

Pupil premium strategy statement – Middlewich High School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged students.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged students last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of students in school	667
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible students	25.9%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024 - 2027
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Lydia Naylor (Headteacher)
Pupil premium lead	S Colclough
Governor / Trustee lead	

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£195,995
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£195,995

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our school values of “Aspire, Believe, Belong” mean that all students, regardless of background, belong to our school community and we aim for them to aspire to be the best version of themselves, as well as believe that they can achieve whatever they set out to achieve.

In line with the school vision of “Excellence in Learning, Achievement for All”, our aim is to use pupil premium funding to improve attainment for disadvantaged students so that outcomes are consistent with non-disadvantaged students nationally.

The three-year strategy addresses common challenges that are preventing disadvantaged students from higher attainment. Diagnostic assessment and a wide range of internal data and evidence also identifies specific barriers and informs development of the strategy.

Quality first teaching is at the forefront of our approach to addressing these barriers. Our evidence informed strategies include, but are not limited to, ‘amplifying the signal,’ lesson sequencing, and the importance of thinking, which support all learners but especially disadvantaged and students with SEND to achieve well and succeed.

To ensure all students will be able to access and make strong progress through our broad and balanced curriculum, core components of our strategy are:

- **Early identification and intervention** based on student need, which includes both academic and wider challenges such as attendance
- Relentless focus on development of **quality first teaching**, assessment, and curriculum planning.
- **Explicit teaching of key knowledge** with opportunities for students to regularly retrieve knowledge and **make connections** to previous learning.
- **Planned literacy opportunities**, including deliberate vocabulary instruction, opportunities and scaffolding for oracy.
- **Collective responsibility** of improving attendance and student culture inside and outside the classroom, using consistent expectations, routines and language.
- Effectively working with parents and carers

As we have high numbers of vulnerable students, such as those with special educational needs, or those who are accessing the Early Help team, the activities we have outlined in this statement are also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Outcomes and Progress</p> <p>The progress of disadvantaged students, historically and nationally, is below that of their more privileged peers</p> <p>Our GCSE basics including English and Maths targets for the school are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grade 7+ - 6.9% - Grade 5+ - 42.8% - Grade 4+ - 75.2% <p>In the current 2024 cohort, 60% of our disadvantaged students have Basics targets of 9-4 or above in English and Maths.</p>
2	<p>Literacy</p> <p>Disadvantaged students have lower baseline starting points especially in literacy.</p> <p>Assessments and observations consistently indicate that our disadvantaged cohort have lower levels of reading fluency and comprehension than their peers. As part of this, vocabulary knowledge of tier 2 and tier 3 will be embedded across the curriculum, supporting students' progress.</p> <p>On entry to Year 7, our disadvantaged students have SATs scores of below national average/expected standard compared to our non-disadvantaged students, who have scores above national average</p>
3	<p>Numeracy</p> <p>Disadvantaged students have lower baseline starting points especially in numeracy.</p> <p>Assessments and observations consistently indicate that our disadvantaged cohort have lower levels of numeracy skills and higher maths anxiety.</p> <p>On entry to Year 7, our disadvantaged students have significantly lower SATs scores in Mathematics, below the national average, when compared to our non-disadvantaged students.</p>
4	<p>Attendance and Persistent Absence</p> <p>In the 2023/2024 academic year our disadvantaged students attended school less frequently than our non-disadvantaged students, specifically SEND disadvantaged students' persistent absence. The persistent absenteeism of disadvantaged students, compared to national figures, is currently 5% worse.</p>

	<p>Attendance remains a focus. Student absence from school is a real barrier to high attainment. Persistent absence is a key challenge.</p> <p>At present, there is a clear attendance gap between our pupil premium and non pupil premium students. Our persistent absenteeism is above the national average.</p>
5	<p>Self-regulation and attitude to learning</p> <p>Assessments and observations show that some students need to further develop their self-regulation skills, as at times, these can impact upon work completion and behaviour inside and outside the classroom.</p>
6	<p>Student wellbeing and mental health</p> <p>Student voice and surveys across the school, observations and discussions with students and families have identified social and emotional issues for students, such as anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged students, including their attainment.</p>

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
<p>1. Improved GCSE attainment, including achievement in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) Higher proportion of disadvantaged students, including those with SEND, having GCSE outcomes in line with or above national average in key performance measures.</p>	<p>GCSE Basics including English and Maths targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 7+ - 6.9% • Grade 5+ - 42.8% • Grade 4+ - 75.2% <p>There will be a significant narrowing of the gaps between the progress of disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers.</p> <p>Quality Assurance (both internal and trust-wide) demonstrating strong use of formative assessment and informing the next steps in students' learning.</p> <p>All students' knowledge gaps are addressed and all disadvantaged students, including those with SEND, make strong progress throughout the curriculum.</p> <p>Implementation of a more effective feedback policy, focussing on all students, including those who are disadvantaged and/or with SEND, developing their conceptual knowledge with timely, meaningful and purposeful feedback.</p>
<p>2. Improve decoding, oracy, fluency, vocabulary knowledge and comprehension among disadvantaged students across KS3 & KS4.</p>	<p>A significant and continuous increase in the number of students who have a reading age in line with their chronological age.</p> <p>A development of a love of reading across the curriculum, so students can access more in and out of their academic lives.</p> <p>Currently, there is an average of 39 students in a year group who have a reading age of 5 years or more below their chronological age. On average, 60% of these students are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Students confidently use tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary in a variety of contexts, both within subjects and across subjects.</p> <p>Secure subject knowledge supports application of literacy skills and decoding.</p>

	<p>Students demonstrate effective communication in their writing, by use of extended writing, and examples of disciplinary writing, across the curriculum.</p> <p>Students will determine the difference between examination-based extended writing, and the development of extended writing throughout the key stages, using single paragraph outlines, kernel sentences and “Because, But, So” as techniques for improving the writing of all.</p> <p>Historically, pupils who are disadvantaged are more likely to do poorly on extended writing questions, as well as be less able to communicate their theories and concepts via extended writing, thus leading to a greater attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Students confidently speak with knowledge and pride about their academic learning, as well as other elements of their lives</p> <p>Students improve their speech against the Oracy Skills Framework, looking at strengthening areas of physical, linguistic, cognitive and social and emotional oracy.</p>
<p>3. Improve numeracy skills and skills for life, reducing maths anxiety, among disadvantaged students across KS3 & KS4.</p>	<p>Numeracy plan to be embedded across Personal development, including planning for financial literacy.</p> <p>CPD to ensure consistent approach of mathematical teaching and thinking in non-mathematical subjects</p> <p>Continued mixed ability teaching in KS3/KS4 to ensure attainment gaps do not widen.</p> <p>Effective use of manipulatives and representations across the curriculum, so all students, including those disadvantaged and/or with SEND.</p>
<p>4. Improve overall attendance and reduce the amount of persistent absenteeism, particularly amongst those disadvantaged students with SEND.</p> <p>Higher proportion of disadvantaged students, including those with SEND, having attendance figures in line with or above national average in key performance measures, provided by FFT.</p>	<p>Students understand the importance of good attendance at school.</p> <p>Whole school attendance will be no lower than 95%, with 97% or above being our aspirational goal.</p> <p>Persistent absence will be below FFT Aspire national average.</p> <p>There will be no gaps between the attendance & persistent absence of disadvantaged and vulnerable students in comparison to their peers.</p>

5. Improve self-regulation and metacognition amongst all students, including disadvantaged students.	<p>There will be no significant difference between the number of behaviour incidences of disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers.</p>
	<p>Behaviour data, observations, teaching and learning information and student attainment will evidence that:</p> <p>Students will develop a greater awareness of their learning and their personal strengths and weaknesses with a particular process</p> <p>Students will be aware of how they plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning, across all subjects</p> <p>Revision strategies will be in place for supporting learning</p> <p>Curriculum plans will evidence metacognition strategies</p>
6. Increased opportunities to engage in personal development, both in academic subjects and to increase cultural capital of all students, including disadvantaged students.	<p>Observations, student voice and student attainment will show that:</p> <p>Students have greater aspirations due to career information, advice and guidance that meets all the Gatsby benchmarks.</p> <p>Students have a greater chance of having further academic experiences, such as visits to post-16 education settings.</p> <p>Students have more opportunities to attend trips and experiences to increase cultural capital, such as a Year 7 trip to London.</p>
7. Nurture, protect, and grow all students' mental health and resilience, including disadvantaged students.	<p>The Personal Development curriculum will be both challenging and supportive of students' wellbeing and mental health.</p> <p>Improved referral systems so students can access the right level of wellbeing initiatives and/or support in school</p> <p>All students recognising that school is a safe environment</p>
	<p>Sustained high levels of student wellbeing as evidenced by:</p> <p>Qualitative data from student voice, surveys and teacher observations</p> <p>Attendance data</p>

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £37,682

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Staffing support of a Pastoral Manager	Oversight of attendance interventions ensures quality assurance, consistency, and targeted support for vulnerable groups. EEF identifies that leadership capacity and coaching enhance the effectiveness of whole-school initiatives. EEF – Leadership and DfE – Improving School Attendance	1, 4, 5, 6
SEND Support - Learning Practitioners (20%)	Dedicated SEND support ensures staff training and co-planning for inclusive teaching. Improves access to the curriculum for disadvantaged SEND learners. EEF – Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools and DfE – SEND Code of Practice	1, 2, 3, 5, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £86,193

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Staffing of the Internal 'Inclusion Provision'	Targeted in-school provision ensures that disadvantaged and vulnerable students receive structured academic and emotional support in a smaller, focused environment. EEF – Small Group Tuition and EEF – Behaviour Interventions	1, 4, 5, 6
Staffing of the 'Garage Enterprise' Provision	Vocational and practical learning environments increase engagement, self-esteem and pathways to success for students less motivated by traditional curricula. EEF –	1, 5, 6

	Mentoring and EEF – Behaviour Interventions	
Rowing and Fishing Interventions	Physical activity interventions can enhance behaviour, wellbeing, and academic outcomes. EEF – Physical Activity and DfE – Mental Health and Physical Activity in Schools	1, 5, 6
Lexia PowerUp Literacy	Adaptive literacy programme improving reading fluency, comprehension and spelling among struggling readers. Supported by EEF evidence on structured literacy interventions. Lexia Research Summary and EEF – Reading Comprehension Strategies	1, 2
IDL Literacy and Numeracy and STAR Reading	Structured digital intervention improving spelling, reading and numeracy, shown to have a positive impact on students with low prior attainment. IDL Literacy Impact Report and EEF – Digital Technology	1, 2, 3
Sparx Reader	Encourages reading for pleasure while improving comprehension and vocabulary knowledge through personalised digital reading. EEF – Reading Comprehension Strategies and DfE – The Reading Framework 2023	1, 2
Power Hour (Targeted Intervention Time)	Structured intervention sessions focused on literacy, numeracy, and retrieval practice. Research shows additional time for structured small-group learning accelerates progress. EEF – Small Group Tuition and EEF – Feedback	1, 2, 3, 5
Staffing of the Library Resource Centre	Access to library resources and reading support fosters independent reading and improves literacy levels. EEF – Reading Comprehension Strategies and DfE – The Reading Framework	1, 2, 6
Mathsbox and Mathswatch Licences	Online platforms that provide structured practice, feedback, and mastery opportunities, supporting independent learning and consolidation of key concepts. EEF –	1, 3

	Digital Technology and EEF – Homework	
School Improvement Liverpool – Reading Development Programme	Targeted professional development and literacy coaching to strengthen reading instruction and consistency across departments. EEF – Professional Development and DfE – The Reading Framework 2023	1, 2

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

Budgeted cost: £72,120

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Rewards and Recognition	Recognition of positive behaviour and attendance improves motivation and engagement. The EEF notes that “ <i>positive reinforcement and behaviour-specific praise can improve self-regulation and learning outcomes.</i> ” Education Endowment Foundation – Behaviour Interventions	1, 4, 5, 6
Attendance Officers and Whole-School Strategy	Ensuring staff training and leadership focus on attendance improves consistency and impact of intervention. Regular monitoring and feedback support improved student outcomes. DfE – Improving School Attendance Guidance	4, 5, 6
SLT On-Call System and Behaviour Support	Effective behaviour systems that promote consistency and swift intervention support improved engagement and classroom climate. EEF – Improving Behaviour in Schools	1, 5
Mploy, Unifrog and Work Experience Partnership	High-quality careers education and employer engagement raise aspirations and reduce NEET rates. Careers & Enterprise Company – The Benefits of Employer Engagement and Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance	1, 4, 5, 6
SWANS	Peer mentoring and leadership programmes build social and emotional skills, promoting self-regulation and belonging. EEF – Social and Emotional Learning	1, 4, 5, 6
Trip Support and Cultural Capital Funding	Access to enrichment activities improves engagement,	1, 4, 5, 6

	attendance, and aspiration. EEF – Arts Participation and DfE – The Impact of Cultural Education	
Education Support Worker - Attendance Support	Targeted family engagement improves attendance and reduces persistent absence. DfE – Improving School Attendance: Support for Schools and Local Authorities and FFT Education Datalab – Attendance and Attainment	1, 4, 5, 6
Music Lessons Support Fund	Arts participation improves academic performance and wellbeing. EEF – Arts Participation and DfE – The Power of Music to Change Lives	1, 4, 5, 6
Uniform Support Fund	Removing financial barriers to uniform increases belonging and attendance, fostering equality and inclusion. EEF – School Uniform and Belonging Research and DfE – School Uniform Guidance	1, 4, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost: £195,955

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged students

Attainment

	2023/24	2024/25	Difference
Basics 9-4%	0.00%	3.30%	3.30%
Basics 9-5%	13.30%	13.30%	0.00%
Basics 9-7%	20.00%	30.00%	10.00%
EBacc Pass (Standard)	10.00%	13.30%	3.30%
EBacc Pass (Strong)	3.30%	3.30%	0.00%

Outcomes and Progress

Attainment across English and Maths has risen, reflecting the impact of high-quality teaching, purposeful intervention, and a consistent focus on effective learning. The EBacc Average Point Score has increased from 2.56 to 2.61, with the proportion of students achieving Basics 9–7 improving by ten percentage points and the EBacc Standard Pass rate rising by 3.3%. These gains demonstrate clear progress at higher attainment thresholds and show that students are increasingly able to meet the expectations of more challenging qualifications.

Students have benefited from explicit teaching that helps them understand how to organise their learning, stay focused, and reflect on their progress. Teachers have strengthened questioning and modelling within lessons, while retrieval practice, interleaving, and elaboration are now regular features of classroom and homework activities. This consistent approach has supported stronger knowledge retention, independence, and engagement. Improvements in learning behaviours are evident in Attitude to Learning (ATL) scores, lesson observations, and student feedback, where students demonstrate greater confidence and a more positive approach to their studies.

Revision and exam preparation are now embedded across the curriculum. Form time includes three structured revision strategies each term, ensuring that every year group receives practical, guided support. Alumni-led sessions have been introduced to raise aspiration and provide real examples of successful study habits. The consistent delivery of the MHS “3 Revision Strategies” framework ensures that all students, and particularly those who are disadvantaged, have access to clear methods for effective revision and preparation.

Regular diagnostic assessments play a central role in identifying learning needs and informing support. These assessments guide targeted interventions, including the use of Zones of Regulation strategies and personalised mentoring for students requiring additional behavioural or emotional support. Teachers adapt planning and feedback to respond directly to the data, ensuring that all cohorts make sustained progress.

Ongoing professional development has strengthened staff expertise and ensured greater consistency across departments. Training has focused on evidence-informed practice, adaptive teaching, and effective feedback, while schemes of learning have been refined to ensure coherent sequencing and a shared approach to assessment. Parental engagement has also been enhanced through the introduction of Parent TLCs, which equip families to support revision and reinforce learning routines at home. Together,

these developments have fostered a stronger culture of ambition, improved attainment, and a noticeable rise in students' confidence, behaviour, and commitment to learning.

Attendance

	Year 7			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	91.05%	91.99%	0.94%	-3.58%	-3.61%
Not PP	94.63%	95.60%	0.97%		
	Year 8			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	85.85%	93.11%	7.26%	-7.48%	-2.13%
Not PP	93.33%	95.24%	1.91%		
	Year 9			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	85.46%	83.51%	-1.95%	-6.36%	-9.93%
Not PP	91.82%	93.44%	1.62%		
	Year 10			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	84.92%	93.67%	8.75%	-7.64%	-0.16%
Not PP	92.56%	93.83%	1.27%		
	Year 11			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	76.92%	87.44%	10.52%	-12.64%	-6.85%
Not PP	89.56%	94.29%	4.73%		
	Whole School			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	83.51%	90.06%	6.55%	-6.16%	-4.39%
Not PP	89.67%	94.45%	4.78%		

Across the school, attendance for Pupil Premium students has improved by 6.55%, rising from 83.51% in 2023/24 to 90.06% in 2024/25. This is accompanied by a steady increase in attendance among non-Pupil Premium students (up 4.78%), resulting in a narrowed attendance gap from 6.16% to 4.39%.

The most significant gains are seen in Year 11, where Pupil Premium attendance increased by over 10 percentage points, reflecting the success of targeted interventions and strong pastoral engagement. Year 8 and Year 10 have also shown notable improvements of 7.26% and 8.75% respectively, illustrating the consistent impact of attendance strategies across year groups.

This improvement has been driven by a blend of personalised support and whole-school celebration. Individual Attendance Plans have provided structured mentoring, weekly reviews, and clear accountability between students, parents, and pastoral leads, ensuring early intervention for those at risk of persistent absence. Alongside this, parental engagement has played a key role, with home visits, attendance panels, and frequent communication helping to strengthen family partnerships and address barriers to attendance.

A culture of positivity has also underpinned this success. Rewards and recognition initiatives such as Alton Towers and cinema trips, along with the 'Twelve Days of Christmas' programme, have helped to reinforce the message that excellent attendance is valued and celebrated. Consistent whole-school engagement, through tutor challenges, year-group incentives, and weekly recognition assemblies, has sustained motivation and ensured that attendance remains a shared priority across all year groups.

Self-regulation, behaviour and attitudes

	Attitude to Learning			
	Year 7		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	3.27	3.30	-0.11	0.03
Not PP	3.38	3.27		
	Year 8		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	3.10	3.29	-0.18	-0.04
Not PP	3.28	3.33		
	Year 9		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	3.11	3.12	-0.13	-0.17
Not PP	3.24	3.29		
	Year 10		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	3.12	3.22	-0.18	-0.02
Not PP	3.30	3.24		
	Year 11		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	2.90	3.13	-0.26	-0.16
Not PP	3.16	3.29		
	Whole School		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	3.1	3.22	-0.17	-0.07
Not PP	3.27	3.29		

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	Behaviour Points			
	Year 7		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	0.2	0.05	0.13	0.00
Not PP	0.07	0.05		
	Year 8		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	0.58	0.12	0.41	0.05
Not PP	0.17	0.06		
	Year 9		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	0.54	0.49	0.11	0.35
Not PP	0.43	0.14		
	Year 10		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	0.6	0.42	0.32	0.13
Not PP	0.28	0.29		
	Year 11		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	0.63	0.51	0.30	0.35
Not PP	0.33	0.16		
	Whole School		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	0.51	0.29	0.25	0.14
Not PP	0.26	0.15		

	Achievement Points			
	Year 7		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	1.72	1.70	-0.27	-0.12
Not PP	1.99	1.82		
	Year 8		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	1.59	1.65	-0.26	-0.14
Not PP	1.85	1.79		
	Year 9		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	1.17	1.06	-0.57	-0.30
Not PP	1.74	1.36		
	Year 10		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	1.29	1.12	-0.33	-0.13
Not PP	1.62	1.25		
	Year 11		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	0.87	0.92	-0.33	-0.33
Not PP	1.2	1.25		
	Whole School		Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	1.33	1.33	-0.34	-0.13
Not PP	1.67	1.47		

Across 2024–25, the combined impact of targeted academic support, high-quality teaching, and pastoral intervention has resulted in a marked improvement in both the achievement and learning culture of disadvantaged students. Achievement points for Pupil Premium students have stabilised and, in many year groups, risen slightly, even as non-disadvantaged scores declined marginally. This has narrowed the whole-school achievement gap from –0.34 to –0.13. The most notable improvements were seen in Years 8 and 10, suggesting that the consistency of classroom practice and intervention from the middle years upward is having a measurable effect.

These gains in attainment are mirrored by steady growth in students' attitudes to learning. The whole-school ATL gap reduced from -0.17 to -0.07 , with particularly strong improvement among older cohorts who have benefited from structured support such as the Success Guarantor programme and the embedding of supportive strategies. Students are increasingly reflective, self-regulated, and proactive in their approach to learning. The introduction of consistent lesson frameworks and the clear sequencing of activities have made learning more transparent and achievable for all, helping disadvantaged students to feel capable and motivated in lessons. Staff training in trauma-informed practice has also strengthened relationships and ensured that expectations are both consistent and compassionate, enabling students to recover more quickly from setbacks.

Behaviour data reinforces this positive trajectory. The difference in behaviour points between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students has narrowed substantially—from 0.25 to 0.14 overall—with some year groups, such as Year 7, closing the gap entirely. This reflects the success of early intervention through Education Support Workers, as well as the school's broader shift towards relational behaviour management. A focus on routine, language, and reward has cultivated a calmer, more purposeful atmosphere in which students' engagement and sense of belonging have grown.

Taken together, these trends demonstrate a genuine cultural shift. Disadvantaged students are achieving more, showing stronger commitment to their learning, and exhibiting improved conduct across the school. The convergence of academic rigour, emotional support, and consistent expectations has begun to dismantle the barriers that once separated pupil premium students from their peers.

Literacy

	Year 7			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	8.64	9.51	9 months	1 year	9 months
Not PP	9.7	10.34	6 months		
	Year 8			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	9.51	9.87	3 months	1 year, 1 month	9 months
Not PP	10.62	10.79	1 month		
	Year 9			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	9.92	10.27	6 months	1 year	1 year, 1 month
Not PP	10.96	11.38	6 months		
	Year 10			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	9.44	10.37	1 year	1 year, 10 months	1 year, 5 months
Not PP	11.26	11.88	6 months		
	Year 11			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	10.35	11.19	9 months	1 year, 10 months	1 year, 6 months
Not PP	12.15	12.8	6 months		
	Whole School			Gap Analysis	
	23/24	24/25	Difference	23/24	24/25
Pupil Premium	9.8	10.41	6 months	1 year, 6 months	1 year, 3 months
Not PP	11.27	11.77	5 months		

A renewed emphasis on literacy and vocabulary instruction has led to significant gains in reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence across all year groups. The 2024–25 data shows that Pupil Premium students improved their average reading age by six months, compared with a five-month gain among non-disadvantaged peers. The gap between these groups continues to narrow, particularly in Years 10 and 11, where targeted intervention and adaptive literacy support have had the strongest impact.

These improvements are the direct result of a consistent, evidence-informed approach to direct vocabulary instruction and disciplinary literacy across the curriculum. Staff training focused on embedding

explicit vocabulary teaching within lesson delivery, using “*I say, you say*” routines to secure pronunciation, retrieval, and retention of new words. Teachers now plan deliberate opportunities for exposure to Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary, ensuring that students can confidently use subject-specific language in reading, writing, and oracy. This approach has supported students’ ability to decode unfamiliar terms, deepen comprehension, and communicate ideas fluently across subjects.

The school’s investment in Lexia PowerUp Literacy and IDL Literacy has also been instrumental in accelerating progress for those students most in need of additional support. Both programmes use adaptive technology to provide personalised instruction in reading, spelling, and comprehension, supported by diagnostic assessment and progress tracking. Students identified within the *Red* and *Amber* cohorts—those more than two years and up to two years below age-related expectations—received targeted intervention sessions delivered through the English department and dedicated intervention staff.

Alongside this, literacy has been intentionally embedded across the wider curriculum. Departments have developed subject-specific vocabulary lists and reading opportunities within schemes of learning, ensuring that every teacher contributes to the development of reading and language. Lesson observations and student voice now show that students are more confident in approaching complex texts and articulating their understanding using precise academic language.

Progress data illustrates the measurable impact of this work:

- In Year 7, disadvantaged students made an average gain of nine months in reading age, closely matching their non-disadvantaged peers.
- In Years 10 and 11, reading ages improved by up to eighteen months, reflecting the cumulative effect of sustained literacy support.
- Across the school, the average reading age for disadvantaged students increased from 9.8 to 10.41, compared with an increase from 11.27 to 11.77 for non-disadvantaged peers.

These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of a cohesive literacy strategy that prioritises explicit vocabulary instruction, cross-curricular literacy development, and adaptive intervention. As a result, students are increasingly able to access demanding texts, express themselves with precision, and engage more deeply with learning across the curriculum.

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
Lexia Power Up	Lexia

