

Pupil premium strategy statement – Outwood Academy Carlton 2025-2026

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	1,116
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	38.14%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023-2024 2024-2025 2025-2026
Date this statement was published	04.11.2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Paul Taylor, Principal
Pupil premium lead	Kate Baker, Vice Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Kelly Marie Webster

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£478,540
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>) *Recovery premium received in academic year 2021 to 2022 can be carried forward to academic year 2022 to 2023. Recovery premium received in academic year 2022 to 2023 cannot be carried forward to 2023 to 2024.	
Total budget for this academic year	£478,540

<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>	
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Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

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, particularly in EBacc subjects. 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 is also integral to wider school plans for education recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, notably in its targeted support through the National Tutoring Programme for pupils whose education has been worst affected, including non-disadvantaged pupils.

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Many of our students have poor basic skills in literacy and numeracy and this is evident across the curriculum and becomes a barrier to learning across most subjects.</p> <p>Reading ages are low, particularly amongst disadvantaged pupils, this has become a real issue following the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
2	<p>Disadvantaged pupils make less progress and attain lower than their non-disadvantaged peers. This occurs across most subject areas.</p>
3	<p>Our attendance data indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils is lower than their non-disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Similarly, more disadvantaged pupils have been 'persistently absent' in comparison to their non-disadvantaged peers.</p> <p>Assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.</p>
4	<p>Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families suggest that the education of many of our disadvantaged pupils continues to be affected by the impact of the school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to a greater extent than for other pupils. These findings are supported by national studies.</p> <p>This has resulted in knowledge gaps resulting in disadvantaged pupils falling further behind age-related expectations.</p>
5	<p>Our assessments (including wellbeing surveys), observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression and low self-esteem. This is partly driven by concern about catching up lost learning and exams/future prospects. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment.</p> <p>Referrals for support remain high with a large proportion of our cohort identified as being 'vulnerable'.</p>
6	<p>Many of our pupils have struggled to access learning successfully following the COVID-19 pandemic and demonstrate a lack of aspiration and ambition, low confidence and resilience. This is particularly so with disadvantaged pupils and has a major impact across all areas of the curriculum, leading to poor attainment.</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 and progress among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of KS4, particularly in EBacc subjects and with a focus on maths and science.	<p>Significantly close the attainment & progress gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers.</p> <p>Outcome data suggests that the disadvantaged gap is narrower than 2024/25</p> <p>The % of students securing 4+ & 5+ in Maths is higher than 2024/25.</p> <p>The % of students securing 4+ 5+, 7+ in Science is higher than 2024/25 and the</p>
<p>Improved reading comprehension and oracy among disadvantaged pupils across KS3.</p> <p>Students have a level of literacy that allows them to access the curriculum. Those students who are below Age Related Expectations (ARE) close the gaps with their peers.</p>	<p>Reading comprehension tests demonstrate a significant improvement in comprehension and oracy skills, particularly among disadvantaged pupils, and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers. Teachers should also recognise this improvement through engagement in lessons and book scrutiny.</p> <p>Greater engagement of KS3 pupils across the curriculum, leading to fewer removals from class.</p>
<p>Improved basic numeracy skills among disadvantaged pupils across KS3.</p> <p>Students have a level of numeracy that allows them to access the curriculum. Those students who are below Age Related Expectations (ARE) close the gaps with their peers.</p>	<p>Numeracy assessments demonstrate a significant improvement particularly among disadvantaged pupils, and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers. Teachers should also have recognised this improvement through engagement in lessons and book scrutiny.</p> <p>Greater engagement of KS3 pupils across the curriculum, leading to fewer removals from class.</p>

<p>To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Extensive support and a range of strategies are available for students who are struggling with their mental health, allowing students to flourish and fully engage with the curriculum.</p>	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. • improved engagement across the curriculum eg. attendance, lesson removals.
<p>To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils and increase the % of students engaging with enrichment opportunities.</p>	<p>Sustained high attendance demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant improvement in the overall unauthorised absence rate for all pupils • The attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers closes significantly. • A reduction in the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent • The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent approaches the same figure for their non-disadvantaged peers. • Tracking of enrichment attendance highlights an increase in pupils 'doing more', when compared to 2024/25
<p>Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects.</p>	<p>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.</p>

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: £239,270.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ensure that first wave teaching is of high quality, supported by a programme of professional development that is focused around pedagogy	A focus on pedagogy and ongoing CPD in this area ensures that there is a constant focus on teaching and learning, supporting innovation and creativity, which leads to better teaching and in turn, to better progress and outcomes.	1, 2, 4, 6
Improving literacy and oracy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance. Fund professional development.	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 maths and English: word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)	1, 2, 4, 6
Ensure that we are able to recruit the best teachers, using the TES recruitment package and creative strategies to recruit and retain staff through the Deeps, NPQs & distributed leadership model.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/new-initiatives-to-improve-teacher-retention# https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Recruitment_and_retention_guidance_FINAL..pdf	1, 2, 4, 6
Provide high quality support to key subject areas through the deployment of Trust Directors, hence improving the quality of teaching.	As subject experts, Directors provide a further level of challenge within subject areas, as well as providing support for teachers to develop and improve their practice, leading to stronger teaching and learning. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit	1, 2, 4, 6

Increasing the frequency of high quality formative assessment episodes in lessons.	https://d2tic4wv0liusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/projects/EFA_evaluation_report.pdf?v=1727463923	1, 2, 4, 6
Developing metacognitive and self-regulation skills in all pupils through the consistent and constant implementation of the 5 pillars of learning and associated pedagogy. Specific focus on independent deliberate practice to develop procedural knowledge and enhance confidence and resilience over time.	Teaching metacognitive strategies to pupils can be an inexpensive method to help pupils become more independent learners. There is particularly strong evidence that it can have a positive impact on maths attainment: Metacognition and self-regulation Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1, 2, 4, 6
Embed, with 100% consistency the Positive Discipline for Learning and Life policy within classroom and across the academy	In successful schools there is a strong emphasis on removing barriers that impact negatively on learning such as poor behaviour and attendance. 'Consistency is Key'. EEF - Improving Behaviour in Schools	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Implement the trust model of the Universal Inclusive Classroom	Managing Cognitive Load COGNITIVE SCIENCE APPROACHES IN THE CLASSROOM: A REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE	1, 2, 3, 4, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £119,635.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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Small group tutors in Maths, English, Science and humanities provide small group and 1 to 1 intervention for those students that are underperforming or are struggling in particular areas within these subjects.	<p>Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one:</p> <p>One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>And in small groups:</p> <p>Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Y10 & Y11 small group teaching of approved level 2 qualifications that PLC students selected as part of the 'Guided Pathways'	Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Aspire room available support students who are unable to access mainstream lessons. Targeted intervention provided by the Bridge Manager.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/individualised-instruction	3, 5
PLC provides an alternative personalised curriculum for a cohort of children who struggle to access mainstream lessons. Staffed by a PLC Coordinator. Provide resources to support this provision and fund intervention programmes for this cohort eg, horticulture.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/individualised-instruction	3, 5
Subject staff from across the curriculum provide additional academic support and intervention after	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

school and during holidays		
LRC Manager provides additional support within the library in areas such as Accelerated Reader and targeted support / intervention with literacy	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4	1, 2, 6
Provide targeted support and intervention for literacy, using packages such, Fresh Start programme to intervene with students who are below age related expectations.	Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on pupils' ability to understand a text, and this is particularly the case when interventions are delivered over a shorter timespan: Reading comprehension strategies Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1, 2, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £119,635.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Use of external agencies such as iSpace, Compass and Ad Astra to provide strong support for students who are struggling with their mental health. Wellbeing staff oversee the whole-school approach to wellbeing and provide staff with the	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	3, 5, 6

knowledge and confidence to understand and recognise signs of poor mental health in pupils and know where to go with any concerns.		
An in-school support team (Deep Support) provide a wealth of support, guidance and advice across a wide range of areas such as pastoral support, behaviour support, safeguarding and wellbeing	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	3, 5, 6
An extensive Careers programme over 5 years, complemented by independent CIAG from Careers Inc, ensures that students are well informed and supported	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1103188/Careers_statutory_guidance_September_2022.pdf	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
The EWO and Attendance team ensure that there is a robust plan to improve student attendance and that this is implemented and monitored. Clear programme of support, interventions and rewards, including strong parental engagement.	[Withdrawn] Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	3, 5
Ensure that disadvantaged students have full access to the curriculum and that they are not restricted due to financial constraints.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/using-pupil-premium	3, 5

Students/Parents are supported by providing Year 7 students with a free uniform bundle, a hardship fund for uniform / trips etc and access to free school meals		
Ensure that we provide additional external alternative provision for those students who need this because they are struggling to access school and/or to supplement their school provision.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/individualised-instruction	3, 5
Improve the behaviour, resilience and engagement of students by engaging with the 'Think for the Future' programme, which involves the deployment of an on site mentor.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mentoring	3, 5, 6
Support the development of the PLC through the appointment of an additional Associate Assistant Principal.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Introduction of Character Education and Personal Development Reads and Votes for Schools as part of the tutor provision to compliment the Life curriculum and address SMSC.	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f20087fe90e07456b18abfc/Character_Education_Framework_Guidance.pdf	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Personalised Learning Centre (PDC) offers a provision for those	Targeted Interventions	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

students who require targeted interventions following one off or infrequent incidents where behaviours have demonstrated unsafe, irresponsible and/or disrespectful behaviours. It is an opportunity to deliver intensive restorative, personal development work in a 1:1 or small group. This is delivered alongside their daily curriculum.	https://d2tic4wv0liusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_schools_Report.pdf?v=1698994869	
Contingency fund for acute issues.		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost: £478, 540

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2024/25 academic year using key stage 4 performance data and our own internal assessments.

For Attainment 8 (which is a measure of GCSE attainment across 8 subjects) it was 33.93. See [DfE guidance](#) for more information about KS4 performance measures. This figure is a notable improvement on the previous academic year.

We have compared our results to national figures to help gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils (although these should be considered with caution as at the time of reporting changes may still occur). The national Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils (FSM6) in 2024/25 was 34.4 (please note this was not validated data at the time of writing this report). The national average attainment 8 gap between disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged students was 15.4. The same figure at OACa was 13.93 indicating a smaller gap than national.

Key stage 4 data and our internal assessments suggest that, despite some strong individual performances, attainment of the school's disadvantaged pupils in 2024/25 was below our expectations, while being better than the previous year and the national attainment gap.

We also identified that some of the approaches we used to boost outcomes for disadvantaged pupils had less impact than anticipated. However, the number of disadvantaged students securing 4+ & 5+ Maths increased. Furthermore, the % of students securing 5+ in English also increased.

Attendance for disadvantaged pupils was 82.39% in 2024/25 and persistent absence was 42.14%. We recognise this higher than for non-disadvantaged and this is why attendance remains a focus on our current plan. However, 2023/24 attendance 81.69% and persistent absence 49.80% for disadvantaged students indicate notable improvements year on year.

Our assessments demonstrated that pupil behaviour significantly improved as the year progressed, but challenges around wellbeing and mental health remain significantly higher than before the pandemic. The impact on disadvantaged pupils has been particularly acute. This is why strategies to address this feature in the current plan for 2025/26.

These results mean that we are not at present on course to achieve the outcomes that we set out to achieve by 2025/26, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above. We have reviewed our strategy plan and made changes to how we intend to use some of our budget this academic year, as set out in the Activity in This Academic Year section above. The Further Information section below provides more details about our planning, implementation, and evaluation processes.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium (or recovery premium) to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
One to one SEMH support. Introduced group sessions too this academic year.	Compass
Behaviour strategies, confidence, resilience and emotional support.	Think for the Future
Behaviour support, exam support, transition support and SEMH strategies.	Adastra