

Pupil premium strategy statement – Fitzharrys 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	921
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	9.3%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (the DFE recommends three-year plans.	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026
Statement authorised by	Will Speke Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Pauline Wileman
Governor / Trustee lead	Claudia Lusardi

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£82,425
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£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>	£82,425

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all students, are able to maximise their potential through an educational offer with integrity, ensuring the capitation that is additional, improves educational outcomes and life chances for disadvantaged students.

The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support all disadvantaged students to make good progress and achieve high attainment through a broad and ambitious curriculum. Quality first teaching allows disadvantaged students to fulfil their potential, raise their aspirations and drive their ambitions along with a pastoral system of excellence that encourages disadvantaged students to overcome barriers to learning.

Our strategy is driven by our teaching and learning priority of challenge and high expectations, achieved through high quality teaching outlined in the Fitzharrys lesson standard. These are the principles, habits, and routines we expect to see across all curriculum areas with a focus on those strategies which are proven to have the greatest impact on improving the progress of disadvantaged students whilst sustaining the progress of the non-disadvantaged students.

Our strategy is also integral to our wider school plans for inclusion for those students who have multiple vulnerabilities. This includes a particular focus on attendance and wellbeing both of which have negatively impacted the attainment and progress of students in particular those who are disadvantaged.

Our approach will be based on diagnostic assessment of the both the academic and wider vulnerabilities students face and will be informed by the Abingdon learning Trust Vulnerable learners Strategy and an integral part of the school improvement plan. Our strategy will provide flexibility to respond to new challenges and will be responsive through regular monitoring and evaluation of the strategy. We will ensure that we:

- Have the highest of expectations of all pupils and that disadvantaged pupils don't lack talent or ability but may lack opportunity. Prior attainment should not set limits on our ambitions for pupils.*
- Create a culture of collective responsibility for disadvantaged pupils including governance, senior leadership, subject leadership, classroom teachers, and pastoral care.*
- Have a strategy rooted in assessment not assumptions.*
- Have a culture of early intervention for addressing need, addressing academic and non-academic barriers to attainment such as attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, and cultural capital*
- Avoid "over intervention" and narrowing the curriculum, recognising the importance of curriculum equity.*

- Give staff with the capacity, knowledge, and expertise to support disadvantaged pupils.
- Have a clear process and impact evaluation process to understand whether the strategy is working/has worked.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Internal data indicates that disadvantaged pupils across KS3 are making less progress than their non-disadvantaged peers. This gap remains during pupils' time at our school. Whilst the gap closed last academic year, this has increased again. In summer 2025 the attainment 8 gap was -12.72.
2	Attendance data shows a disproportionate number of disadvantaged pupils are classed as persistent absentees and therefore do not fully engage with school life. This has a negative impact on their social and emotional development as well as academic progress. Students who attend school more that 96% of time have a higher A8 and therefore more value added to their progress score. Students under 80% (19 students in 2025) got an estimated P8 of -0.89 which brought the overall P8 down to 0.26. It is clear to see, and understandable that, students who are not in lessons and learning have achieved significantly below those who are benefitting from the teaching at Fitzharrys school.
3	Students join the school with reading ages that are significantly lower than their non-disadvantaged peers. This impacts students' abilities to access the curriculum and their ability to understand and comprehend concepts, topics and other information presented in lesson. The reading gap persists through students at our school and directly impacts the progress that disadvantaged students make across the school.
4	Our Oxwell survey data and referrals from staff have identified social and emotional issues for many students such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. This impacts on student learning as consequently students spend more time outside of the classroom.
5	Our discussions with pupils and families, alongside data on available opportunities, indicate that many disadvantaged pupils have significantly lower cultural capital compared to their peers. This limited exposure—such as fewer visits to museums, libraries, theatres, or major cities—reduces access to enriching knowledge and experiences. As a result, pupils may feel less connected to school life and its cultural or extracurricular events, which can weaken their sense of belonging and engagement within the school community.

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 by the end of KS4.	By the end of our current plan in 2024/27, we would expect that the progress of our disadvantaged students is at least 0, and that the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students has closed significantly on the current gap.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance by the end of this plan demonstrated by: the overall absence rate for all students being no more than 5% and the attendance gap between disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers reduced by 2%.
Improved levels of language and literacy, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.	Data (including data from Bedrock and Lexia for students who are part of the literacy intervention groups) demonstrates progress in diminishing the difference between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. All students can access the curriculum and make better progress. There will also be improvements seen in students understanding and comprehension through work scrutiny and lesson visits.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by: - Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. - A significant increase in the proportion of students achieving the school awards (which focuses on students experiencing leadership, community, cultural and extra-curricular activities)
Increased cultural capital for all disadvantaged students	Teacher reports and class observations suggest disadvantaged pupils have access to more knowledge associated with cultural capital and engage more actively in lessons. All disadvantaged students are given the opportunity to participate in some form of enrichment inside or outside of school. We would expect to see increased numbers of students participating in these activities through our monitoring procedures. There are several trips throughout the year to cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries or other venues. These trips have a strong rationale rooted in the curriculum.

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: £ 9,231.32

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ensure all pupils have access to quality first teaching supported by evidence informed CPD for teachers and support staff. This will involve ongoing teacher training and support and release time.	The EEF guidance report for Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools recommendation 3 outlines the importance of ensuring all pupils have access to high quality teaching and that good teaching for pupils with SEND is good teaching for all. Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching	1
Ensure that academic reading and writing is taught explicitly in all subjects. Training for staff focusing on developing literacy across the curriculum, that is bespoke to each faculty area.	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject. reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with progress and attainment across the curriculum. Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3
Training for staff focusing on modelling, scaffolding and checking for understanding to ensure that all students can access challenging learning, and that teachers can be responsive to students' learning needs when delivering this learning.	The EEF guidance report for Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools references five specific approaches—the 'Five-a-day' are particularly well-evidenced as having a positive impact. Teachers should develop a repertoire of these strategies, which they can use daily and flexibly in response to individual needs, using them as the starting point for classroom teaching for all pupils, including those with SEND. 5 a day approach	1

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

Budgeted cost: £ 23,439

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To develop further the Bedrock vocabulary curriculum across KS3 in order to: narrow the word gap that exists between different groups of students; improve outcomes across the curriculum for all students, particularly our disadvantaged students; and support students to develop stronger connections between “Bedrock words” learned and their lessons. Progress for individuals to be monitored effectively and to feed into SMART targets.	Acquiring key tier 2 and 3 vocabulary is crucial to enable students to access the curriculum. Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	3
To continue to embed Lexia as our chosen intervention/support programme for supporting students' literacy development to narrow the gap and improve outcomes particularly for our disadvantaged students.	Provide high-quality literacy interventions may be required for identified students to support the high-quality teaching in the classroom. Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	3
Targeted after school support for homework to remove the barriers for students in completing homework by providing the resources and support needed to complete the tasks set. Staff will be employed to run this support.	The EEF findings state that homework has a positive impact on average (+5 months) particularly in Secondary Schools. Homework	1
Targeted literacy programme for students who have a reading age below their chronological age, focusing on comprehension and understanding vocabulary.	Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on the students' ability to understand a text and this is particularly the case when interventions are delivered over a shorter timespan: Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3
Targeted daily phonics intervention for identified students, and appropriate training for staff to ensure high quality delivery of	Phonics intervention is proven to have a positive impact on the development of early reading skills, particularly for disadvantaged	3

phonics to support students at the early stages of reading.	students. This allows students to make more rapid progress in their reading and a greater ability to access the curriculum. Phonics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Implement Sparx Maths as an adaptive homework platform for KS3 and Year 10 to improve engagement, completion, and attainment. The platform provides personalised practice, scaffolding, and video support to reduce barriers for disadvantaged learners.	Sparx Maths has demonstrated measurable improvements in homework completion and attainment in schools nationally. Its adaptive algorithms tailor work to individual needs, while built-in tutorials reduce reliance on external support, supporting equity for disadvantaged students. Edtech - Sparx	1
All students in key stage 3, and in Year 10, to read during tutor time once per week, increasing students' exposure to words and reading more challenging texts.	One evidence-informed approach is guided oral reading instruction. This involves an adult modelling the fluent reading of a text first and then pupils reading the same text aloud with appropriate feedback. It is an opportunity to make the implicit explicit by expertly modelling fluency through appropriate use of pace, expression, punctuation and phrasing – all important features of effective prosody. EEF blog: Shining a spotlight on reading fluency EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 49,462 (£25115 – staffing)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embedding the 5 foundations approach to attendance which has been informed by the DFE guidance. Home School link worker will continue to be	The DFE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels. Working together to improve school attendance	2

funded to support families with attendance and acute needs and build capacity for home visits and early morning phone calls.		
Provide a programme of subsidised trips and visits to support the curriculum and to offer pupils opportunities they would otherwise not participate in to boost wellbeing, behaviour, attendance, and aspiration.	There is a range of evidence to support that students participating in a wider range of activities can increase aspirations, support mental health and well-being as well as increasing confidence with others and engagement with school "An Unequal playing field"	4, 5
To continue to employ a counsellor to ensure pupils social and emotional needs are met so they can actively engage in learning.	Supporting students to develop strategies to recognise, support and cope with adversity, and even be strengthened by it can have a clear and significant impact on a students' well-being. This is proven to increase attendance and engagement in school and ultimately, student achievement: Effectiveness of school counselling revealed in new research (bacp.co.uk) Advice template (publishing.service.gov.uk)	4, 2

Total budgeted cost: £ 82425

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Below are the details of the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in 2024 - 2025.

Numbers of disadvantaged students are smaller for this cohort, so individual students have a bigger impact on the aggregate outcomes.

3 Year trend for attainment

- Attainment 8 disadvantaged: 38.15 → 39.76 → 34.65
- Gap disadvantaged/non-disadvantaged: -10.42 → -6.67 → -12.72

While the attainment gaps highlight persistent challenges for disadvantaged pupils, it's important to note that the small cohort size means each student's performance significantly influences overall figures. Despite fluctuations, there have been periods of improvement, and the data reflects both progress and areas for continued focus.

Limited cultural capital and reduced access to enrichment opportunities likely contribute to weaker engagement and outcomes, particularly in EBacc and creative subjects. These gaps underline the need for targeted intervention in English, Maths, and EBacc subjects, alongside strategies to broaden cultural experiences and strengthen pupils' sense of belonging within school life.

Progress rates amongst disadvantaged students were closely linked to attendance, safeguarding, and wider pastoral issues. Decisions were made regarding curriculum provision that, while reducing the number of examination entries for some students, ensured a clear progression pathway and supported successful transition to post-16 education. This approach prioritised long-term outcomes and readiness for further study.

Our focus on improving attendance this year will be a key component in continuing to raise attainment for current cohorts.

Attendance

Attendance and engagement for our PP students remains a key priority. Following extensive work with students to improve attendance, the gap between PP and all students is 13%. Whilst recognising this is a national issue, we remain concerned about this figure and are continuing to work hard with our pastoral teams to increase the attendance of our PP students. This includes building connections and relationships with parents and consistent application of the attendance policy which will be integral to supporting students to attend school with the intended outcome of further reducing the attendance gap.

Attendance	Count	A8	P8
96% +	48	5.87	1.05
91% +	78	5.41	0.82
81% +	94	5.17	0.62
All	113	4.62	0.26
Less than 80%	19	1.91	-0.89

Language and Literacy

29 students received English Plus intervention in y7. Of these, 15 (52%) made notable increase in their reading age following the intervention.

18 students received English Plus intervention in y8. Of these, 8 (44%) made notable progress.

15 students received English Plus intervention in y9. Of these, 6 (40%) made notable progress. However, it should be noted that attendance concerns mean there are gaps in this data, and this may not reflect the full picture.

For 2025-26, the English Plus curriculum is being brought in house to the English Faculty, and the curriculum redesigned so that it more closely aligns with the full English curriculum. Reviews will be ongoing as part of the English Faculty Improvement Plan, with adjustments made accordingly.

3 students received regular phonics intervention. Of these, 2 students made significant progress in reading age.

On average, students made 23% progress on Bedrock between pre-topic test and post-topic test (this percentage represents competence and accuracy with word acquisition). The average improvement for students in receipt of the Pupil Premium was 20%.

Wellbeing

Supporting students' mental health remains a key priority, with both internal and external resources actively used. Feedback from students engaging in counselling and wellbeing services this year highlighted significant positive outcomes across four areas:

Emotional Wellbeing

- Increased hope and positivity
- Reduced anxiety and distress
- Improved self-compassion and ability to manage negative thoughts
- Less shame around identity and body image
- More balanced thinking and perspective-taking

Self-Expression and Coping Skills

- Safer expression of difficult emotions
- Development of coping strategies
- Better management of OCD and eating distress

- Healthier communication with peers and staff
- Increased resilience and self-awareness

Relationships and Connection

- Feeling listened to and acknowledged
- Improved relationships at home and with peers
- Greater empathy and compassion

Processing Loss, Trauma, and Change

- Safe space for grief and bereavement
- Support for trauma processing
- Strategies for coping with parental illness or loss

Key Context:

Y24-25 saw a rise in students affected by bereavement and parental illness. The Wellbeing team ensured access to longer-term support and maintained a steady, thoughtful pace for counselling sessions. Afternoon drop-ins provided timely support for students not in regular sessions. The team also managed waiting lists, reminders, and scheduling, ensuring consistency. Student feedback emphasised the value of a safe, confidential space, with excellent attendance and strong engagement.

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

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year**

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

We have a dedicated member of staff who coordinates support for service pupils. We continue to be involved in the Supporting Schools with Small Service Children Cohorts project and have completed the “thriving lives toolkit” which has enabled us to identify what support is needed.

Service children have been trained as peer mentors and will be supporting our new Year 7 service children this academic year and have attended University visits to get a taste of university life, focusing on academic routes into higher education and apprenticeships while meeting other Service children in similar circumstances.

The impact of these activities has been a greater awareness of the impact of being a service child on their education which has then enabled us to plan appropriate support.

Further information (optional)

Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activity that is not being funded by pupil premium or recovery premium.

That will include:

- Utilising support from the CAMHS outreach team, The Abingdon bridge and MHST to support pupils with mild to moderate mental health and wellbeing issues, many of whom are disadvantaged.
- Ensuring that our disadvantaged students are all well known to all staff and all staff have access to comprehensive data, information and guidance to support each disadvantaged student.
- Our whole school Vulnerable learner's strategy which includes our plan to increase the support provided for vulnerable students in the classroom to enable students to benefit from high quality teaching across the curriculum.
- A focus on disadvantaged students through the RAP process including learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil and teacher voice activities.
- Deployment of the best staff to support disadvantaged pupils.
- An ongoing item on all faculty and pastoral meetings.
- CIEAG has a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils.

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

In planning our new pupil premium strategy, we triangulated evidence from multiple sources of data including assessments, engagement in class book scrutiny, conversations with parents, students, and teachers to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils. Evidence (especially EEF toolkit) was used to decide which strategies are likely to be most effective in overcoming the barriers to learning of disadvantaged pupils. Consideration is given to high impact, low-cost strategies. We also used the EEF's families of schools database to view the EEF toolkit of disadvantaged pupils in school similar to ours. We used the EEF's implementation guidance to help us develop our strategy and will continue to use it through the implementation of our activities.