

The Willows School Academy Trust

Pupil premium strategy statement

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	75
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	48%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2022/2023 to 2024/2025
Date this statement was published	Oct 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	Oct 2024
Statement authorised by	Malcolm Shaw
Pupil premium lead	Sarita Powell
Governor / Trustee lead	Balevir Grant

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£36,375
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£13,920
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£50,295

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is to use pupil premium funding to help us achieve and sustain positive outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils. Numerous obstacles can impede the academic success of Pupil Premium (PP) children, ranging from a dearth of educational encouragement or aspirations at home to financial constraints hindering access to enriching activities. These students might experience social isolation due to disparities in opportunities compared to their peers.

Our goal is to thoroughly understand each student's unique circumstances and challenges, allowing us to adapt our support accordingly. At the heart of our approach is high-quality teaching focussed on areas that disadvantaged pupils require it most, targeted support based on robust diagnostic assessment of need, and helping pupils to access a broad and balanced curriculum.

Quality-First Teaching is the biggest driver for the progress of Pupil Premium students and research shows that they make substantial additional progress in comparison to their non-disadvantaged peers when they have high quality teaching.

Although our strategy is focused on the needs of disadvantaged pupils, it will benefit all pupils in our school where funding is spent on whole-school approaches, such as high-quality teaching. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that outcomes for non-disadvantaged pupils will be improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our strategy will be driven by the needs and strengths of each young person, based on formal and informal assessments, not assumptions or labels. This will help us to ensure that we offer them the relevant skills and experience they require to be prepared for adulthood.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Educational barriers - Disadvantaged pupils often enter our school with educational gaps, including lower levels of literacy and numeracy,

	which can hinder their ability to fully participate in and benefit from the curriculum.
2	Communication barriers - some pupils have complex social, communication and emotional needs which can result in emotional dysregulation. This lack of regulation can impact on their ability to learn effectively
3	Environmental barriers - some pupils' sensory needs are negatively affected by their physical environment; this can reduce their ability to learn effectively.
4	Parental engagement - some parents require a high level of guidance to engage fully in all aspects of school life and understand how to support their child/ren.
5	Access to enrichment opportunities - Limited financial resources may restrict disadvantaged pupils' participation in extracurricular activities or educational experiences outside the classroom, impacting their holistic development and academic attainment.

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 of all pupils in all subject areas.	<p>Increase in literacy and numeracy levels among disadvantaged pupils, measured through standardized assessments and progress monitoring.</p> <p>Reduction in the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in key academic areas.</p> <p>Improvement in the participation and engagement of disadvantaged pupils in classroom activities and discussions.</p>
Promote social communication and interaction	Enhanced emotional regulation skills among pupils with complex social, communication, and emotional needs, demonstrated through decreased instances of disruptive behaviour and increased ability to self-regulate.

	Improvement in communication skills, evidenced by increased participation in verbal exchanges, interactions with peers, and understanding of social cues.
Foster accessible and inclusive environments	<p>Creation of a sensory-friendly learning environment that meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils, as evidenced by feedback from students, teachers, and parents.</p> <p>Decrease in sensory-related challenges impacting learning, reflected in improved focus, attention, and participation in classroom activities.</p>
Devise strategies to improve parental engagement to support pupils' learning, pupils' families and wellbeing.	<p>Increase in parental involvement in school activities and events, measured through attendance records and participation rates.</p> <p>Enhanced understanding and support from parents for their child's education, evidenced by feedback surveys and parent-teacher communication.</p>

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £17,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Offer professional development	Evidence suggests that offering professional development	1 2

opportunities for teachers to enhance their understanding of effective instructional practices and differentiation strategies to meet the diverse needs of disadvantaged pupils.	opportunities for teachers to enhance their understanding of effective instructional practices and differentiation strategies is a critical component of improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. By investing in high-quality professional learning experiences, schools can support teachers in meeting the diverse needs of their students and ultimately contribute to narrowing the achievement gap (Desimone et al., 2002; Guskey, 2002).	3
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £26,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Implement targeted literacy and numeracy interventions	<p>Research studies have shown that targeted interventions, such as small-group instruction and personalized support, can significantly improve literacy and numeracy skills among disadvantaged pupils (Hattie, 2009; Torgerson et al., 2011).</p> <p>Evidence suggests that differentiated teaching strategies, such as providing additional support and resources for struggling learners, can lead to improved academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	1
<p>Foster a supportive and inclusive school culture:</p> <p>Establish a multidisciplinary team,</p>	Studies have demonstrated that interventions focusing on social-emotional learning and emotional regulation can enhance communication skills and reduce	1 2 3

<p>including counsellors, speech therapists, and special education teachers, to assess and support pupils with complex social, communication, and emotional needs.</p> <p>Develop personalized behaviour plans and social skills interventions to help pupils regulate their emotions and improve their communication abilities in both academic and social settings.</p>	<p>behavioural challenges among pupils with complex needs (Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg et al., 2017).</p> <p>Research has also highlighted the effectiveness of speech therapy and social skills interventions in improving communication abilities and social interactions among pupils with communication barriers (National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, 2019).</p>	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £7,295

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Parental Engagement:</p> <p>Develop a targeted outreach plan to actively involve parents in their child's education and school community.</p> <p>Establish regular communication channels, such as newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, and digital platforms,</p>	<p>Studies have found a positive correlation between parental involvement in education and academic achievement among children, with increased parental engagement leading to improved learning outcomes and school success (Desimone, 1999; Fan & Chen, 2001).</p> <p>Research suggests that targeted outreach efforts and communication strategies aimed at involving parents in school activities and decision-making processes can strengthen home-school partnerships and support children's</p>	<p>4 5</p>

<p>to keep parents informed about school events, initiatives, and their child's progress.</p>	<p>academic development (OECD, 2019).</p>	
<p>Access to enrichment opportunities:</p> <p>Allocate Pupil Premium funding to provide financial assistance or scholarships for disadvantaged pupils to participate in extracurricular activities, field trips, and educational experiences beyond the classroom.</p> <p>Promote a culture of inclusivity and equity within extracurricular programs and enrichment activities to ensure all pupils feel valued and supported in pursuing their interests and passions.</p>	<p>Evidence shows that participation in extracurricular activities and enrichment programs can have a positive impact on academic achievement, social skills development, and overall well-being among disadvantaged pupils (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Mahoney et al., 2005).</p>	<p>1 5</p>

Total budgeted cost: £50,295

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 2022/23 academic year using key stage 1 and 2 performance data, phonics check results and our own internal assessments. To help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils we compared our results to those for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at a national level.

Although disadvantaged pupils did not attain as well as non-disadvantaged pupils in end of KS2 writing outcomes, the pupils achieved well in comparison to national figures for disadvantaged pupils and broadly in line with national averages in general. This suggests that the provisions that we have put in place to support disadvantaged pupils have enabled them to close the gap with non-disadvantaged pupils. Targeting CPD to improve writing outcomes will be a focus for this academic year and is reflected in the budgeting for Pupil Premium. Phonics outcomes have improved from the previous academic year, but still below national levels. As a result, we will continue to invest in the school's phonics programme, Phonics International, and put in place early interventions and additional reading support to ensure pupils meet age-related expectations by the end of the year (BRP/FFT).

Our observations and assessments demonstrated that pupil behaviour improved last year, but challenges in relation to wellbeing and mental health remain significantly high. The school will continue to provide ongoing support through the range of wider strategies as listed in the report. Overall, data outcomes for 2022-2023 demonstrate a marked improvement from the previous year. We will continue to put in place the strategies as listed in this report and target phonics and early reading, writing, and particularly focusing on closing the gap on disadvantaged pupils achieving greater depth.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Horse Riding	Equestrian centre
Yoga	Oscar Stevenson
Kung-Fu	Jack Kontou
African Diaspora – Drumming	Nahum McLean

