

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Bridge School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	92
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	56% (51 pupils)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025/2026 to 2028/2029
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Andrew Seager
Pupil premium lead	Andrew Seager
Governor / Trustee lead	Paul Roberts

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£69,960
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	No Carry forward

<p>Total budget for this academic year</p> <p><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></p>	<p>£69,960</p>
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Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At The Bridge School, all staff and the Local Academy Council are committed to providing the highest quality education for all learners, regardless of background or barriers to learning. We accept responsibility for socially disadvantaged learners and aim to meet their pastoral, social, and academic needs within a supportive environment.

Our approach is evidence-informed and tailored to the individual needs of each learner. While our strategy focuses on disadvantaged pupils, whole-school approaches—such as high-quality teaching—will benefit all pupils. Outcomes for non-disadvantaged pupils will improve alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Challenges

The primary barriers to progress and achievement for our learners are related to their disabilities (ASC, SLD, PMLD). See summary table below.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Individual Special Educational Needs: Each pupil has unique learning needs and faces different challenges to their learning.
2	Communication and Expression: Disadvantaged pupils often have greater challenges in communicating and expressing needs, including nonverbal communication, limited language, and social interaction difficulties.

3	Limited Cultural Capital: Disadvantaged pupils generally have fewer opportunities to develop cultural capital outside of school.
4	Family Engagement: Families of disadvantaged learners are harder to engage, which can affect pupils' readiness to learn physically, practically, and emotionally.
5	Emotional Wellbeing and Regulation: Pupils who are dysregulated cannot access learning. They require support and strategies to self-soothe and regulate for high-quality teaching to take place.
6	Limited Outdoor Learning Opportunities: Pupils have fewer chances to access outdoor learning experiences.

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 disadvantaged pupils in all subjects, relative to their starting points as identified through baseline assessments.	Achievement of improved performance, as demonstrated by assessments and progress captured on Evidence for Learning.
Improved attainment in reading	Assessment of phonics and reading skills show improved performance, as demonstrated by our reading assessments.
Improved language comprehension for disadvantaged pupils so that they can independently comprehend relevant texts.	Assessment of pupils' language comprehension through the use of the PIRA tests and Assessment Pathway shows a reduction in the disparity in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils
Pupils can use a range of communication systems to aid their understanding and to develop expressive communication skills.	Through achievement of EHCP and IEP targets.
Disadvantaged pupils have greater confidence and independence to help them engage more with the wider community and prepare for adulthood.	Through observations and discussions with pupils and their families. Progress logged on EfL to relevant PLGs.

Improved attendance for our disadvantaged pupils to maximise learning opportunities provided at school.	Attendance levels for our disadvantaged pupils are in line with the rest of their peers. Persistent absentee levels are reduced towards national levels in SEND schools.
Pupils will be supported, as appropriately, with their emotional wellbeing, behavioural and mental health needs.	Through observations with pupils. Reduction in number of recorded behavioural incidents
Pupils will access learning outside the classroom	Through observations and discussions with pupils. Residential offer for all pupils to participate in.
Families will be engaged and active partners with their child's learning. Recruitment of family support officer.	Through observations and discussions with families. Meeting minutes of family support officer.

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: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Provision of wide range of resources for curriculum activities across the 3 curriculum pathways.	The curriculum is play based and by having appropriate resources staff will be able to develop and enhance pupil engagement with the curriculum pathway. (Formal, Semiformal, Pre-formal). The Education Development Trust highlight that effective classroom-based resources are vital for effective teaching 98ad6340-0ef64e1da541db6018afce7d.pdf (educationdevelopmenttrust.com)	1, 2, 5

<p>Support the delivery of all forms of communication methods for pupils at The Bridge.</p> <p>Provide additional resources to further enhance the love of reading and support the delivery of phonics</p> <p>£10,000</p>	<p>Understanding the meaning of a text requires a combination of word recognition and language comprehension: Phonics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Learning to Read: “The Simple View of Reading” National Center on Improving Literacy</p> <p>Understanding the meaning of a text requires a combination of word recognition and language comprehension</p> <p>ADD IN</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>
<p>Purchase of Language Therapist (SALT) to deliver 26 sessions across the academic year through Soundswell.</p> <p>£10,000</p>	<p>The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists state speech and language therapists (SLTs) provide life improving treatment, support and care for children rcsltwhat-is-slt-factsheet.pdf The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence also provide evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of speech and language therapist support benefits of speech and language therapy Search results page 1 Evidence search NICE</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 5</p>
<p>Purchase of an Occupational Therapy (OT) practitioner through Midlands Occupational Therapy to support pupils throughout the academic year</p> <p>£10,000</p> <p>One day a week</p>	<p>Research evidence to date supports the effectiveness of occupational therapy in a school setting. The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (2016) state that OTs should be included in education in order to support and promote full participation and wellbeing of diverse students by supporting their strengths and finding solutions to reduce or remove learning activity limitations and participation restrictions.</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 5, 6</p>

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

Budgeted cost:£

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Enhancing the sensory regulation equipment available for PP learners with enhanced sensory needs, including autism. We will also fund staff training. (£3,000)</p>	<p>We have observed that sensory equipment and resources such as mattresses, lap pads, tunnels, weighted jackets and additional proprioceptor equipment can be effective at providing support for our pupils with sensory needs. These pieces of equipment have also been recommended by our Occupational Therapist.</p>	<p>1,4,5</p>
<p>'Music of Life' live music and singing sessions (12 sessions per term). (£7,000)</p>	<p>Learning about music and having the opportunity to play musical instruments and make music together is a vital part of a rich and rounded education. It has also been proven that music plays a key role in brain development. This is because it helps with the nurturing of language, motor skills, emotional intelligence and collaboration skills. (Gov Education Hub).</p>	<p>1,2,3,5</p>
<p>Enhancing the use of accessible technology and communication equipment available for learners including AAC resources such as switches. (£3,000)</p>	<p>We have observed that AAC equipment such as switches, communication devices and switch accessible technology is effective in supporting not only communication and interaction, but also engagement and enjoyment so positively impacting well-being.</p>	<p>1, 2, 5</p>

<p>Learning outside the classroom is an essential part of our curriculum offer. Outdoor spaces will be developed including purchasing of relevant Equipment.</p> <p>Pupils will have the opportunity for a residential event throughout the academic year. (£4,690)</p>	<p>Council for Learning Outside the Classroom Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (lotc.org.uk)</p> <p>Appropriate provision for pupils to experience educational visits where appropriate.</p>	<p>1, 5, 6</p>
<p>Continue to provide additional behaviour support provided by a behaviour consultant. (£10,000)</p>	<p>The Education Endowment Foundation provides research on the importance of behaviour strategies in schools: Improving Behaviour in Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	<p>1, 2, 5</p>

<p>Maintaining the role of the full time Family Support Worker. (£15,000)</p>	<p>Here is significant research, nationally and internationally, to suggest that parental involvement in children’s learning is positively related to achievement – National College for School Leadership</p> <p>EEF Parental Engagement Guidance Report.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</p> <p>The Department of Education sets out the principles underpinning an effective whole school strategy for attendance.</p> <p>Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>	<p>1, 4</p>
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Total budgeted cost:

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for Disadvantaged pupils

Targeted Academic Support

1. Communication and Language Development

Strategy: Continued use of PECS, Makaton, Write Dance, and AAC approaches embedded consistently across the school.

Rationale: Evidence shows that augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) approaches support access to learning and independence for pupils with communication needs.

Intended Outcome: Improved expressive and receptive communication skills for disadvantaged pupils.

Success Criteria: 90% of Pupil Premium pupils demonstrate progress against individual communication targets on EHCPs or personalised learning plans. Increased independent use of communication systems evidenced through observation records and Evidence for Learning (EfL). No difference in communication progress between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium pupils.

2. Phonics and Reading Development

Strategy: In-house phonics training and bespoke CPD, including 1:1 coaching and classroom modelling. Purchase of additional Read Write Inc. (RWI) resources and books for school and home use.

Rationale: High-quality phonics instruction and well-matched decodable texts improve early reading outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Intended Outcome: Accelerated progress in early reading and phonics for disadvantaged pupils.

Success Criteria: Pupil Premium pupils make at least equivalent progress to non-Pupil Premium peers in phonics and early reading. 70% or more disadvantaged pupils show improvement in reading assessment scores across the academic year. Increased engagement with home reading, evidenced through reading records and parental feedback.

3. Reading Culture and Curriculum Enrichment

Strategy: Launch of 'Bridge Classics' and 'Bridge Poems' initiatives. Expansion of the school library to enhance access to high-quality texts.

Rationale: Exposure to rich and varied texts improves vocabulary, comprehension, and enjoyment of reading.

Intended Outcome: Improved engagement with reading and broader language development.

Success Criteria: Increased pupil participation in shared reading activities. Improved vocabulary acquisition observed through assessment and classroom evidence. Positive pupil and staff feedback regarding reading engagement Targeted Therapeutic and Pastoral Support.

4. Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)

Strategy: SaLT support at whole-class and individual levels, including assessments, intervention strategies, and AAC implementation.

Rationale: Early and targeted SaLT intervention supports access to learning and communication development.

Intended Outcome: Improved communication outcomes and curriculum access.

Success Criteria: SaLT reports evidence of progress towards communication targets for Pupil Premium pupils. Increased functional communication observed across learning environments. No progress gap between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium pupils.

5. Occupational Therapy and Sensory Support

Strategy: OT-designed sensory programmes and staff training, including the use of therapeutic swings.

Rationale: Sensory regulation supports readiness to learn and emotional wellbeing.

Intended Outcome: Improved regulation, engagement, and classroom participation.

Success Criteria: Reduction in dysregulation incidents recorded for Pupil Premium pupils. Improved time on task and engagement data. Staff report increased confidence implementing sensory strategies.

6. Behaviour and Emotional Regulation

Strategy: Behaviour Consultant input, including classroom environment design, behaviour strategies, home visits, and MDT working.

Rationale: Consistent, trauma-informed approaches reduce barriers to learning.

Intended Outcome: Improved behaviour regulation and reduced barriers to learning.

Success Criteria: Reduction in behaviour incidents for disadvantaged pupils.

Increased engagement and sustained participation in learning.

Positive feedback from families regarding consistency of support

Wider Strategies

7. Attendance and Family Engagement

Strategy: Recruitment and retention of a Family Support Officer. Strengthening home-school communication and parental partnership.

Rationale: Strong family engagement supports attendance and pupil wellbeing.

Intended Outcome: Improved attendance and engagement for disadvantaged pupils.

Success Criteria: Attendance for disadvantaged pupils meets or exceeds the national average for special schools (87.1%). Reduction in persistent absenteeism compared to the previous academic year. Positive parental feedback, including Ofsted Parent View outcomes.

Impact of Previous Pupil Premium Spending

Pupil Premium pupils make equivalent or better progress than non-Pupil Premium pupils, demonstrating no attainment or progress gap.

Evidence: EFL assessments, pupil work, and progress reviews.

70% of pupils improved reading scores during the academic year following investment in reading resources.

Increased and effective use of AAC and communication aids, resulting in improved independence and access.

Improved engagement, regulation, and wellbeing through therapeutic and sensory interventions.

100% of parents responding to the 2024–25 Ofsted Parent View would recommend the school.

Attendance improved year-on-year and aligned with national expectations.

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We continue to work with external professionals, including Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and a Behaviour Consultant, to deliver high-quality support for our pupils. These specialists work closely with staff to implement both whole-class strategies and personalised interventions, ensuring that their impact benefits all pupils, including those in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.

Provision includes enhanced support for communication, sensory regulation, behaviour, and engagement, alongside targeted investment in phonics, reading resources, and curriculum materials. Initiatives such as PECS, Makaton, Write Dance, Read Write Inc., and the development of our school library continue to strengthen learning opportunities both in school and at home.

As a result of this targeted and multi-disciplinary approach, pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding consistently make equivalent or better progress than their non-Pupil Premium peers, demonstrating that there is no progress gap.

