



THE CATHOLIC HIGH  
SCHOOL, CHESTER

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CHRISTO FIDELIS

# **Pupil Premium Strategy**

**Year 1      2024/25**

**Year 2      2025/26**

**Year 3      2026/27**

# Pupil premium strategy statement – The Catholic High School, Chester

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	648 (Year 7-11) 806 (Year 7-13)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	22.22% (Year 7-11) 19.73% (Year 7-13)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year</b> )	2024/25 – Year 1 2025/26 – Year 2 2026/27 – Year 3
Date this statement was published	November 2024 – Year 1 November 2025 – Year 2
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Mrs C. McKeagney
Pupil premium lead	Mr T. Wilson
Governor / Trustee lead	Mrs L. Liddiard

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£146,200
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> <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>	£146,200

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

At The Catholic High School, Chester, we are unwavering in our commitment to ensuring that students in receipt of the Pupil Premium achieve outcomes that are at least in line with, and ideally exceed, those of their peers. Guided by our Catholic ethos and ARCH principles, our mission is to provide every young person, particularly those facing disadvantage, with the opportunity to excel academically, grow personally, and thrive within a community grounded in care, aspiration, and high expectations.

Our strategy is rooted in the belief that educational disadvantage is best addressed through high-quality teaching, effective pastoral support, and sustained engagement with families. The Pupil Premium is therefore deployed strategically to remove barriers to learning, improve attendance and behaviour, and secure access to a rich and inclusive curriculum that develops both knowledge and character.

This approach is explicitly aligned with the evidence and recommendations of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), particularly *“The Guide to the Pupil Premium”* (2022) and *“Putting Evidence to Work – A School’s Guide to Implementation”*. We focus on three interconnected pillars identified by the EEF-High-Quality teaching, targeted academic support, and wider strategies, recognising that improving classroom practice has the greatest long-term impact on disadvantaged pupils. Our model also draws upon Marc Rowland’s research into tackling educational disadvantage and the Ofsted Research Review (2022), both of which emphasise the importance of culture, relationships, and consistent systems over short-term interventions.

Implementation at The Catholic High School, Chester is evidence-informed, data-driven, and context-specific. We make use of a range of diagnostic data, such as Attainment 8, reading ages, attendance, and ATL scores, to identify barriers, monitor progress, and evaluate impact across the academic year. Through our cycle of *tracking points* and collaborative reviews, we ensure that intervention is responsive, proportionate, and embedded into classroom practice rather than operating as a separate tier of provision.

Beyond academic attainment, we are equally committed to developing cultural capital, aspiration, and readiness for adulthood. Pupil Premium funding supports participation in enrichment activities, residentials, and leadership opportunities, ensuring that financial barriers do not limit access to experiences that build confidence, curiosity, and community.

By combining robust research, professional expertise, and compassionate pastoral care, The Catholic High School, Chester strives to ensure that disadvantage is never a predictor of destiny. Our goal is for every student to leave CHSC empowered to achieve, ready to contribute, and equipped with the skills and values to flourish in life beyond school.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge																				
1	<p><b><u>Attendance</u></b> Despite notable improvement in whole-school attendance over recent years, the attendance of students in receipt of the Pupil Premium remains consistently below that of their non-disadvantaged peers. This persistent gap indicates that disadvantage continues to be a significant barrier to full engagement with learning.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Non-PP Students Attendance</th> <th>PP Students Attendance</th> <th>Gap between Non-PP and PP Students</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>89.51%</td> <td>77.75%</td> <td>11.76%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>86.49%</td> <td>76.74%</td> <td>9.75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24</td> <td>94.40%</td> <td>85.60%</td> <td>8.80%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024/25</td> <td>93.30%</td> <td>80.80%</td> <td>12.50%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Non-PP Students Attendance	PP Students Attendance	Gap between Non-PP and PP Students	2021/22	89.51%	77.75%	11.76%	2022/23	86.49%	76.74%	9.75%	2023/24	94.40%	85.60%	8.80%	2024/25	93.30%	80.80%	12.50%
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2	<p><b><u>Progress of Pupil Premium Students</u></b> There is a significant gap in Attainment 8 data between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students, indicating lower academic outcomes for pupil premium students.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Attainment 8 of Non-PP Students</th> <th>Attainment 8 of PP Students</th> <th>Gap between Non-PP and PP Students</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>51.30</td> <td>40.27</td> <td>11.03</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>47.22</td> <td>31.37</td> <td>15.85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24</td> <td>48.92</td> <td>30.74</td> <td>18.18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024/25</td> <td>49.61</td> <td>32.49</td> <td>17.12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Attainment 8 of Non-PP Students	Attainment 8 of PP Students	Gap between Non-PP and PP Students	2021/22	51.30	40.27	11.03	2022/23	47.22	31.37	15.85	2023/24	48.92	30.74	18.18	2024/25	49.61	32.49	17.12
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3	<p><b><u>Social, Emotional and Mental Health</u></b> A significant proportion of disadvantaged students at The Catholic High School, Chester experience social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) challenges, which can affect their engagement, relationships, and overall readiness to learn. These difficulties often manifest as lower levels of resilience, reduced self-regulation, or increased anxiety, all of which can limit participation in lessons, attendance consistency, and wider school life.</p>																				
4	<p><b><u>Suspensions</u></b> The proportion of suspensions involving Pupil Premium students at The Catholic High School, Chester remains disproportionately high compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. Although the total number of suspensions has remained relatively stable over time, disadvantaged students continue to represent a significantly larger share of behaviour-related incidents, indicating that underlying barriers linked to engagement, regulation, and support remain unresolved.</p>																				

		Year	Total Number of Suspensions	% of Non-PP	% of PP
		2021/22	39	79.00	21.00
		2022/23	39	54.00	46.00
		2023/24	36	61.11	38.39

  

5	<p><b><u>Literacy</u></b></p> <p>Diagnostic reading data, including Sparx Reader assessments, indicate a clear disparity in literacy levels between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students at The Catholic High School, Chester. Pupil-Premium students typically record lower average reading ages and comprehension scores, with notable gaps in vocabulary acquisition, inferential understanding, and extended writing. These weaknesses limit access to complex texts, hinder progress across the curriculum, and reduce confidence in independent learning and exam literacy.</p>
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## 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
The attendance of Pupil Premium students continues to improve year on year, ensuring that disadvantaged students are in school, learning, and fully engaged in the life of the community. Reduced absence leads to fewer instances of missed learning and greater equity of opportunity across all subjects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The gap between the attendance of Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students reduces each academic year.</li> <li>By July 2027, both groups achieve attendance rates above 95%, with the attendance gap closed to 0%.</li> <li>Fewer disadvantaged students fall into the Persistent Absence category (&lt;90%).</li> <li>Improved attendance is reflected in stronger Attitude to Learning (ATL) scores and progress measures for Pupil Premium students.</li> </ul>
To narrow the attainment gap between PP and non-PP students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By Summer 2027, overall Attainment 8 outcomes for all students meet or exceed the national average, with annual progress towards this target monitored through internal tracking and data drops.</li> <li>The gap in attainment between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students achieving Grade 4+ in English and Maths reduces each year and is significantly narrowed by Summer 2027.</li> <li>Learning walks, book reviews, and departmental reviews provide clear evidence of consistently high-quality teaching, effective feedback, and strong engagement of disadvantaged learners.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal progress data demonstrates sustained improvement in the progress scores of Pupil Premium students, particularly in literacy-rich subjects.</li> </ul>
<p>To improve the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) of disadvantaged students, enabling them to engage more positively with their learning, build stronger relationships, and participate fully in school life. Enhanced wellbeing will support improved attendance, behaviour, and academic outcomes over time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved engagement in lessons and wider school life, evidenced through student voice, staff observations, and Attitude to Learning (ATL) data.</li> <li>A reduction in SEMH-related referrals and incidents requiring additional pastoral intervention.</li> <li>Increased and sustained participation in targeted SEMH interventions, mentoring, and wellbeing activities.</li> <li>Student surveys and pastoral records demonstrate greater emotional regulation, confidence, and sense of belonging among disadvantaged students.</li> </ul>
<p>To reduce the disproportionate number of suspensions among Pupil Premium students by promoting positive behaviour, early intervention, and inclusive classroom practice. The aim is to ensure that disadvantaged students experience a consistent sense of belonging, support, and fairness across all areas of school life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A year-on-year reduction in the gap between the proportion of suspensions for Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students.</li> <li>By Summer 2027, the proportion of suspensions involving disadvantaged students is in line with or below their representation in the school population.</li> <li>Behaviour data and Ready to Learn (R2L) logs show fewer repeat suspensions and improved reintegration outcomes for Pupil Premium students.</li> <li>Learning walks and pastoral reviews provide evidence of proactive behaviour management and inclusive strategies being applied consistently across classrooms.</li> </ul>
<p>Pupil Premium students develop the literacy knowledge and skills needed to access the full curriculum with confidence and independence. Through the consistent use of Sparx Reader across Key Stage 3 and high-quality teaching disadvantaged students will close the gap with their peers. By Summer 2027, there will be no significant difference in literacy levels between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students across all literacy levels. This will lead to improved outcomes across the school, particularly those with a higher literacy demand such as English, RE, and History.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COPS (Capital letters, Organisation, Punctuation, Spelling) expectations are consistently embedded and visible in all subjects.</li> <li>Sparx Reader data shows improved reading fluency, comprehension, and engagement for Pupil Premium students, with clear progress across KS3.</li> <li>Internal and external assessment data evidences narrowing gaps in literacy-related outcomes, particularly in subjects with higher literacy content.</li> <li>Targeted literacy interventions demonstrate measurable improvements in reading age, vocabulary, and written accuracy for disadvantaged students.</li> </ul>

<p>Ensure that material disadvantage at home does not limit pupils' ability to fully engage with the educational opportunities at The Catholic High School, and strengthen parental engagement so that all families are able to support their child's learning effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disadvantaged students have full access to all aspects of school life at The Catholic High School because financial barriers are removed, with increased uptake of support for uniform, equipment and educational visits.</li> <li>• Parent and carer engagement improves year on year, evidenced through stronger communication, increased participation in school events, and improved understanding of how to support learning and attendance at home.</li> </ul>
<p>Foster a school culture in which disadvantaged students feel a strong sense of belonging, value and positivity about their experience at The Catholic High School. Strengthen resilience, perseverance and aspiration so that PP students recognise the importance of education and are confident in their ability to succeed. Increase disadvantaged pupils' participation in wider school life, ensuring they have rich opportunities to develop their cultural capital and personal growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of disadvantaged students in extra-curricular activities, school trips and enrichment opportunities increases year on year and is comparable to the involvement of their non-disadvantaged peers.</li> <li>• A growing number of disadvantaged students take up leadership roles within the school community, reflecting improved confidence, aspiration and engagement.</li> <li>• PP students receive regular, visible recognition for their achievements through rewards, celebration events and positive communication with home.</li> <li>• Improved attendance for disadvantaged students is evident and can be directly linked to their increased involvement in wider school life and a stronger sense of belonging.</li> </ul>

## 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: £42,563

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b><u>Ambitious Curriculum Design</u></b>            A coherently sequenced, knowledge-rich curriculum ensures all students, particularly disadvantaged learners, build deep, secure knowledge over time. This includes explicit vocabulary instruction, deliberate sequencing, cumulative assessment and structured knowledge progression.</p>	<p><b>EEF – A Tiered Approach to School Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises that high-quality teaching and curriculum design are the most effective ways to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE Research Review Series (English, Maths, Science, History)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the importance of coherent curriculum sequencing, explicit knowledge progression, and rich vocabulary development.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF – Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning (+7 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports explicit modelling, scaffolding and guided practice within curriculum planning.</li> </ul>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</p>
<p><b><u>Enhancing Literacy across the curriculum</u></b>            Embedding disciplinary literacy approaches across subjects to strengthen reading, vocabulary, writing and oracy, ensuring disadvantaged learners can access complex curriculum content.</p>	<p><b>EEF – Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rec 1: Prioritise disciplinary literacy.</li> <li>Rec 2: Deliver explicit vocabulary instruction.</li> <li>Rec 3: Develop reading fluency and comprehension.</li> <li>Rec 4: Break down complex writing tasks.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF Toolkit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Comprehension Strategies (+6 months)</li> <li>Oral Language Interventions (+6 months)</li> </ul>	<p>2, 5</p>

	<p><b>DfE Reading Framework (2023)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises structured reading practice, fluency development and vocabulary instruction.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust – Social Mobility Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stresses that poor literacy is a major barrier to long-term attainment and life chances for disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Attitude to Learning and Behaviour Monitoring</u></b></p> <p>A consistent school behaviour system, with clear routines, expectations and data-informed monitoring, ensuring early intervention and equitable experiences for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p><b>EEF – Improving Behaviour in Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rec 2: Teach, model and rehearse behaviour expectations.</li> <li>Rec 4: Use targeted interventions appropriately.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF Toolkit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behaviour Interventions (+4 months)</li> <li>Social and Emotional Learning (+4 months)</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE – Behaviour in Schools (2022):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises consistent routines, positive relationships, and early intervention as central to improving behaviour and engagement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust – Classroom Behaviour &amp; Disadvantage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately affected by low-level disruption, making strong behaviour systems particularly impactful.</li> </ul>	2, 4
<p><b><u>Bespoke CPD for Teachers</u></b></p> <p>A comprehensive and sustained CPD programme, underpinned by the WalkThrus framework and supported through BlueSky and The National College, will develop high-quality, research-informed classroom practice across the school.</p>	<p><b>EEF – Effective Professional Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies four mechanisms of effective PD (building knowledge, motivating, modelling, embedding).</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF (2017, 2019)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies quality teaching as fundamental to reducing disparities between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.</li> </ul>	2, 5

<p>Training will focus on core elements of effective teaching. Staff will receive regular opportunities to revisit and refine these approaches through coaching, professional dialogue and deliberate practice, ensuring that strategies become embedded in daily teaching. This programme aims to strengthen pedagogy across all departments, improve the quality and consistency of teaching experienced by disadvantaged students.</p>	<p><b>DfE – Early Career Framework &amp; NPQ Frameworks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasise evidence-based instruction, responsive teaching, and feedback as core components of effective teaching.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enser (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocates for targeted CPD, noting that bespoke training has a more substantial impact than generic programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>William (2010)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asserts that improving teacher quality is the most critical factor in enhancing student outcomes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Didau (2019)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the importance of quality-first teaching in closing attainment gaps, which requires comprehensive CPD.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Coaching Programme for Professional Growth</u></b></p> <p>The coaching programme provides ongoing, personalised support for teachers, focusing on practical strategies to enhance classroom practice. Using frameworks from Teacher WalkThrus, BlueSky Education and The National College, the programme aims to build knowledge, refine teaching methods, and embed effective practices, ensuring professional development is meaningful and impactful.</p>	<p><b>EEF – Effective Professional Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies instructional coaching as one of the highest-impact approaches to improving teaching.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF Toolkit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Professional Learning (+3 months)</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust (Coe, 2014)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaching strengthens clarity of instruction.</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE National Professional Qualification Frameworks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasise coaching as a core lever for improving teacher quality and classroom climate.</li> </ul>	2, 3, 5
<p><b><u>Embedding Sparx Reader as Core KS3 Homework</u></b></p> <p>All KS3 students complete weekly Sparx Reader homework to develop reading fluency,</p>	<p><b><u>EEF – Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rec 1: Disciplinary literacy</li> <li>Rec 3: Reading fluency &amp; comprehension</li> <li>Rec 7: Structured reading practice</li> </ul>	2, 5

<p>comprehension and vocabulary through structured, personalised reading tasks. Staff use engagement and assessment data to identify gaps early and intervene where needed.</p>	<p><b>EEF Toolkit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Comprehension Strategies (+6 months)</li> <li>• Homework (Secondary) (+5 months)</li> <li>• Digital Technology (+4 months)</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE Reading Framework (2023)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured reading and fluency development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasises literacy as a key driver of closing disadvantage gaps.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Embedding Sparx Maths for KS3 and KS4 Homework</u></b></p> <p>Sparx Maths is used consistently to provide structured, personalised maths homework, reinforcing class learning, supporting retrieval practice and addressing misconceptions. Teachers use accuracy and engagement data to inform early intervention.</p>	<p><b>EEF – Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 &amp; 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rec 1: Use assessment to build understanding</li> <li>• Rec 2: Explicit instruction &amp; feedback</li> <li>• Rec 5: Encourage metacognitive thinking</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF Toolkit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mastery Learning (+5 months)</li> <li>• Feedback (+6 months)</li> <li>• Digital Technology (+4 months)</li> <li>• Homework (Secondary) (+5 months)</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE Maths Guidance (KS3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasises structured practice and fluency.</li> </ul>	2

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

Budgeted cost: £40,592

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b><u>English and Maths Intervention</u></b>            Targeted small-group and one-to-one intervention sessions are provided for students who need additional support in English and Maths. These sessions are delivered by a specialist Teaching Assistant before school and during lunchtimes. Students are referred through teacher identification, with an option for self-referral to encourage independence and engagement.</p>	<p><b>EEF – Teaching and Learning Toolkit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small Group Tuition (+4 months) and One-to-One Tuition (+5 months) show strong impact when sessions are structured, planned and delivered by trained staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF – Improving Mathematics in KS2 &amp; KS3 (2018)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommends diagnostic assessment, structured interventions and targeted support for students who struggle with core mathematical ideas.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF – Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the importance of explicit reading, vocabulary and writing support for those below age-related expectations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Marc Rowland (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises that high-quality deployment of support staff, with clear planning and alignment to classroom teaching, is essential for improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE – Interventions for Disadvantaged Pupils (2022)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stresses early identification and targeted additional teaching as key drivers in closing attainment gaps.</li> </ul>	<p>2, 5</p>
<p><b><u>Literacy Intervention</u></b>            Students complete reading assessments to evaluate their literacy levels. Students identified as performing below significantly below</p>	<p><b>EEF – Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommends targeted, high-quality small-group literacy interventions (Rec 6).</li> </ul>	<p>2, 5</p>

<p>age-expected levels attend targeted literacy intervention sessions. These sessions are conducted in small groups and overseen by a dedicated Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) who also coordinates wider school literacy strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the need for diagnostic assessment and structured reading fluency practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF Toolkit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Comprehension Strategies (+6 months)</li> <li>Phonics (+5 months) for students with decoding weaknesses</li> </ul> <p><b>Hirsch (2013)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates the strong relationship between vocabulary size, background knowledge and academic achievement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Alex Quigley (2018, 2020)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argues that vocabulary instruction, disciplinary literacy and reading fluency are essential to closing attainment gaps.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust – <i>Closing the Vocabulary Gap</i> (2019)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises vocabulary development as a key lever in improving life chances for disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul> <p><b>Marc Rowland (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights that targeted literacy support is crucial in overcoming cumulative disadvantage, especially where reading age is a barrier to accessing the curriculum.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Subsidised Revision Guides – Year 10 and 11</u></b></p> <p>Revision guides and subject resources are subsidised or fully funded for disadvantaged students to ensure equitable access to high-quality study materials. Staff support students in understanding how to use these guides effectively, linking them to metacognitive</p>	<p><b>EEF – Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning (+7 months):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stresses that students benefit significantly when taught how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning using structured resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF – Homework (Secondary) (+5 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights that access to high-quality materials strengthens the impact of homework on attainment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognises resource inequality as a major barrier for disadvantaged</li> </ul>	2

<p>strategies, retrieval practice and independent revision routines.</p>	<p>pupils and advocates equitable access to learning tools.</p> <p><b>DfE – <i>Promoting Effective Study Skills</i> (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasises explicit modelling of revision techniques to support independent learning.</li> <li>• Providing revision guides removes financial barriers and reduces the “hidden cost of learning,” allowing PP students equal opportunity to prepare for assessments.</li> </ul>	
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## Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £63,045

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b><u>Ready to Learn (R2L) Provision</u></b></p> <p>The Ready to Learn room provides a structured, supportive environment for students who require short-term removal from lessons due to behavioural or emotional needs. The focus is on reflection, regulation and reintegration, ensuring students return to lessons quickly with the skills, expectations and support needed to succeed. R2L staff work with students to rebuild relationships, understand school expectations and address the underlying barriers that contributed to removal.</p>	<p><b>Marc Rowland (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises that strong relationships and early pastoral intervention are essential to reduce disengagement and support reintegration.</li> </ul> <p><b>T. Bennett – <i>Creating a Culture</i> (DfE, 2020):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the need for clear routines and explicit teaching of behaviour expectations so that students understand how to be successful in the classroom.</li> </ul> <p><b>David Sobel (2019)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies structured reintegration and reflective support as key strategies for reducing repeat removals and preventing suspension.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pinkett &amp; Roberts (2019)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argue that proactive behaviour support systems provide students with the tools to self-regulate <i>before</i> behaviour escalates</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE – <i>Behaviour in Schools</i> (2022)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports the use of short-term internal spaces focused on reintegration, not withdrawal.</li> </ul>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>
<p><b><u>Trinity Provision</u></b></p> <p>Trinity provides targeted emotional, social and mental health support for students who need additional pastoral intervention. Students are referred by Year Leaders, and support includes mentoring, emotional literacy,</p>	<p><b>Marc Rowland (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stresses the importance of prioritising SEMH needs to enable disadvantaged learners to engage academically.</li> </ul> <p><b>David Sobel (2019)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States that effective pastoral systems are preventative, not</li> </ul>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>

<p>anxiety reduction and work on self-esteem, confidence and motivation.</p>	<p>reactive, and should intervene early to avoid escalation.</p> <p><b>Pinkett &amp; Roberts (2019)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight the need for trained pastoral staff who can provide high-quality emotional and mental health support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust – Social Mobility &amp; Wellbeing (2020)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies SEMH support as critical to closing gaps.</li> </ul> <p><b>Internal Data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Known internal data patterns show a disproportionately high number of PP students requiring SEMH support, emphasising the importance of early, structured intervention.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Attendance</u></b> The school employs an Attendance Officer to monitor attendance, provide targeted intervention and work with families to remove barriers to regular schooling. Interventions are put in place for individuals or groups who are at risk of becoming persistently absent.</p>	<p><b>Marc Rowland (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stresses that improving attendance requires trust, communication and strong relationships with families.</li> </ul> <p><b>Professor Sonia Blandford (2017)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies parental engagement as a powerful tool in improving attendance and promoting aspiration among disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE – Improving School Attendance (2022)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlights early intervention, tracking, and multi-agency support as key to reducing persistent absence.</li> </ul> <p><b>EEF – Parental Engagement (+4 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stresses that supportive home-school partnerships can improve attendance and motivation.</li> </ul>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>

<p><b><u>Use of Power BI for Attendance</u></b></p> <p>Power BI supports refined, real-time tracking and analysis of attendance data, enabling staff to identify emerging concerns earlier, target specific groups, and intervene quickly.</p>	<p><b>DfE – Using Data in Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises that accurate, accessible data systems enable timely intervention for vulnerable pupils.</li> </ul> <p><b>Marc Rowland (2021)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the importance of combining data with relational work to address attendance barriers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Professor Sonia Blandford (2017)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinforces the role of data-informed practice in tackling disadvantage.</li> </ul>	<p>1, 2</p>
<p><b><u>Financial Support for Educational Visits</u></b></p> <p>Disadvantaged students receive subsidised or fully funded access to educational visits and curriculum-linked experiences to ensure equity of opportunity.</p>	<p><b>Baars, Shaw, Mulcahy &amp; Menzies (NFER, 2018)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural capital and enriched learning experiences significantly improve engagement and long-term outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sutton Trust – <i>Cultural Capital &amp; Social Mobility</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies educational visits as critical for broadening horizons and improving attainment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Internal School Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal school review identified a disparity in visit participation between PP and non-PP students; financial support removes this barrier.</li> </ul>	<p>1, 3</p>
<p><b><u>Year 7 Residential</u></b></p> <p>Year 7 students attend a residential that builds resilience, teamwork and belonging. PP students receive subsidised places to ensure full participation.</p>	<p><b>Sutton Trust – <i>Life Skills &amp; Social Mobility (2017):</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrichment activities support confidence, resilience and belonging, improving long-term academic outcomes.</li> </ul> <p><b>DfE – <i>Character Education Framework (2019):</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises residential and enrichment experiences as powerful ways to build character and engagement.</li> </ul>	<p>1, 3</p>

	<p><b>Internal Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal evidence shows students who attend the residential integrate quicker, feel more connected to the school community and show stronger early engagement.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Alternative Provision (AP) Support</u></b></p> <p>Where appropriate, students access high-quality alternative provision on a short-term or part-time basis. This is reviewed regularly with the aim of successful reintegration. Transport and equipment costs are covered for disadvantaged students.</p>	<p><b>DfE – <i>Alternative Provision: Effective Practice</i> (2017)</b></p> <p>AP improves engagement, behaviour and outcomes for students whose needs cannot be met within mainstream settings alone.</p> <p><b>Marc Rowland (2021)</b></p> <p>Stresses maintaining connection with the home school, structured monitoring and reintegration plans.</p> <p><b>Sobel (2019)</b></p> <p>Reinforces the value of nurture, relationship-building and clear pathways back into mainstream.</p> <p><b>Sutton Trust</b></p> <p>Highlights the need for equitable access to high-quality AP to avoid further disadvantage.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>

**Total budgeted cost: £146,200**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

#### **Attendance**

Attendance for disadvantaged pupils remains one of the school's most significant strategic priorities. While long-term trends show improvement, the picture is variable and has been affected by staffing changes. Between 2021/22 and 2023/24 the PP and non-PP attendance gap narrowed from 11.76% to 8.80%, reflecting strengthened processes and more effective pastoral monitoring. However, 2024/25 data shows the gap widening again to 12.5%, with PP attendance falling to 80.8%, compared with 93.3% for non-PP students.

A term-by-term comparison shows that PP attendance declined across all three terms of 2024/25, with the sharpest drop in spring and summer.

Despite this, 2023-24 and the start of 2024-25 saw clear improvements, supported by a more robust, data-driven and consistent approach. The school made increased use of Notice to Improve (NTI) letters and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for families where attendance did not improve despite support, resulting in improved attendance for several PP households. Alongside this, first-day calls, attendance panels, home visits and multi-agency work helped address barriers and improve engagement with harder-to-reach families.

Progress slowed from November 2024 due to staffing issues, reducing capacity for day-to-day monitoring and follow-up. Capacity has now been restored with a new Attendance Officer in post from September 2025, who is prioritising relationship building with PP families and strengthening early identification of emerging concerns. Early indicators show that persistent absence among PP students will require renewed focus; however, the re-established systems and improved data tracking now provide a strong foundation moving forwards.

#### **Attainment and Progress of Pupil Premium Students**

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils show a fluctuating but improving trend across the past three years. The PP attainment gap was 0.89 grades in 2022/23, widened to 1.34 grades in 2023/24, and improved again to 1.01 grades in 2024/25. The 2023/24 dip coincided with a more complex cohort profile marked by weaker attendance, higher SEND prevalence and increased SEMH needs. In response, the school strengthened attendance procedures, expanded academic intervention and adopted a more proactive pastoral approach.

Subject-level analysis identifies the widest gaps in English, Maths, Geography and digital subjects, all of which rely heavily on extended writing, vocabulary, organisation and independent study, areas where PP students nationally face the greatest barriers. The school's reading-age analysis confirms that literacy remains a defining challenge: PP students make up 30.6% of students below expected reading age and 36.7% of students significantly below, despite representing 21.5% of the cohort. This over-representation becomes increasingly pronounced in KS4, directly affecting access to GCSE content and limiting the likelihood of achieving grade 5+ in English and Maths.

Conversely, PP pupils perform more strongly in structured, highly scaffolded subjects such as Art, Food Technology and Textiles. They have also benefitted from the tiered approach in

Science. In 2024/25, PP pupils outperformed non-PP peers in Combined Trilogy Science, reflecting the strength of the tiered Science curriculum. Strategic tiering ensures disadvantaged pupils are placed on the correct pathway, supported by precisely sequenced content, strong modelling and structured retrieval, leading to improved confidence and secure knowledge over time.

Curriculum refinement has also removed structural barriers. Creative iMedia, previously the subject with the widest disadvantage gap, has been replaced with Media Studies (first exam in 2027), a more balanced and accessible course with clearer scaffolding and reduced reliance on extended digital coursework.

Looking forward, the school is prioritising literacy and numeracy from KS3, including strengthened vocabulary instruction, improved reading instruction, and the introduction of longer-term cumulative Sparx homework to secure foundational skills. The new 12-indicator flag system implemented this year ensures that early risk is identified quickly, enabling Curriculum Leaders, Year Leaders, classroom teachers and form tutors to intervene with precision.

### **Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Outcomes**

SEMH support for disadvantaged students has strengthened substantially over the last two years, with both access and outcomes improving. In 2023–24, 42% of ELSA plan users and 46% of provision-level ELSA participants were PP students, which is above their proportion of the school population, demonstrating good access to support. PP pupils made expected progress across these programmes.

Early 2024-25 data indicates a marked improvement. 60% of ELSA plan users are now PP students, and PP pupils are achieving more than expected progress (+0.67), significantly outperforming non-PP peers (+0.08). This trend is consistent across multiple SEMH strands, including anger management, emotional regulation, managing strong feelings, relationships work and ESNB (Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance) support.

Access to wider SEMH provision is also strong. In 2023–24, disadvantaged pupils accounted for 29% of before-school and break/lunch Trinity access, with both PP and non-PP students achieving +1 (more than expected) outcomes. In 2024–25, PP students represent 30% of lesson-time ARC/Trinity access, with continued high impact (+1 on average).

Together, Trinity, ARC and ELSA provision show a clear upward trajectory in both uptake and impact for disadvantaged pupils. Improved emotional regulation, reductions in dysregulation, strengthened engagement and better readiness to learn are contributing positively to reintegration, behaviour and academic participation. This aligns clearly with reductions in repeat incidents and improved pastoral stability for PP students who engage with intervention.

### **Behaviour, Attitude to Learning and Suspensions**

Since September 2023 the behaviour system has become fully embedded, providing consistent routines and expectations across all subjects. This improved consistency is supporting disadvantaged pupils more effectively and reducing variability between classrooms.

ATL (Attitude to Learning) data is now used diagnostically, forming a central part of Year Leader line-management meetings. Emerging disengagement, particularly among PP pupils, is

identified early, triggering timely referral into Trinity or other pastoral pathways. Form tutors use regular ATL updates to mentor targeted PP students, while Curriculum Leaders triangulate ATL trends with academic and behaviour data to identify underlying causes of underperformance.

Evidence from 2023–24 and early 2024–25 shows that where early intervention processes were activated quickly, PP students demonstrated improved engagement and reduced behavioural escalation. Subject-level tracking has strengthened communication across teams and ensured that concerns are followed up consistently.

In 2021/22, PP students accounted for 21% of suspensions, below their representation in the school population. This rose sharply in 2022/23 to 46%, reflecting a cohort with higher pastoral need, weaker attendance and increased SEMH complexity.

In 2023/24, the proportion of suspensions involving disadvantaged pupils fell to 38.39%, despite the total number of suspensions decreasing only slightly. This represents a notable reduction in disproportionality and is directly linked to strengthened early intervention, improved behaviour consistency across departments, targeted SEMH support (ELSA, Trinity, ARC) and more effective reintegration following R2L.

Although PP students remain over-represented in suspensions relative to their share of the school cohort, the improvement from 46% to 38.39% indicates that the combined behaviour, pastoral and SEMH strategies are increasingly effective at reducing escalation and supporting sustained engagement. Maintaining this downward trajectory will require continued consistency of routines, rapid support activation and close alignment between academic, attendance and pastoral systems.

### **Literacy Outcomes**

Reading Age analysis for 2025–26 highlights literacy as one of the most significant barriers for disadvantaged students. Across Years 7–10, 20–27% of all students are below age-related reading expectations. However, PP pupils are disproportionately represented. PP students represent:

- 11.1% of Above Average readers
- 21.0% of Average readers
- 24.5% of Slightly Below
- 30.6% of Below
- 36.7% of Significantly Below

This shows a steep downward gradient, with PP students increasingly over-represented in each lower band and significantly under-represented among the strongest readers. The implications for curriculum access, particularly in English, History, Geography and RE, are profound and directly linked to the attainment gaps noted earlier.

The overlap with SEND, particularly SEND K, compounds disadvantage. Many of the weakest readers are both PP and SEND, necessitating dual intervention.

In response, the school is prioritising early KS3 literacy intervention, explicit vocabulary instruction, targeted reading support, and tighter monitoring of reading-age progress. Longer-

term Sparx homework in KS3 will further strengthen literacy and numeracy foundations, supporting improved fluency, retrieval, and extended writing skills needed for success at KS4.