

Pupil premium strategy statement – Southmoor Academy

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1401
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	35%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement for each academic year)	2024/2025 to 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Joanne Maw
Pupil premium lead	Sammy Wright
Governor / Trustee lead	Vasso Kontou-Watson

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£464,100
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£ 0
Total budget for this academic year	£464,100

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

As laid out in our analysis of previous data, there is a simple intent behind everything we are trying to do. No student should reach the end of a Key Stage without being ready to embark on the next. At the moment, nationally and within our own the community, disadvantage holds students back – by a careful, systematic, interventionist approach we aim to change this.

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across the curriculum. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers.

We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker and young carers. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our strategy will continue to consider where additional support is required for pupils whose education and wellbeing were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, notably through tutoring for pupils whose education has been worst affected.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in general is lower, with a similar pattern as has been recognised across Sunderland in the Shine scoping exercise – that often higher achieving PP students at KS2 make less progress by end of KS4.
2	Assessments, observations and discussion with KS3 pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils generally have lower levels of literacy. This impacts their progress in all subjects.
3	Our observations suggest many lower attaining disadvantaged pupils lack self-regulation strategies when faced with challenging tasks, notably in their monitoring and evaluation of their answers, and their ability to work through problems without giving up. This has a particular impact in Maths
4	Our assessments (including wellbeing survey), observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment.
5	Our attendance data over the last 3 years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been 6.9% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. 49% of disadvantaged pupils have been ‘persistently absent’ compared to 15.17% of their peers during that period. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils’ progress.

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 outcomes among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end	KS4 performance measures in 2026/27 demonstrate that disadvantaged pupils achieve an average Attainment 8 score of at least 45 and at least 40% pass GCSE maths at grade 5 or above.

of KS4, particularly in maths.	
Improved reading and writing skills across KS3, leading to better access to GCSE curriculum and higher English attainment	Floor standard literacy tests at KS3 show narrowing of gap by 50% between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. Attainment gap at GCSE narrowed by 50%.
Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects.	Teacher reports and class observations suggest disadvantaged pupils are more able to monitor and regulate their own learning. This finding is supported by improved homework completion rates across all classes and subjects, and improved rates of independent revision at KS4.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2026/27 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance by 2026/27 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall unauthorised absence rate for all pupils being no more than 5% and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced by 50%. • the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 10% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 50% lower than their peers.

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: **£232,050**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Improvement of core literacy skills and English achievement at KS3 by adoption of Ark Mastery English	Ark Mastery has a track record in schools across the country for improving outcomes in English	1, 2
Staffing of alternative provisions Pathway, Gateway and Bridge by subject specialist teachers to ensure quality first teaching for vulnerable students	Alternative provision outcomes have been significantly improved when we have been able to timetable in specialist teachers	1, 3
Improving the expertise in Maths and English by funding lead practitioners to work on the achievement of all, with a specific remit for PP students.	The DfE non-statutory KS3 guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: Teaching mathematics at key stage 3 To teach maths well, teachers need to assess pupils' prior knowledge and understanding effectively, employ manipulatives and representations, teach problem solving strategies, and help pupils to develop more complex mental models: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3	1, 2, 3
Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance by funding whole staff CPD, as well as releasing teaching time so a specialist senior team can	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in all subjects: word-gap (Oxford University Press)	1, 2

work with each department in turn		
Providing quality EdTech resources via Seneca, EduCake and Mathswatch		1,3
Building curriculum time for extra Maths and English support	New Ofsted framework draws on research that indicates the importance of foundational skills in maths and English	1,2,3

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

Budgeted cost: **£116,025**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Timetabled one to one and small group tuition in literacy and numeracy for students not at Floor Standard at KS3 as part of Achieve – <i>built in not bolt on</i> .	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind: One to one tuition Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF Small group tuition Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	1, 2, 3
Timetabled and structured intervention for English and Maths at GCSE level – <i>built in not bolt on</i> .	In England, positive effects have been found in studies where teaching assistants deliver high-quality structured interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching: Teaching Assistant Interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	1, 2, 3
Timetabled Academic mentoring option slot at KS4 designed to support other non-core subject learning – <i>built in not bolt on</i>	We see significant impact of average grade where students who struggle with the volume of work are given extra support as and when they need it.	1,2,3
Staffing of Pathway, Gateway and Bridge provisions to support students who have struggled to access school – <i>built in not bolt on</i>	Our alternative provision facilities have led to significant improvements in outcomes for SEN and non-attending students	All

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

Budgeted cost: **£116,025**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Staff CPD and further development on Zones of Regulation and on well-being and mindfulness techniques specifically linked to improving the ability of students to self-regulate</p>	<p>Approach has a strong basis in research https://zonesofregulation.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Evidence-of-Effectiveness-Brief.pdf</p> <p>Recent research by the enquiry into White Working Class Educational Outcomes indicates negative emotional reactions to school are significant</p>	3,4,5
<p>Embedding good practice set out in DfE's guidance on working together to improve school attendance.</p> <p>Staff training and release time to develop and implement procedures. Attendance/support officers and pastoral staff appointed to improve attendance.</p>	<p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.</p>	5
<p>School wide 3 Tier mentoring programme allows all students to have a trusted adult with an appropriate level of expertise to support them through their schooling</p>	<p>The EEF indicates a 2 month impact from mentoring – and our own data shows that students with regular mentor contact have higher attainment at GCSE and better attendance.</p>	4,5
<p>Enrichment programme allows all students to access cultural trips, and ensures disadvantage is no bar to access to the arts</p>	<p>As well as being valuable in itself, culture and arts participation can have a positive impact on wellbeing and education outcomes, including English and maths, when interventions are linked to academic targets.</p> <p>Arts participation Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	1, 2, 4
<p>Specialist provision residential trip allows most vulnerable to have safe access to outdoors</p>		2,4

Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	All
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Total budgeted cost: £464,100

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

In Summer 2025, for the second year running our results as a school improved significantly, with a significant increase in passes at grades 4 and 5 English and Maths such that our PP students now perform in line with the grades achieved by all students in 2023. At grade 5, PP students are slightly below national (24% to 26%), while at grade 4 they outperform national by 52% to 44%. A8 shows that our PP students outperform national (36.5 to 34.8) and have done for some time.

However, across individual subjects there is a significant gap in attainment between PP and non PP – although in the absence of progress data this is harder to interpret. PP students have worse attendance, and are more likely to be persistently absent. When we look at KS3 outcomes, we can see the impact of disadvantage on students as they enter the school. PP students are more likely to not meet floor standards in English or Maths, although over their time with us, many then make significant progress.

What this means in summary is that we have a polarised picture. Disadvantage is having a strong impact on attainment and attendance, fuelled by the fact that disadvantaged students are more likely to start their school careers with a literacy or numeracy deficit. But the school has a positive impact, both on students as they spend time here, and on trends over each successive year.

This analysis has informed our current strategy as a school – which is to ensure no student is left behind. By adopting a strongly interventionist approach at KS3, supported by targeted one to one support at KS4, we aim to regularly screen our whole student body for those who are at risk of not meeting those basic standards, and give them specific targeted support to get there.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider