

Pupil premium strategy statement – Armthorpe 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 the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	695
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	29%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025/2026; 2026-27; 2027-2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	June 2026
Statement authorised by	David Bisley (Principal)
Pupil premium lead	Beth Donkin (AP)
Governor / Trustee lead	Emma Bennett

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£206,400
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>	£206,400

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

For our students attending Armthorpe Academy, who are also in receipt of pupil premium, we aspire for them to be able to access a broad and ambitious curriculum which supports them making the most possible academic progress. We want all of our students to have the skills and knowledge they need to be able to succeed in their next steps and beyond. We also value the holistic development of each of our students. Whilst we highly value the academic and enrichment achievements, we are able to offer our students we also value the pastoral care and support that students receive whilst attending with us.

We are highly committed to raising outcomes for pupil premium students. We promote an ethos of high expectations and excellence for all students and do not stereotype students in receipt of pupil premium as being a group with less potential to succeed. 29% of students at the school are in receipt of pupil premium and we have an individualised approach to how we support these students through Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. We also recognise that not all disadvantaged students will be in receipt of pupil premium funding and that some recipients are not socially disadvantaged.

Our focus is primarily on high quality teaching within the classroom, and we provide multiple training sessions for all our staff each year on research informed strategies that are proven to work particularly well for 'disadvantaged' students. We also develop our support staff, such as student support officers, inclusion leads and learning support assistants to support these students both within and outside of the classroom. We ensure that we remain focused on supporting our students to secure the best possible outcomes for them as individuals. Supporting these decisions is based on strategic discussions and decisions which are informed by school assessment points, standardised assessment data and student voice. As an academy we also use additional Key Performance indicators to monitor academic progress, attendance and behaviour of all students in receipt of Pupil Premium funding. These students in turn are prioritised for intervention and support.

Our pupil premium strategy forms part of our wider plans for school improvement and we continue to target our students who are classified as 'disadvantaged' for intervention.

Our objectives for our pupil premium plan fall into the three following areas:

- Ensuring that students, who are identified as pupil premium access an excellent standard of teaching and learning across the curriculum. This will support students to make the most possible progress and attain well across the curriculum. This is to ensure that they have the requisite knowledge and skills to transition into education, employment or training of their choosing to allow them to fulfil their personal aspirations.

- Students to attend well so that they can make the most of the experiences and opportunities at Armthorpe Academy. This is in the broadest sense of lessons, so that gaps in knowledge do not appear but also extra-curricular and enrichment activities. This is to ensure that students have the skills and knowledge to thrive academically but also in a wide variety of situations.
- Students can self-advocate and regulate strong emotions, when this is required. We believe that this is a key factor in supporting our young people to become successful adults who can thrive and adapt to the challenges that the next stages in their life may pose them.

We feel that these objectives will support our students in the most effective way possible to give them not only, the best possible chance of success at Armthorpe Academy but also when they leave to pursue the next steps of their choice.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Consistent Quality First Teaching to promote the progress of PP students. Poor teaching disproportionately disadvantages those children who would be considered deprived (Dunford) but, equally, evidence tells us that excellent teaching disproportionately benefits them. For this reason, many of our disadvantaged achievement strategies will consistently focus on improving the quality of teaching and closing any gaps that exist for our PP students.</p> <p>Whilst we are focusing on ensuring that our PP students have access to consistently excellent teaching across the curriculum, we are also planning to focus on ensuring that this teaching is adaptive so that the needs of students are met in an effective and timely manner. This involves accurate and thorough identification of misconceptions and then ensuring that teaching adapts to tackle these misconceptions to ensure that they do not become embedded. We are fully focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum to ensure excellence.</p> <p>We also believe that the staff at the academy must strive to a standard of excellence so that our staff are most able to support our students effectively.</p>
2	<p>Data on student entry and that reviewed throughout student's journey through Year 7-11, suggests that there is a consistent trend, reading ages are below age-related expectations. We recognize the importance of reading, and reading well, in supporting students to access learning effectively across the curriculum. We are aware that when student's reading is a concern, student's ability to</p>

	<p>access the curriculum then is a limiting factor for their progress in other aspects of the curriculum.</p> <p>Therefore, we recognise that we need to ensure that when student's reading age is not equal to their chronological age, then it is crucial that they access appropriate reading interventions to ensure that their reading age is in line with at least their chronological age.</p>
3	<p>The complexity of individual needs/family dynamics impacts on holistic development and student's ability to manage their behaviour for learning in school. This then in turn can have an impact on their ability to engage in their learning and therefore their academic attainment and progress across the curriculum. Therefore, this means that we need to provide pastoral support to ensure that students can self-regulate and develop a range of strategies to support their needs so that they are able to access as much learning as possible and therefore make the most attainment and progress possible.</p>
4	<p>Attendance of our disadvantaged students is lower on average than our non-disadvantaged students and therefore a gap still exists between our pupil premium and non-pupil-premium students in their school attendance. Students cannot learn if they are not at school and inconsistent attendance is likely to create gaps in their learning which will then have an impact on their attainment and progress.</p> <p>We are aware of the links between low attendance and poor attainment and progress and therefore this is a specific area that we need to target. There is strong research evidence to suggest that 'well targeted support to improve attendance' is an effective use of disadvantaged funding and this will not only improve attendance at school but therefore is likely to support attainment and progress.</p>
5	<p>Providing disadvantaged students with access to cultural capital. Some disadvantaged students may be less likely to have focused, ambitious career targets to work towards. We work hard to develop cultural capital in the curriculum and involve PP students in trips and extra-curricular and enrichment activities. This is a way of supporting students to be able to access a full curriculum as effectively as possible. This is therefore, going to support student's attainment and progress across the curriculum.</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
<p>Improve the progress and attainment of disadvantaged students through high quality teaching and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assurance of lessons involving disadvantaged students will show an effective standard of teaching and learning. Higher expectations and aspirations of disadvantaged students will result in progress throughout the year which can be measured through our academy's assessment processes. Not only will we see students making progress but there should be no difference in the rate of progress between our disadvantages and non-disadvantaged students. • We have the following targets for our pupil premium students to achieve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attainment 8 score of 35 - 27% achieving a 5+ in both English and Maths • When work scrutiny and book looks are completed, the work in lessons will show no gaps between the work produced by disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. • An ambitious curriculum throughout all curriculum areas which will drive progress and outcomes for disadvantaged students ensuring they develop the fundamental, core knowledge and skills they need to be successful.
<p>Whole school lesson structure (SOLAR) is implemented with certainty in classrooms, which leads to typicality within departments and results in effective teaching and learning across the curriculum and across the academy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to explain all the various phases of the learning cycle, and this will increase students' ability to navigate the learning cycle in all lessons across the curriculum. • The implementation of the SOLAR learning cycle will mean that students are able to explain how they will learn and have a greater understanding of prior and future learning. This is paramount for disadvantaged students as it makes learning relevant and clarity supports them by fitting the learning associated with an individual lesson into a bigger picture. This will support them in building knowledge of how each lesson contributes to the schemas they are building.
<p>Attainment and progress of disadvantaged students is improved across the curriculum so that their attainment and progress is in line with their non-disadvantaged peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attainment 8 score of 36 representing an improvement on the previous year. • A gap of less 0.5 than between our pupil premium and non-pupil premium students. • The gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students achieving a 4+ and 5+ in both English and Maths to be under 10% at each threshold. • Progress matches non-disadvantaged students at Key Stage 3.
<p>To achieve and sustain improved attendance for disadvantaged students. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged peers will diminish</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gap between pupil premium students and non-pupil premium students narrows both in terms of attendance and persistent absenteeism. • Overall persistent absentee rate reduces over time. • Attendance shows a continuous three-year improvement trend for our students who are pupil premium. • Students know their own attendance and can articulate the importance of good attendance.

<p>both in terms of rate of attendance and persistent absentees.</p>	
<p>Reading ages improve across the academy so that reading is not a barrier to any students accessing the curriculum. Disadvantaged students will have a reading age in line with their chronological age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the starting points measured, reading ages increase at a faster rate than chronological age. • Students will access appropriate interventions to support the narrowing of the gap between their reading age and chronological age.
<p>Effective pastoral care enables those students with barriers to learning receive timely and effective intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion tracker evidence intervention for identified pupil premium students. • PASS meetings to be used to identify pupil premium students who may benefit from and require additional support to reduce their barriers to learning. • Strong working relationship with the LA shows effective support for students receiving support from external agencies as appropriate to their individual needs.
<p>Incidents of poor behaviour (suspensions, removals, negative points) are reduced over time and the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students narrows over time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of suspensions decrease for pupil premium students in line with non-disadvantaged students. • Days of suspension decrease for pupil premium students in line with non-disadvantaged students. • Removals from pupil premium students reduce over time in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. • Negatives points for pupil premium students reduces over time in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. • Percentage of students receiving the rewards is the same as non-disadvantaged students.
<p>Wider opportunities for cultural capital are offered through whole school enrichment to ensure that the curriculum is as accessible as possible to disadvantaged students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment activities will result in better student wellbeing as well as developing cultural capital. • Pupil premium students will participate in all aspects of the school's wider offer including student leadership opportunities, trips and visits and regular and ongoing enrichment activities at the same rate as their non-disadvantaged peers.
<p>Students who are disadvantaged will receive specific support to support their transition into an appropriate post-16 placement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academy is successful in achieving all the Gatsby benchmarks. • Percentage of NEETs, who are also identified as disadvantaged, is to be reduced. • Students access appropriate post-16 courses to their individual aspirations, including an increase in those students who are accessing academic courses such as A Levels at Key Stage 5.

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: £ 24,955

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Improving quality first teaching across the school through CPD and effective quality assurance learning to improved engagement and narrowing of the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.	Effective teaching has the largest impact on student outcomes (Chetty et al., 2014; Hattie, 2003; Rivkin et al., 2005; Rockoff, 2004).	1
Investing in Provision Map as an IT package to support teaching staff in being better able to understand and therefore meet the needs of vulnerable students to support them so that they make greater levels of progress.	Highly effective teaching staff can use evidence from a range of sources to identify and support students most effectively. This supports making best use of the students' expertise but also is aligned to their prior attainment. (Coe et al., 2020)	1
Investing in IT packages in order to support the completion of homework across the curriculum so that students have access to high quality, effective independent learning resources to support them making	Homework has a positive impact, particularly for students in secondary school provision. When this homework is linked to classroom learning it is particularly effective in supporting attainment and progress. (Teaching and learning toolkit – homework, EEF, 2021)	1

greater levels of progress.		
Continue to improve transition arrangements from KS2 to KS3. Including gaining knowledge of the KS2 gaps in knowledge to ensure that academy curriculum planning, and sequencing is cohesive and identifies gaps accurately.	EEF report (Closing the Attainment Gap, 2018) highlights that points of transition are a particular point of vulnerability, and this is particularly the case with Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. This is especially true for disadvantaged students and so managing transition effectively will support students at a point where they are most at risk of a decline in educational outcomes (Transition from Primary to Secondary School, NFER, 2006).	1, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 22,585

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Year 7 students to undertake standardised diagnostic assessments and internal baseline assessments - GL suite of examinations completed on entry.	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into specific strengths and weaknesses of our students to ensure they receive the most appropriate intervention packages and teachers are most able to meet the needs of their learners (EEF, Assessing Learning in the new Academic Year, 2020).	2
Bespoke reading groups created for students with SAS below 100 to ensure that they access intervention to support their reading developing so it is not a barrier to accessing curriculum areas.	Reading is a key skill and all subjects across the curriculum have a reading demand. When students are unable to read effectively this then becomes a barrier affecting their curriculum access and therefore attainment and progress. As a result, ensuring that all students can read effectively is a key focus (EEF, Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools, 2021).	2
Accessing a small group intervention to support students with high prior attainment through the Brilliant Club to boost	Knowledge of universities is a key focus in supporting students to aspire to higher education and therefore supporting educational attainment and progress. Undertaking projects with universities is key in supporting students to make choices to attend	5

access and understanding of higher education.	university (Office for Students, Schools, Attainment and the role of Higher Education, 2022)	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £158,219

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Attendance strategy embedded to ensure that all staff understand their part to play in improving attendance.</p> <p>Use of A Star Attendance to support effective and appropriate attendance monitoring and interventions to improve attendance.</p>	<p>It is challenging for students to make as much academic progress as possible if their attendance at school is poor. Therefore, in order for teaching and learning strategies or intervention strategies to be effective it is important that the students are in school as much as possible. It is important that these approaches target the right students for us to be able to support them as effectively as possible (EEF, Supporting School Attendance, 2024).</p>	3, 4
<p>Encourage involvement of disadvantaged students in the wider life of the school, providing supra-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for pupil premium students to enable them to acquire cultural capital. Students also have access to the Consilium Charter where they have greater access to experiences that will enhance their cultural capital.</p>	<p>Various gaps exist in the experiences of high-income and disadvantages families. This includes participation in activities such as sport which enrich the school experience (Social Mobility Commission, Childhood Origins of Social Mobility, 2024).</p>	5
<p>A rigorous and interleaved careers provision, disadvantaged students have priority</p>	<p>Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have greater levels of uncertainty in terms of the qualifications they require and ways in which they</p>	3, 5

<p>interviews and guidance throughout their time at the academy. This will include greater interaction with universities and further education providers to enhance the ambition of students across the academy.</p>	<p>can access their chosen career (EEF, Careers Education Internation Review, 2016).</p>	
<p>Effective collaboration with families to ensure that successes and concerns about students and particularly around their behaviour for learning are communicated in a timely and effective manner through the use of Class Charts.</p>	<p>Collaboration with families is likely to support students making enhanced levels of progress and therefore outcomes (EEF, Working with Parents to support Student's Learning, 2018).</p>	<p>3, 5</p>

Total budgeted cost: £206,400

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Attainment and Progress

PP %	22/23	23/24	24/25
Y11 Students	101	104	128
PP	37	32	43
A8	30.82	26.92	34.13
4+ Eng&Maths	27%	22%	44%
5+ Eng&Maths	16%	19%	16%

As can be seen above there has been **an improvement in attainment and progress of our disadvantaged students**, particularly over the last academic year. The attainment 8 figure improved from 26.92 in 2023 – 2024 to 34.13 in 2024 – 2025. Notably, the number of students achieving a 4+ in both English and Maths doubled from 22% in 2023 – 2024 to 44% in 2024 – 2025. **Whilst there remains a gap between our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students**, there has been progress with the percentage of disadvantaged students achieving a 4+ in English and Maths increasing from 22% in 2023/24 to 44% in 2024/25. However, it is critical that this remains a key focus for us moving forwards to continue to make progress in this area and narrow the gap which currently exists between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.

Reading

Reading intervention programmes using ReadingWise for our pupil premium students who accessed a small group reading intervention on average gain of 10 months was made in a 6-month time period. These interventions have been put in place to support students with a reading age below their chronological age and therefore is supporting narrowing the gap between them and their peers. This represents a positive for the students in terms of their curriculum access with many students making over 12 months of progress. We believe that this is a key factor in supporting an increasing number of students to be able to access the curriculum in greater depth due to the removal of literacy as a barrier. Reading remains a high priority due to the number of students who have entered with reading standardised scores below 100 and so this will remain a focus moving forwards to ensure that all students are able to access the curriculum as much as possible.

Behaviour

Suspensions

Area of Focus	24/25 (Target)	24/25 Actual	24/25 (Difference)
Suspensions	-50%		
Total Susp	270	252	-18
Total Days	506	470	-36

Lesson Removals

24-25	HT1 Removals	78	145	309	167	215	915	120pw
24-25	HT2 Removals	141	119	306	176	187	928	132pw
24-25	HT3 Removals	141	133	191	166	167	798	133pw
24-25	HT4 Removals	142	98	153	135	163	698	139pw
24-25	HT5 Removals	141	95	128	140	103	631	116pw

This information demonstrates an improvement in the behaviour for learning within the academy and this supports our disadvantaged students in two ways. Firstly, ensuring that their lessons experience less disruption supporting a settled learning environment which will support teaching and learning and it also highlights the **reduction in behaviour incidents from our disadvantaged students**. Suspensions in the academy were reduced by 50% both in terms of the number of suspensions and the number of days where students were suspended and these both reduced by 50%. Lesson removals also across, Year 8 to Year 11 reduced over the academic year quite significantly. However, suspensions are still issued when our in-school interventions have been fully exhausted and therefore, this needs to remain a focus to ensure that our disadvantaged students are able to access the best possible education whilst attending the academy.

Attendance

All students	Year 7*	Year 8*	Year 9*	Year 10*	Year 11*	Whole School
2025-26	95.8%	94.1%	93.4%	93.1%	93.5%	94.0%
2024-25	-	95.3%	93.0%	92.7%	93.3%	93.5%
2023-24	-	-	92.7%	90.9%	89.6%	89.6%

* Shows direct comparison between year groups

By Group	PP	PP PA	Non-PP
2024-25	89.6%	37.8%	95.1%

2023-24	82.3%	54%	92.9%
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Attendance has significantly improved at the academy, and this is particularly the case for our disadvantaged students. This has happened both in terms of school attendance and a reduction in the rate of persistent absenteeism amongst our disadvantaged students. There was a 7% increase in school attendance for our disadvantaged students and a 16.2% reduction in the number of disadvantaged students who were classified as persistently absent. Whilst this represents a significant improvement, there continues to be a gap between our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. As a result, attendance needs to remain an ongoing focus of the strategy over the next 3 years.

Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils is meeting expectations in some areas, particularly attendance and behaviour. However,

Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils met expectations, and we are at present on course the outcomes we set out to achieve by 2027/28, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above.