

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Blue Coat School

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	832
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	305 (36.7%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024/25 – 2026/27
Date this statement was published	March 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	March 2027
Statement authorised by	Miss J Halsey (Headteacher)
Pupil premium lead	Mrs C Jakes (Deputy Headteacher)
Governor / Trustee lead	Mrs J Pratt Chair of Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£345,426
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>	£345,426

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim at the Blue Coat School is to ensure that all of our students, including those where circumstances may put them at a disadvantage to their peers, have a happy, safe and effective learning environment. We want them to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful, both during their time with us and in later life. Our core values of respect, kindness and ambition help to drive forward our purpose and commitment to ensure every child regardless of circumstance can secure a bright and varied future.

Within our strategy, we continue to follow the EEF guidance of taking a 'tiered approach' to our use of the Pupil Premium funding. In line with this approach, a range of qualitative data has been used to identify the specific needs of our learners, with the overarching aim of ensuring that our disadvantaged students make the same progress as their peers against a range of measures. Regular review of this data will highlight any emerging trends or areas of concern and allow us to tailor the support further if necessary.

A continued commitment to Quality First Teaching across the school remains the key principle within our Pupil Premium strategy as, in line with EEF guidance, we believe that high quality teaching is the most impactful way that we can support our students to find success. Through a continued programme of professional development, we believe our teachers will be in the best position possible to support our disadvantaged students. The Blue Coat School is committed to supporting all pupils in our care regardless of circumstances and are focused on ensuring the best possible outcomes for all of our students and supporting them to become the happy, safe and empowered young people we know they are all capable of becoming. More than a third of our students are eligible for pupil premium funding and we are aware of the socio-economic insecurities many of our students' experience. We aim to provide all students with a broad and balanced curriculum as well as a comprehensive range of enrichment opportunities that will ensure that every pupil's needs are met irrespective of background. We are developing a school culture, in which students are committed to making good progress and achieving excellence in all aspects of their lives.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Standardised reading tests show that our disadvantaged students have a significantly lower reading age than their peers. This has been noted as being on average, at least 12 months lower than their chronological age and in many cases an even greater gap exists. This places our Pupil Premium students at a greater disadvantage than those non-disadvantaged students; disproportionately affecting access to the curriculum.</p> <p>2025 outcomes indicate an 8% gap in Non PP V PP Basics measure 4+.</p>
2	<p>During the 2023-24 academic year, there was an 8.6% gap in attendance between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is still increasing and shows no signs of slowing down, this is particularly prevalent amongst our disadvantaged pupils and attendance and progress are synonymous.</p>
3	<p>Classroom climates have benefited from our clear behaviour management strategy, which is well understood by students and teachers. However, lesson observations, and student and teacher interviews, have indicated that disadvantaged students are too often passive, asking too few questions, and do not have enough exposure and opportunities to discuss and reason their thinking and to practice using a rich vocabulary. Whilst we do not misinterpret student engagement as a proxy for deep learning, we know that frequent, high-quality teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interactions positively impact attainment.</p>
4	<p>The school has increasing numbers of students with a wide range of special educational needs. Social emotional and mental health needs and emotional based school avoidance are on an upwards trajectory. A significantly large proportion of these students come from a disadvantaged background and resources are stretched thin in trying to meet this high level of need resulting in poor attendance and attainment for these pupils.</p>
5	<p>The school faces significant challenges around students' ability to self-regulate, to cope with their own emotions and to resolve conflict productively in the moment and throughout the day. Students often lack the strategies and the vocabulary to relate, negotiate and compromise, resulting in frustrations and poor behaviour choices which affect their attainment and outcomes.</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 reading comprehension skills and increased vocabulary among disadvantaged students in all year groups. This should lead to a reduced gap in the basics measure for PP students 4+.</p>	<p>Sustained reduction over time in the number of disadvantaged students with a reading age of more than 12 months below their chronological age</p> <p>Closing gap in reading age between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students in all year groups</p> <p>Reduction in students requiring basic phonics intervention beyond Year 7</p> <p>Teachers can recognise an improvement in students' ability to read a broader range of vocabulary, and apply to both verbally and in written work, across all subjects</p>
<p>The attendance of disadvantaged students is increasing sustainably and the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students' attendance is diminishing.</p>	<p>Sustained improvements in attendance in 2024/25 demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased percentage of overall attendance for all groups of pupils including disadvantaged • Significantly decreasing number of disadvantaged pupils who fall into the Persistent absence category • Clear and consistent expectations around attendance through improved communication with parents supported with a full range of local authority support
<p>Improved self-regulation, resilience and improved behaviour choices for all learners, especially those who are disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Data across several areas will show sustained and continual improvement as will the sense of belonging and pride in the school felt by all stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving attitude data across all year groups year on year, including for disadvantaged students • Significant reduction in the number of behaviour incidents for all pupils including the disadvantaged across the school, improving over time • Decreased suspension, reciprocals and managed moves required for disadvantaged pupils • The number of disadvantaged students participating in extracurricular activities will have increased
<p>Improved internal and external support systems and strategies in place to meet the needs of disadvantaged students and their families' experiencing challenges with SEMH and EBSA as well as other SEN needs</p>	<p>Over the 3 year plan significant changes will be seen to the way the school is able to meet the needs of pupils including.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring of the SEN department with a focus on interventions and targeted support • Implementation of a student support centre • Increase capacity to support students through tailored provision.

Improved attainment of disadvantaged students with a focus on core subjects.	<p>Outcomes of disadvantaged students will show progress towards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average Attainment 8 score moving to be in line with non-disadvantaged students • A closing attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, especially in core subjects • Basics measure 4+ gap is reduced compared to Non PP
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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: £ 156,895

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Use of external expertise in lead practitioners and the improvement to the development cycle for teaching staff, including regular lesson looks, a coaching/mentoring programme for our core Heads of Department	<p>“Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children’s outcomes. Indeed, research tells us that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap” - EEF Effective Professional Development</p> <p>“Mentoring can lead to a range of positive outcomes for mentees, including improved teaching practice, confidence and self-belief, enhanced teacher-student interactions, and an improved classroom environment” - NIT Mentoring and Coaching for Teachers</p>	1, 3,4
<i>Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme for staff, including T&L CPD, use of National College for designated programmes of focus. Step Lab CPD to target specific Blue Coat Benchmarks.</i>	<p>“Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children’s outcomes. Indeed, research tells us that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap” - EEF Effective Professional Development</p> <p>“Evidence indicates that high quality teaching is the most powerful way for schools to improve pupil attainment, especially for socio-economically disadvantaged students” - EEF Guide to Pupil Premium (Evidence brief)</p>	1,3,4

<p><i>Developing use of classroom support and a SEN Practitioner to provide high quality in-class support as well as targeted interventions.</i></p>	<p>“There is good emerging evidence that TAs can provide noticeable improvements to pupil attainment... Research on TAs delivering targeted interventions in one-to-one or small group settings shows a consistent impact on attainment of approximately three to four additional months’ progress” - EEF Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistance</p>	<p>1,3,4</p>
<p><i>Use of additional technological applications, such as GCSE Pod, technical hardware, SPARXs maths</i></p>	<p>“The opportunities [using technology in the classroom] offers us to improve education are truly exciting” - EEF Using Digital Technology to Improve Learning</p> <p>“To improve learning, schools should consider the specific barriers technology is addressing – particularly for disadvantaged students” - EEF Guide to Pupil Premium</p> <p>https://researchschool.org.uk/bradford/news/should-i-use-a-visualiser-to-model-writing</p>	<p>1,2,3,4</p>
<p><i>Use of our assessment data to review process to identify barriers to progress and apply specific, targeted in class interventions. Middle and senior leader analysis of the data allows for larger scale monitoring of disadvantaged pupils’ progress to inform necessary therapies.</i></p>	<p>“Gaining a thorough knowledge of your disadvantaged pupils’ levels of attainment and progress is the first step to developing an effective Pupil Premium strategy.” - EEF Guide to Pupil Premium</p>	<p>3,4</p>
<p><i>Curriculum development, including improving cross curricular links and broadening the curriculum to include a more diverse range of vocational and academic subjects.</i></p>	<p>“Over 120,000 disadvantaged students made the transition from primary to secondary school below the expected standard for reading. The educational prospects for this group are grave. Literacy is key to academic success across the curriculum and is more important than ever as curriculum reforms place new demands on students and teachers.” - EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary School</p> <p>“The average impact of reading comprehension strategies is an additional six months’ progress over</p>	<p>1,3,4</p>

	the course of a year.” - EEF Reading Comprehension Strategies	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 116,372

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Curriculum intervention sessions for KS3 student where it's recognised that their SEN need or other vulnerabilities are having an impact on their ability to make expected progress.	<p>“It is likely that some pupils will require additional support in the form of high quality, structured interventions to make progress.”</p> <p>EEF - SEN in mainstream schools.</p> <p>“Small group tuition has an average impact of four months’ additional progress over the course of a year.”</p> <p>EEF Small Group tuition</p>	3,4,5
<i>Use of in-school targeted academic tuition for KS4 learners, particularly for students whose circumstances put them at a disadvantage to their peers, resulting in below expected progress.</i>	<p>“Small group tuition has an average impact of four months’ additional progress over the course of a year.” -</p> <p>EEF Small Group tuition</p> <p>“On average, one to one tuition is very effective at improving pupil outcomes. One to one tuition might be an effective strategy for providing targeted support for pupils that are identified as having low prior attainment or are struggling in particular areas.”</p> <p>- EEF One to One tuition</p> <p>EEF Making a Difference with Effective Tutoring</p>	1,3,4,5
<i>Curriculum Access pathway resulting in the reduction of student curriculum pathway by 1 GCSE to increase curriculum time in English, Maths & Life Skills.</i>	<p>“Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) have the greatest need for excellent teaching and are entitled to provision that supports achievement at, and enjoyment of, school. The attainment gap between pupils with SEND and their peers is twice as big as the gap between pupils eligible for free</p>	1,3,4,5

	<p>school meals and their peers. However, pupils with SEND are also more than twice as likely to be eligible for free school meals. Closing the disadvantage gap means finding better ways to support pupils with SEND.” - EEF Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools</p>	
<p><i>Use of Alternative Provision, such in person/online tutoring, small group support, and bespoke educational packages, for students who face barriers significant enough to make accessing mainstream education extremely challenging.</i></p>	<p>“Small group tuition has an average impact of four months’ additional progress over the course of a year.”</p> <p>EEF Small Group tuition</p> <p>“On average, one to one tuition is very effective at improving pupil outcomes. One to one tuition might be an effective strategy for providing targeted support for pupils that are identified as having low prior attainment or are struggling in particular areas.”</p> <p>EEF One to One tuition</p> <p>EEF Making a Difference with Effective Tutoring</p> <p>“Small-group and one-to-one interventions can be a powerful tool.</p>	2,4,5
<p><i>Developing use of classroom support and a SEN Practitioner to provide high quality in-class support as well as targeted interventions.</i></p>	<p>“There is good emerging evidence that TAs can provide noticeable improvements to pupil attainment... Research on TAs delivering targeted interventions in one-to-one or small group settings shows a consistent impact on attainment of approximately three to four additional months’ progress” - EEF Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistance</p>	1,3,4,5
<p><i>A broad and varied Enrichment Programme is offered to students to compliment the learning taking place in lessons, including educational trips and visits, external speakers and interventions and school-led House Cup Competitions.</i></p>	<p>“There is intrinsic value in teaching pupils creative and performance skills and ensuring disadvantaged pupils access a rich and stimulating arts education.”</p> <p>EEF Arts Participation</p> <p>“Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds may be less likely to be able to benefit from sport clubs and other physical activities</p>	2,4,5

	<p>outside of school due to the associated financial costs (e.g. equipment). By providing physical activities free of charge, schools give pupils access to benefits and opportunities that might not otherwise be available to them.”</p> <p>- EEF Physical Activity</p> <p>“Outdoor adventure learning studies report wider benefits in terms of self-confidence and self-efficacy.”</p> <p>EEF Outdoor Adventure Learning</p>	
<p><i>Use of our assessment data review process to identify barriers to progress and apply specific, targeted in class interventions. Middle and senior leader analysis of the data allows for larger scale monitoring of disadvantaged pupils’ progress to inform necessary therapies.</i></p>	<p>“Gaining a thorough knowledge of your disadvantaged pupils’ levels of attainment and progress is the first step to developing an effective Pupil Premium strategy.”</p> <p>EEF Guide to Pupil Premium</p>	1,3,4,5

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

Budgeted cost: £ 72,159

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Appointment of a Family Liaison Officer, to provide support for students struggling to access school (of which a disproportionate amount are disadvantaged).</p>	<p>“Targeted intervention may be needed for persistent or particularly challenging causes of pupil absence. These should be based on knowledge of your pupils, exploration of relevant data, and diagnosis of need.”</p> <p>EEF – Supporting School Attendance</p> <p>“Severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them.”</p> <p>Working together to improve school attendance</p>	2,4,5

<p><i>Recruitment of a Lead Pastoral Assistant</i> to oversee and provide targeted support and mentoring for student who struggle to regulate their emotions and behaviour.</p>	<p>“A tailored approach to support an individual’s behaviour should complement the school’s behaviour policy without lowering expectations of any pupil’s behaviour.” _ EEF – Improving Behaviour in Schools “Some pupils will need more support than others and this should be provided as proactively as possible. It will often be necessary to deliver this support outside of the classroom, in small groups, or in one-to-one activities.” _ Behaviour in Schools</p>	2,4,5
<p><i>Regular Attendance Strategy Meetings with the Attendance Officer, used to track and monitor student attendance and provide individualised support for those students whose attendance is below the school target or national averages (including PA and SA students).</i></p>	<p>“Pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds were nearly twice as likely to be persistently absent than their classmates. With clear links between poor attendance and poor attainment and behaviour, tackling persistent absence is an important part of improving outcomes for all pupils.” EEF Attendance context “Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.” DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance</p>	2,4,5
<p><i>Development of on-site alternative pathways and interventions to support disadvantaged students who are struggling to access mainstream education in a positive way.</i></p>	<p>“Wherever possible, the LA believes that suitable provision to meet need should be ‘in-house’. It is recognised that transition and change can be challenging for many children. The LA therefore encourages all schools to, wherever possible, use alternative provision within a blend of offer which includes continued contact</p>	2,4,5

	<p>with education in the home school setting.”</p> <p>ISS Alternative Provision Guidance for Schools</p> <p>“Outdoor adventure learning studies report wider benefits in terms of self- confidence and self- efficacy.”</p> <p>EEF Outdoor Adventure Learning</p>	
<p><i>Targeted wellbeing intervention, designed to equip students, especially those at a disadvantage to their peers who are more likely to experience SEMH challenges, with the tools to find success.</i></p>	<p>“Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment.”</p> <p>“SEL interventions in education are shown to improve SEL skills and are therefore likely to support disadvantaged pupils to understand and engage in healthy relationships with peers and emotional selfregulation, both of which may subsequently increase academic attainment.”</p> <p>- EEF Social and Emotional Learning</p>	2,4,5
<p><i>An ambitious and wide-ranging Careers programme, including careers curriculum, targeted careers interventions from the Careers Lead, and work placements for key students.</i></p>	<p>“Good career guidance helps inspire pupils towards further study and enables them to make informed decisions whenever choices are open to them. It helps them to understand enough about the world of work to know what skills they need to succeed. It is important for social mobility because it helps open pupils’ eyes to careers they may not have considered” –</p> <p>Gatsby Good Career Guidance</p>	2,4,5
<p><i>Continuation of specific ‘Hardship’ spending for disadvantaged students who are in need of individual support, such as for school uniform, transport, breakfast, equipment or other specifically identified needs.</i></p>	<p>“Staff identify each pupil’s challenges and interests. They seek the best strategies to help each pupil make the next step in his or her learning. Schools</p>	2,4,5

	provide individual support for specific learning needs and group support for pupils with similar needs." - DfE Effective ways to support disadvantaged pupils' achievement	
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Total budgeted **cost: £ 345,426**

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

The continuation of work towards addressing the disparity between disadvantaged students when compared to their peers continues. Progress has been made in establishing key areas of protocol, routine and staffing to facilitate work in the initial identified areas.

Academic progress for our disadvantaged students remains a priority, but must be addressed in conjunction with mental health support, SEND needs, attendance, behaviour and external factors that all impact the overall success of individual students and the group as a whole. Current data from the last academic year are below in order to provide some comparison for the work completed by the end of this academic year.

2025 : Outcomes disadvantaged students:

Attainment 8: Average: 30.4

Eng and maths grade 4 +: 35%

Eng and maths grade 5+ : 15%

2024 to 2025 Behaviour data:

Events per pupil – disadvantaged: 32.88 events

Events per pupil – average data: 13.86 events

Suspensions:

Total 600 suspensions

Disadvantaged student suspensions: 420 (70% of all suspensions)

2024 to 2025 Attendance Data:

Disadvantaged TBCS : 80.1%

Non disadvantaged TBCS 86.8%

Disadvantaged National %: 86.2%

Persistent Absence:

All students: 37.1%

National figures: 25.1%

Disadvantaged students: 56%

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider