

Pupil premium strategy statement

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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Aylestone School
Number of pupils in school	450
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	35%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024/25 – 2026/27
Date this statement was updated and published	December 2024 Annual review updated and completed December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	Simon Robertson, Executive Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Phil Lewis, Assistant Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Georgie Griffin

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 145 315
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£ 0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£ 145 315

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is for all children to leave for the next stage of their education with the confidence and aptitude to make their own valuable contribution to their community.

The focus of our pupil premium strategy is supporting our children, regardless of their background, in their learning and access to the wider curriculum. Our intention is to identify those students who face additional challenges and provide support they require to make the progress they need.

Our three-tiered approach (teaching, targeted academic interventions and wider strategies), guided by research from OFSTED and the Education Endowment Fund (amongst others) gives our pupil premium strategy the guidance to enable us to meet our outcomes.

As an attainment gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils has remained, we will continue to focus and build on the improvements in quality first teaching. This means to ensure that all lessons deliver a universal offer for all pupils, so that any remaining gaps within school and compared to national data continue to be reduced.

We also recognise the need to further develop the school-wide strategy in improving reading and literacy skills. The literacy strategy's aim is to improve the reading fluency, comprehension and vocabulary of all students. We will use New Group Reading Test (NGRT) information to pinpoint precise gaps pupils have with their reading, give appropriate support to gain literacy skills, and encourage pupils to read more widely too. Staff will be given CPD to develop their teaching of literacy – specifically disciplinary literacy and reading practices. And most significantly, the school will invest in a new Tutor Reading Programme to expose all children to a wider range of literary sources, vocabulary and therefore improve the literacy ability of our disadvantaged students.

We aim to address the challenges that attendance and behaviour can present in the face of children's academic progress. Continued school-wide focus on these challenges, coupled with targeted support, will help students improve their engagement in learning at school, and at home.

And by further widening the outlook and aspiration of all of our students; we will ensure our pastoral work reflects our continued commitment to well-being, aspiration and that our curriculum work will give students the skills and drive to succeed during, and beyond, their time at Aylestone.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge																				
1	<p>Disadvantaged students join Aylestone with lower cognitive ability than their non-disadvantaged peers, looking at their CAT test scores taken in the autumn term of year 7.</p> <p>See table below for comparisons</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Current year group</th> <th>Mean CAT4 score Disadvantaged</th> <th>Mean CAT4 score Non-disadvantaged</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>94.0</td> <td>98.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>93.6</td> <td>97.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td>95.7</td> <td>100.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>93.2</td> <td>101.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>95.9</td> <td>100.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Current year group	Mean CAT4 score Disadvantaged	Mean CAT4 score Non-disadvantaged	11	94.0	98.5	10	93.6	97.1	9	95.7	100.1	8	93.2	101.9	7	95.9	100.0
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2	<p>Attendance for disadvantaged students, especially those listed as FSM6, is lower than non-disadvantaged in the school. Disadvantaged students have higher levels of persistent absence than non-disadvantaged students</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Academic year</th> <th>Attendance FSM6 for Aylestone +(national figure)</th> <th>Attendance for non FSM6 +(national)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2025/26 to date</td> <td>88.4%</td> <td>95.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024/25</td> <td>86.5% (87.8%)</td> <td>94.4% (94.2%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24</td> <td>85% (85.3%)</td> <td>92.4% (92.7%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Academic year	Attendance FSM6 for Aylestone +(national figure)	Attendance for non FSM6 +(national)	2025/26 to date	88.4%	95.0%	2024/25	86.5% (87.8%)	94.4% (94.2%)	2023/24	85% (85.3%)	92.4% (92.7%)						
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3	<p>Lower literacy levels – disadvantaged students in Year 7 and 8 have an average reading age lower than their non-disadvantaged peers. All children have an average reading age lower than their chronological age</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year group</th> <th>Reading age for disadvantaged pupils</th> <th>Reading age for non-disadvantaged pupils</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>9 ears 8 months</td> <td>10 years 2 months</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>9 years 7 months</td> <td>10 years 7 months</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Improved literacy skills will allow students to access and make progress through the curriculum. Potential of GCSE results at KS4 to improve.</p>			Year group	Reading age for disadvantaged pupils	Reading age for non-disadvantaged pupils	7	9 ears 8 months	10 years 2 months	8	9 years 7 months	10 years 7 months									
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4	<p>Disadvantaged pupils receive fixed term suspensions and sanctions, resulting in lost learning.</p> <p>Our data shows that in 2024/25 disadvantaged pupils received 15 internal/external suspensions out of a total of 25 suspensions (60%). This is proportionally more than in 2023/24, of 30 total suspensions, 12 were disadvantaged pupils (40%)</p>																				
5	<p>Mental health and wellbeing needs have increased significantly over the years since the pandemic. There is a need for continued pastoral support.</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
Reduce the learning gaps for disadvantaged students. Improved outcomes at the end of KS4	In line with our school development, Attainment 8 gap reduced between disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged from -1.2 in 2025 to -0.5 in 2026.
Students will make expected or better progress by developing good independent learning habits	All students to make expected or better progress (Progress 8 to be 0 or positive). Lesson monitoring shows consistency in targeted Teaching and Learning Strategies When surveyed, 90% of pupils can articulate how they learn and which strategies they implement to help them meet their targets.
Accelerate progress in reading	By the end of KS3, students' reading age is in line with their chronological age – NGRT data.
Attendance for disadvantaged pupils improves and moves towards national figures	Ensuring that the attendance of PP improves and the gap to the rest of the school reduces from 8% to in line with peers. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils is in line with target of 95%.
All students will progress into full-time further education or apprenticeships	NEET figures are better than national. 95% of Year 11 in 2025 know the career paths they wish to follow and their next steps.
Improve pupil behaviour	Reduction in the number of students being sent to behaviour support centre. Fixed term exclusions of disadvantaged students are in proportion to that of non-disadvantaged students and an overall exclusion rate that is below national average.
Improve the mental health and wellbeing of students	Mental health concerns reduced by 10% from July 2025 – July 2026. Pupil surveys identify 90%+ of students feel happy and safe in school. Students are aware of the signs and symptoms of poor mental health and wellbeing and know where to seek support

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: £139 400

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Further develop and integrate high quality approach to teaching across school, through ongoing CPD and support for new staff and ECTs.</p> <p>Establishing key essentials of the universal offer - refine strategies for the effectiveness of assessment and the feedback loop of the Diagnosis – Therapy – Testing – Revisit (DTTR) process .</p>	<p>The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) state that <i>'good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils'</i>. This is the priority for Pupil Premium spending.</p>	<p>1 and 3</p>
<p>Maintain reduced class sizes, by additional classes, for KS4 core subjects to support with efficient and effective behaviour management, assessment, marking and feedback.</p>	<p>The EEF state that reducing class sizes has a <i>moderate impact</i>, but this allows teachers to deliver more verbal and written feedback to students, which has a <i>very high impact</i>.</p> <p><i>There is evidence to suggest that feedback involving metacognitive and self-regulatory approaches may have a greater impact on disadvantaged pupils and lower prior attainers than other pupils.</i></p>	<p>1, 3 and 4</p>
<p>Further develop effective assessment, marking and feedback by ensuring that key assessments are fit for purpose and give meaningful feedback that the student can action and learn from.</p> <p>Ensure students can identify how they can be a better learner than they currently are and can implement strategies to affect improvement PLCs in Key Subjects</p>	<p>The EEF state that <i>'there is evidence to suggest that feedback involving metacognitive and self-regulatory approaches may have a greater impact on disadvantaged pupils and lower prior attainers than other pupils. Pupils require clear and actionable feedback to employ metacognitive strategies as they learn, as this information informs their understanding of their specific strengths and areas for improvement, thereby indicating which learning strategies have been effective for them in previously completed work'</i></p>	<p>1</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £ 35 141

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Targeted literacy and reading support -</p> <p>Further develop school approach to reading - to promote reading for pleasure; implement school-wide practice on reading in form times and lessons; develop disciplinary literacy practice across all subjects.</p>	<p>OFSTED report from 2024 – <i>“The school should ensure that all pupils, including weaker readers, are supported to help improve their reading skills and that pupils are encouraged to read more widely”.</i></p>	3
<p>Implement new Tutor Time Reading programme - Disadvantaged students are exposed to a wide range of literature and vocabulary, and tutors enhance comprehension and language development through the deliberate use of synonyms.</p>	<p>EEF has discussed research - including both its own work and wider academic evidence - suggesting that listening to challenging texts read aloud may benefit students’ spoken language understanding, vocabulary development and comprehension.</p>	3
<p>Develop Literacy lessons in Year 7 and 8 – Disadvantaged students engage in reading comprehension activities in dedicated Literacy lessons, exposing them to a wide range of literature and support by teachers to develop reading fluency.</p>	<p>Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+7 months) <i>EEF states - ‘The average impact of reading comprehension strategies is an additional six months’ progress over the course of a year. Successful reading comprehension approaches allow activities to be carefully tailored to pupils’ reading capabilities, and involve activities and texts that provide an effective, but not overwhelming, challenge.’</i></p>	3
<p>Nessy phonics-based intervention - Through students’ NGRT tests, pupils who are reading significantly below their chronological age will receive support through Nessy – a phonics based intervention programme</p>	<p>The EEF states that <i>‘Targeted phonics interventions may therefore improve decoding skills more quickly for pupils who have experienced these barriers to learning’</i></p>	3
<p>A pupil premium mentor who supports students in lessons, especially those disadvantaged pupils with additional educational needs.</p>	<p>The EEF states that <i>‘well-evidenced teaching assistant interventions can be targeted at pupils that require additional support and can help previously low attaining pupils overcome barriers to learning and</i></p>	1 and 3

	<p><i>'catch-up' with previously higher attaining pupils'</i></p> <p>The use of Aylestone's pupil premium profiles, developed between the PP-mentor and the student, can provide an invaluable resource for identifying support strategies and recommendations to address areas of need.</p>	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £22 793

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Priority for disadvantaged students in careers meetings with an external careers advisor in Year 10 and 11.</p> <p>Regular assemblies to deliver key messages from visiting speakers from a range of educational, social and cultural backgrounds</p> <p>Ensure the Careers Programme supports the learner in understanding how the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom transfers and therefore supports the knowledge and skills needed in the workplace</p>	<p>The Gatsby Benchmarks are central to the planning and delivery of the careers provision at Aylestone. These benchmarks detail the components of good practice from a broad range of international research.</p> <p>The EEF states that <i>'young people from poorer backgrounds are more likely to have career aspirations that are misaligned with their educational ambitions'</i>.</p>	1
<p>Pupil premium mentor conducts regular personalised meetings with disadvantaged students and identifies and need for further academic or pastoral support. This includes but is not limited to ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support)</p>	<p>A study by the EEF found that one-on-one mentoring programs can lead to moderate improvements in academic attainment, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds</p>	5
<p>Attendance panels meetings, attendance officer within school contacting home and offering support, home visits to persistent absentees with support from local school attendance advisor</p>	<p>Continue upward trend in attendance for PP students, which reduces the gap between them and non-PP students</p>	2

<p>Provision for funding towards offsite enrichment activities (such as D of E and other educational visits).</p> <p>Provision for funding towards stationary, uniform, equipment and other resources where necessary</p>	<p>The EEF states ‘participation in challenging physical and emotional activities, outdoor adventure learning interventions can support pupils to develop non-cognitive skills such as resilience, self-confidence and motivation’</p> <p>There is intrinsic value in ensuring disadvantaged pupils access a rich and stimulating arts education and cultural trips which can be subject to financial barriers for pupils from deprived backgrounds.</p>	<p>1, 2 and 4</p>
<p>Provision towards funding of Aylestone summer school for incoming year 7s</p>	<p>The EEF states <i>‘there is some evidence that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit from summer schools, where activities are focused on well-resourced, small group or one to one academic approaches’</i></p>	<p>1 and 2</p>
<p>ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) sessions are used in school to help students develop emotional awareness and resilience. Led by trained ELSAs, these sessions provide a safe and supportive environment where students can explore their feelings, improve their social skills, and learn coping strategies for emotional challenges</p>	<p>Research published by The Children's Society highlights that ELSA programs are particularly effective for students facing challenges such as trauma, bullying, or family difficulties. The tailored, individualized nature of ELSA support allows students to feel heard and understood, contributing to a sense of safety and belonging at school</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Breakfast club - highly beneficial for students from disadvantaged backgrounds as they provide a consistent, nutritious start to the day, helping to ensure that all students are ready to learn. Additionally, breakfast clubs create a supportive, positive environment where students can engage socially, build relationships, and feel more connected to the school community.</p>	<p>A study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (2019) found that students who participated in breakfast clubs showed improved concentration, behaviour, and academic performance, particularly in areas like literacy and numeracy.</p>	
<p>Homework club – staffing to support children who attend after-school homework sessions</p>	<p>Research from the EEF shows that targeted support, like homework clubs, can help close the attainment gap between disadvantaged students and their peers by providing structured time to focus on learning and receive individualized support.</p>	

Total budgeted cost: £ 184 334

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

Intended outcomes from previous Pupil Premium Strategy statement:

Reduce Attainment Gap

Although an attainment gap persists, the 2025 disadvantaged cohort had a significantly lower prior attainment than their peers when comparing their CAT tests in year 7 (99.5 < 104). In terms of the average gap to their targets', disadvantaged students were similar to other students in the year (-1 below, compared to -0.8 below)

The gap in attainment may also reflect the difficult circumstances that many pupils will have experienced over their school years, which saw various restrictions put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. periods of lockdowns and tiers) that resulted in restricted attendance to school and periods of home learning.

Year	Student group	KS2 Prior attainment	Attainment 8 score	Attainment 8 gap to target	9 – 5 in Maths and English	9 – 4 in Maths and English	Progress 8
2025	Disadvantaged	99.5	2.94	-1.03	13%	25%	-1.17
	Others	104	4.11	-0.81	37%	60%	-0.78
2024	Disadvantaged	95.5	2.29	-1.06	14%	24%	-0.94
	Others	105	4.15	-1.18	43 %	63%	-0.61

Attendance improves for disadvantaged students

Attendance for disadvantaged students has improved over the last 3 years, and these efforts have been recognised by the Department for Education measured on the new attendance baseline improvement expectation (ABIE). Aylestone School's attendance outcomes are amongst the strongest compared to our group of similar schools in overall attendance or persistent absence.

	Disadvantaged students	Non-disadvantaged students
Aylestone School 2025/26 (to date)	88.4%	95.0%
Aylestone School 2024/25	86.5% (87.8%)	94.4% (94.2%)
Aylestone School 2023/24	85% (85.3%)	92.4% (92.7%)

Here, we need to continue to ensure attendance remains a high priority with the aim of achieving 95% or above. Our attendance officer to focus on SEN and PP students with regular meetings to determine barriers to attendance and to offer any support to families of these students.

Multiple approaches are used to encourage high attendance. These included:

- Contact with home for every absence – attendance officer priorities contact with parents/carers within the morning of absence reported.
- Referral to ELSA support where absence has been linked to emotional learning issues.
- Letters home and meetings to follow up, where there were worrying trends of absence..
- Penalty notices were also issued, when unauthorised holidays were taken or low attendance was not condoned.

Outlook and life after Aylestone School

Of the 2024/25 cohort, 30 out of 31 disadvantaged students remained in full-time education – further education or sixth-form college.

Of the 2023/24 cohort, 29 out of 32 disadvantaged students remained in full-time education – further education or sixth-form college.

Although these few cases of NEET have significant context, we recognise the need to further develop the careers offer for students.

We will do this by; enhancing the programme of careers activities which will highlight the learning skills required to be successful in a spectrum of employment roles; and create opportunities for professionals to speak to students in lessons and in assemblies.

Targeted literacy and reading support

Through students' accelerated reader scores, pupils who were reading significantly below their chronological age received support through use of Nessy – a phonics support programme aimed at children with dyslexia/low reading ages

From January until July, 10 students accessed the phonics intervention programme during form time twice a week. Students also had the option to access this from home.

9 out of 10 students made significant improvement in their baseline assessed reading ages – ranging from progress of +7 months to +4 years 2 months in reading age. Whilst most of these students' reading ages are still significantly below their chronological age, their engagement with this phonics intervention will continue to have impact and bridge the gap in their literacy ability.