.

The Sittingbourne School staff and leaders see it as their role to remove the barriers that can prevent students from achieving highly and being able to pursue appropriate and fulfilling opportunities. The school’s context aside, the majority of students and their parents/carers echo the school’s high aspirations and want the students stretched and challenged to be the very best they can be.

Our overriding intention for our disadvantaged students is that they achieve at least as highly as our more advantaged students, and that they are able to pursue future opportunities that are appropriate and fulfilling. To achieve this we have a holistic approach to eliminating the barriers to achievement our students face. Our approach can be summarised as the following:

- High-quality teaching: Ensuring every student receives excellent instruction in every lesson.
- Targeted academic support: Providing additional support for students who require extra help.
- Excellent pastoral care: Offering comprehensive support to address students' social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Enrichment opportunities: Providing a broad range of extracurricular activities to broaden students' horizons.

Through careful implementation, monitoring and evaluation of student achievement we will regularly review the impact of these interventions to ensure all students meet our high aspirations.



Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Progress and Attainment:</p> <p>Outcomes over the last three years show that disadvantaged students make less progress than their non-disadvantaged peers in most of their subjects. Last year's A8 and P8 for PP students was 26.03 and -1.03 respectively compared to 37.8 and -0.47 for non PP students.</p> <p>However, the gap in progress and attainment between PP and non PP students is widest in more "academic" subject such as English, Maths, History and Modern Languages. Whereas, the gap between PP and non PP students is most narrow in vocational subjects.</p>
2	<p>Independent learning & metacognition:</p> <p>Students from less advantaged backgrounds often face significant challenges in developing the metacognitive skills and independent learning strategies necessary for academic success. These challenges may stem from a lack of exposure to academic language, limited opportunities for independent study and a lack of parental support in developing effective study habits. These factors can hinder their ability to self-regulate their learning, monitor their own progress, and adapt their learning strategies to suit different tasks and subjects.</p>
3	<p>Attendance:</p> <p>Whilst Pupil Premium attendance has improved over the last two years, there is still a significant gap between their attendance and the attendance of more advantaged students. Last year's PP attendance was 88.1% compared to 91.9% non PP, whereas in 2022/23 it was 83.8% and 88.4% respectively.</p> <p>Last year, 41% of PP students had attendance below 90% compared to 14% of non PP students.</p> <p>Furthermore, students with attendance of 95% or above achieved an average grade of 4.5. Whereas PP students with attendance of between 85%-89% achieved an average grade of just a 1.7.</p>
4	<p>Literacy & reading:</p> <p>Our data shows that students from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to arrive at school with poorer literacy and reading skills compared to others. This gap widened following the national lockdowns in response to Covid-19.</p>
5	<p>Behaviour & engagement:</p> <p>Pupil Premium students are over represented in both classroom behaviour data and suspensions/exclusion data. Consequently, Pupil Premium students are more likely to miss learning time due to removal from lessons or missing school due to a suspension.</p>



	<p>The most common reasons for negative behaviour being logged was for not following instructions (28%) and not competing work set to the best of their ability (19%)</p> <p>In 2023/24 66% of fixed period suspensions were issued to PP students who make up 40% of the school population. In total 198.5 days of school were lost to PP students due to suspension. The most common reasons for the suspension were for persistent disruptive and defiant behaviour (49%) and Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult (24%).</p>
6	<p>Parent/carer engagement:</p> <p>Parental engagement is a challenge. Parents from less advantaged backgrounds may face additional barriers to engaging with the school, such as language barriers, lack of time due to work commitments or negative experiences with education. These challenges can hinder effective communication between home and school, limiting opportunities for parents to support their child's learning and development.</p>
7	<p>Mental Health & Wellbeing:</p> <p>Students from deprived backgrounds often face a complex interplay of factors that can significantly impact their mental health and wellbeing. These factors may include socioeconomic stressors like financial instability, housing insecurity, or food insecurity, which can lead to increased anxiety and depression. Furthermore, limited access to quality healthcare, mental health services, and social support networks can hinder early identification and intervention of mental health issues. These challenges can compound, making it difficult for students from deprived backgrounds to reach their full potential and thrive.</p>
8	<p>Double Disadvantage:</p> <p>Students who are "doubly disadvantaged" face compounding barriers where socioeconomic hardship is multiplied by the complexities of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or the trauma and instability associated with being Looked After (LAC). Students who fall into two or more vulnerable groups are more likely to make slower progress and have lower attainment; have lower attendance rates; be disproportionately represented in suspension and exclusion data; are less likely to engage with wider school activities; have lower aspirations and less self agency.</p>

Intended outcomes

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

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved attainment for all disadvantaged students at the end of Key Stage 4, with a particular focus on outcomes in GCSE English, Mathematics, History and Languages.	By the end of this current plan (2027), the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students will have been removed. This includes pupils who are classed as "doubly disadvantaged".
Improved metacognitive and independent learning skills among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects.	At least 80% of classroom observations suggest (disadvantaged) pupils are more able to monitor and regulate their own learning.



	Homework completion rates are high across all classes and subjects (evidenced through cyclical data analysis).
Attendance of all students is improved and sustained, but particularly those who face disadvantage.	By the end of this plan (2027), we have achieved sustained high attendance, with the overall absence rate not exceeding 5% for all students and the persistent absence rate not exceeding 15% for all students.
Reading and writing abilities are improved for disadvantaged students in Years 7-9 in preparation for the demands of Key Stages 4 and 5.	CAT4 tests show an increase in reading comprehension scores for disadvantaged students. Teachers identify greater command of spoken and written English by disadvantaged students. Reading interventions have a positive effect on writing outcomes at both Key Stages 3, 4 and 5
Significantly reduce the number of Pupil Premium students who are removed from lessons and/or suspended from school, thereby increasing their overall attendance and engagement in learning.	A decrease in the number of behaviour incidents logged for Pupil Premium students, particularly those related to not following instructions and not completing work. A noticeable shift in the overall behaviour culture among Pupil Premium students, characterised by increased cooperation, respect and a willingness to learn.
To significantly improve parental engagement among families of Pupil Premium students, fostering stronger partnerships between home and school.	A higher number of Pupil Premium parents attending school events, such as parent-teacher conferences, workshops, and open evenings. A more positive perception of the school among Pupil Premium families, characterised by increased trust and confidence in the school's ability to support their child's education.
To achieve and sustain improved well-being for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2023/24 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations.• At least 80% of all students participate in more than one enrichment activity per year, tracked through Tutor and Club logs.• Qualitative and quantitative data indicates impact – bespoke per student.



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: £188,773

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Metacognition and Independence Training for Staff: equip staff with the knowledge and skills to effectively teach metacognitive strategies and promote independent learning among Pupil Premium students.</p>	<p>By providing teachers with the necessary training and support, schools can create a more effective learning environment for all students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has consistently highlighted the positive impact of metacognition and self-regulated learning on student outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged learners.</p> <p>John Hattie's Visible Learning: Hattie's research has shown that explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies can have a significant impact on student achievement.</p>	<p>1 & 2</p>
<p>Enhance the impact of teacher feedback:</p> <p>Through targeted training, improve the quality and effectiveness of teacher feedback, particularly for Pupil Premium students, leading to enhanced student learning and progress.</p>	<p>The effectiveness of high-quality feedback on student achievement is widely supported by educational research. Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of high-quality feedback on student achievement. Effective feedback can help students to identify areas for improvement, develop self-regulation skills, and deepen their understanding of the subject matter.</p> <p>EEF Guidance: The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has highlighted the importance of specific, timely, and actionable feedback in improving student outcomes. Impact can be as high as 6 months for low cost</p>	<p>1 & 2</p>
<p>Review and refine the curriculum to ensure that the curriculum is accessible, engaging, and challenging for all students, particularly those</p>	<p>Numerous studies have shown that a well-designed and differentiated curriculum can significantly improve student outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged learners.</p>	<p>1 & 2</p>



from disadvantaged backgrounds	EEF Guidance: The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has highlighted the importance of high-quality teaching and curriculum design in improving student achievement.	
<p>Recruiting and Retaining High-Quality Teachers:</p> <p>To attract and retain high-quality teachers, particularly those with expertise in supporting disadvantaged learners.</p>	<p>Numerous studies have shown that high-quality teachers have a significant impact on student achievement, particularly for disadvantaged learners.</p> <p>EEF Guidance: The EEF has highlighted the importance of effective teacher recruitment and retention in improving student outcomes.</p>	1, 2, 4 & 5
Implement an effective whole-school reading strategy to improve literacy skills, particularly for Pupil Premium students, through a comprehensive whole-school reading strategy	The EEF identifies reading comprehension strategies as having very high impact (6 months+) for very low cost based on extensive evidence	1, 2 & 4
Implementing a new homework strategy to ensure that all students are set and complete high quality work outside of the classroom. This includes providing them with the resources to complete them.	EEF: Homework has a positive impact on average (+ 5 months), particularly with pupils in secondary schools.	1 & 2
Recruit a Lead Practitioner in maths to improve the quality of maths teaching and learning, particularly for Pupil Premium students,	The EEF has highlighted the importance of high-quality teaching and leadership in improving student achievement.	1
Increase the length of the school day in order to provide an additional 15 mins a day / 1 hr 15 mins a week in class	EEF: "Programmes that extend school time have a positive impact on average"	1
Increase the number of teachers in Maths and English in order to reduce class sizes for students entering the school with	Whilst the EEF acknowledge that this action can be expensive, it can have a positive impacts of +2 month, on average.	1



low prior attainment or with SEND.		
Maximising NPQ participation at all levels to increase the number of teachers participating in National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) to enhance their professional development and improve student outcomes.	The EEF has highlighted the importance of ongoing professional development for teachers. The Department for Education has emphasised the role of NPQs in raising standards and improving teacher quality	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7
Improving and embed data-driven decision making to enhance the use of data to identify and address underperformance among Pupil Premium students.	The Education Endowment Foundation has highlighted the importance of using data to inform teaching and learning.	1, 3, 4 & 5

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

Budgeted cost: £168,974

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
After-School, Saturday, and Holiday subject Interventions to prepare students for their GCSEs	EEF Guidance: The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has highlighted the effectiveness of tutoring and mentoring programs in improving student outcomes.	1
Use diagnostic assessments to identify students' specific reading needs and strengths. Target interventions based on individual student needs include (but are not limited to) Lexia and Accelerated Reader, small-group reading and one-to-one support.	The EEF has conducted extensive research on effective interventions and has found that high-quality, targeted reading interventions can have a significant impact on student outcomes. Lexia and Accelerated Reader: These programs have been extensively researched and evaluated, demonstrating positive impacts on student reading outcomes. National Literacy Trust: The National Literacy Trust has highlighted the importance of early intervention to prevent literacy difficulties.	1
Targeted Interventions with Teaching Assistants	Education Endowment Foundation: The EEF has conducted research on the effective deployment of TAs and found that targeted	1 & 4



	<p>interventions delivered by well-trained TAs can significantly improve student outcomes.</p> <p>EEF recommends that TAs should be deployed to support specific learning needs, rather than general classroom support.</p> <p>Institute of Education (IOE):</p> <p>Research from the IOE has shown that TAs can have a positive impact on student achievement when they are deployed effectively.</p> <p>It is important to ensure that TAs are well-trained and have clear roles and responsibilities.</p>	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £391,640

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Improve student behaviour and engagement, particularly for Pupil Premium students, by explicitly teaching learning behaviours	<p>Education Endowment Foundation:</p> <p>The EEF has highlighted the importance of explicit instruction and behaviour management in improving student outcomes.</p> <p>Research has shown that teaching students specific learning behaviours can lead to improved engagement and achievement.</p> <p>John Hattie's Visible Learning:</p> <p>Hattie's research has shown that effective feedback and explicit instruction can significantly impact student learning.</p> <p>Teaching learning behaviours can be seen as a form of explicit instruction that can improve student outcomes.</p>	2 & 5
Provide a range of targeted behaviour intervention strategies to support improved behaviour for learning for targeted students, in particular those who are disadvantaged.	<p>The EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit evidences that 'behaviour interventions seek to improve attainment by reducing challenging behaviour in school'. It further suggests a targeted and universal approach to interventions can have a positive overall effect on learners.</p> <p>This has guided our approach, which will see interventions such as the use of cooking, gardening and bicycle clubs alongside behaviour support and mentoring, each of which has proven over the last three years to have a positive impact on learners.</p>	5 & 7
Train staff in effective positive behaviour management strategies	<p>Education Endowment Foundation:</p>	5



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EEF has highlighted the importance of effective behaviour management in improving student outcomes. • Research has shown that positive reinforcement and clear expectations can significantly reduce disruptive behaviour. 	
Invest in pastoral staffing, including, but not limited to Pastoral Support Managers, Safeguarding officers and Wellbeing staff	<p>Numerous studies have shown that strong pastoral support can significantly improve student well-being, mental health, and academic achievement.</p> <p>Department for Education: The DfE has emphasised the importance of pastoral support in improving student outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged students. The DfE has provided guidance on effective pastoral care practices.</p> <p>Mental Health Foundation: The Mental Health Foundation has highlighted the impact of mental health on educational attainment and has called for increased investment in school-based mental health support.</p>	3, 5, 6 & 7
Supplementing Free School Meals	<p>Department for Education: The DfE has recognized the importance of healthy school meals in supporting student learning and well-being. The DfE has provided guidance on school food standards and nutritional requirements.</p> <p>Public Health England: Public Health England has highlighted the link between diet and health, and has encouraged schools to promote healthy eating.</p>	1, 2, 3, 5 & 7
Implementing Class Charts to improve communication with parents and track student behaviour effectively	<p>Effective communication between home and school can improve student outcomes. Class Charts can facilitate this communication by providing a platform for sharing information and updates.</p> <p>Using data to inform decision-making can lead to more effective interventions and improved outcomes. Class Charts can provide valuable data on student behaviour and progress.</p> <p>Increased parent engagement can lead to improved student outcomes. Class Charts can help to foster stronger partnerships between home and school.</p>	5 & 6
Increase extracurricular opportunities, including subsidising trips and visits	<p>Department for Education: The DfE has emphasised the importance of extracurricular activities in promoting the personal and social development of students.</p>	1, 2 & 7



	The DfE has encouraged schools to offer a wide range of activities to cater to the diverse interests of students.	
Reviewing and Updating the Curriculum to Increase Diversity	<p>Department for Education: The DfE has emphasised the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes equality and diversity.</p> <p>Ofsted: Ofsted has highlighted the importance of inclusive education and has called on schools to create a curriculum that reflects the diverse needs of all students.</p>	1, 2, 5 & 7
Implement a Peer Mentoring Programme	<p>Education Endowment Foundation: The EEF has highlighted the importance of mentoring programs in improving student outcomes.</p> <p>Department for Education: The DfE has encouraged schools to implement effective mentoring programs to support student development.</p>	5 & 7
Employing an Attendance Advisory Service to work with families in order to improve attendance	<p>Department for Education: The DfE has emphasised the importance of good attendance in improving educational outcomes. The DfE has provided guidance on strategies to improve attendance, including working with external agencies.</p>	3
Provide a range of School-Based Counselling both internally and through external agencies	<p>Department for Education: The DfE has recognized the importance of mental health support in schools and has encouraged schools to provide access to counselling services.</p> <p>Mental Health Foundation: The Mental Health Foundation has highlighted the impact of mental health on educational attainment and has called for increased investment in school-based mental health support.</p>	7
Providing essential support, such as uniforms and bus passes	<p>Department for Education: The DfE has recognized the importance of addressing barriers to education, such as poverty and disadvantage.</p> <p>The DfE has provided guidance on supporting vulnerable students, including those eligible for Pupil Premium</p> <p>EEF: Wearing a uniform is not, on its own, likely to improve learning, but can be successfully incorporated into a broader school improvement process which includes the development of a school</p>	3 & 5



	ethos and the improvement of behaviour and discipline	
Revise and implement a parent/carer engagement plan to include (but not limited to) workshops, surgeries, tea mornings, parent voice and social events.	EEF: Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress	6
Reintroducing tutor groups to improve the pastoral care and academic support for Pupil Premium students	Department for Education: The DfE has recognized the importance of pastoral care and support in improving student outcomes. The DfE has encouraged schools to implement effective tutor systems	3, 5 & 6

Total budgeted cost: £749,387



Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Please see *Pupil Premium Strategy 2021-24 Autumn 2024 review document*, located here: <https://www.thesittingbourneschool.org.uk/page/?title=Pupil+Premium&pid=29>

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
Lexia	Lexia Learning
CAT 4	GL Assessments
NGRT	GL Assessments
Accelerated Reader	Accelerated Reader
Bedrock	Bedrock
GCSE Pod	GCSE Pod
Class Charts	Class Charts

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>
Not applicable
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
Not applicable



Further information (optional)

The Sittingbourne School is committed to ensuring that the most vulnerable children receive the support and opportunities they need to succeed. We prioritise their needs through targeted interventions, additional resources and personalised support. They are also at the forefront of our policies and practice. For example, Pupil Premium students are prioritised for trips and visits, and Pupil Premium pupils' books and tests are the first to be marked. By fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment, we empower our pupil premium pupils to reach their full potential.

Strategic leadership of The Sittingbourne School's Pupil Premium Strategy:

The Pupil Premium leads for the school is the Headteacher. This decision signals a strong commitment to addressing the needs of disadvantaged students. It indicates that the school prioritises:

- **Equity and Social Justice:** The school is dedicated to ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, have equal opportunities to succeed.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** The school uses data to identify the specific needs of Pupil Premium students and to allocate resources effectively.
- **Targeted Interventions:** The school is committed to providing targeted interventions to address the unique needs of disadvantaged students.
- **Collaboration and Partnership:** The school values collaboration with parents, carers, and community organisations to support student success.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The school is committed to monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Pupil Premium strategy and making adjustments as needed.

However, leaders across the school are all accountable for the delivery and success of this strategy.

Evaluation and Monitoring

- **Data Collection:** The school will collect and analyse a range of data on a regular basis to monitor the impact of the strategy. This will include (but not limited to) progress and outcomes data (both internally and externally validated), reading age data, attendance data, behaviour data (including suspensions and exclusions), trips and visits data, attendance to clubs and activities and student, staff & parent voice feedback.
- **Review and Evaluation Process:** This strategy will be reviewed twice a year in the Autumn and Spring terms of 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 academic years.