

Pupil premium strategy statement

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

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Bedwell Primary
Number of pupils in school	295
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	34.2%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024/25 - 2027/28
Date this statement was published	04.12.25
Date on which it will be reviewed	07.05.26
Statement authorised by	Emma Shaw
Pupil premium lead	David Roberts
Governor / Trustee lead	Peter Browning

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£162,105
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£162,105

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

We want all children to make good progress through the curriculum, experience success, enjoy their time at school and develop a love of learning. Our curriculum is built around six core learning powers - Curiosity, Empathy, Co-operation, Perseverance, Independence and Reflectiveness - and these underpin all that we do and all that we want our children to learn and experience. These are our objectives for **every** child in the school, irrespective of background, home circumstances or the challenges they face outside of school - and therefore the purpose of this strategy is to support our disadvantaged children in achieving these goals and making the most of their time at Bedwell.

We have used guidance from the Educational Endowment Foundation to help us to use this funding in the most effective way possible. Their report, the *EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium*, recommends a tiered approach to Pupil Premium spending:

- Teaching should be the top priority, including professional development, training and support for early career teachers and recruitment and retention
- Targeted support for pupils working below Age Related Expectations
- Providing non-academic support, including improving attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support.

In line with this, high-quality teaching lies at the heart of our approach. This has the biggest impact on learning, and will benefit every child in our school. In the 2024/25 academic year, our core focus here is on building home-school links, improving the retention of prior learning and developing the teaching of writing. We are keen to ensure that these strategies result in accelerated progress for children across the ability range, including those who are already (or who have the potential to be) higher attaining.

Alongside this, targeted programmes and interventions support children's individual needs. These are based on careful diagnostic assessments to ensure that the right support is given to the right child, along with the use of research evidence on what works well (particularly the EEF's *Teaching and Learning Toolkit*).

In 2021/22, we were also part of the *Making the Difference for Disadvantaged Pupils in Hertfordshire Primary Schools Project*, run by Herts for Learning and Sandringham Research School, providing guidance, support and coaching on the best way to improve Pupil Premium outcomes for our children. This project highlighted the importance of communication and language skills, which continue to be at the heart of our provision.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 - Communication	Observations, feedback from external professionals and discussions with staff consistently identify communication skills as the primary barrier faced by disadvantaged children. At the end of EYFS in 2024, there was a 27% gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children reaching the expected standard in Communication and Language. Vocabulary is often limited, many younger children lack the ability to talk in sentence-like structures and children across the school find it challenging to engage in discussion or negotiation.
2 - Phonics	Baseline phonics data shows a clear gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. Intensive support in KS1 has historically helped to close this gap, but these have widened again (in part due to the impact of the pandemic on children in recent cohorts) and therefore gaps remain. This negatively impacts on children's development as readers.
3 - Writing	Internal assessments, diagnostic testing and discussions with teachers show a marked gap in writing between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. In July 2024, there was a 27% gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children reaching the expected standard in Literacy at the end of EYFS. Across the school, these children have limited vocabulary, find it hard to independently generate ideas, construct grammatically correct sentences and spell common words.
4 - Metacognition and Self-Regulation	Linked to communication challenges, our disadvantaged children find it much harder to reflect on their learning, explain their thinking and act on feedback they receive. This is evident in classroom observations, pupil book study activities and feedback from staff in Learning Review Meetings.
5 - Wellbeing	Our assessments, observations and discussions with children and their families continue to show the wellbeing, social and emotional issues faced by our community. Demographic data shows the area to be the second most deprived in Hertfordshire, while crime statistics report a high proportion of anti-social behaviour,

	violent and sexual crime. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged children, and have a clear negative impact on their behaviour, learning and academic outcomes.
6 - Cultural Capital	Pupil voice, surveys and discussions with parents show that many of our disadvantaged children have very limited access to 'cultural capital' outside of school. Many have never been to London, visited a museum, been to the theatre or seen a castle - and as a result their ability to engage in learning, talk about or write about any of these things is severely hampered.
7 - Attendance	Attendance data for the last 3 years shows that attendance of disadvantaged children 90.4% and 91.8%. This means that disadvantaged children are, on average, missing around 16 days of school a year. Attendance of this group is also consistently around 1.5% lower than that of non-disadvantaged children. Internal assessments, pupil voice and discussions at Learning Review Meetings identify that this attendance gap is negatively impacting on progress and attainment.

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
1 - Improved vocabulary and oral language skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessments and observations show all disadvantaged children to be engaging in class talk and discussions - High quality language and conversation is heard around the school throughout the day - EYFS Communication & Language outcomes show at least 65% of disadvantaged children reach expected standard
2 - Improved phonics knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 80% of disadvantaged children pass Year 1 phonics screening check - At least 90% of disadvantaged children achieve pass the check by the end of Year 2
3 - Improved writing progress and attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence in books shows children writing with increased stamina and independence - Improvement in spelling data (using online assessments)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attainment gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children are less than 10% in all year groups - KS2 writing progress scores are above average (1+) - At least 70% of disadvantaged children achieve Age Related Expectations by the end of KS2
4 - Metacognition and Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children can talk about the feedback that they receive on their learning and how they use it to improve their work - Teachers model their own thought processes and reasoning, teaching children how to tackle tasks, and as a result metacognitive talk is regularly observed in classrooms - Children can talk about their strengths and areas for development in different subjects
5 - Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wellbeing surveys, pupil voice and staff referrals show no significant difference between disadvantaged children and their peers - Attendance data, Learning Review Meetings and internal assessment data show disadvantaged children to be arriving at school ready to learn, and to be engaging enthusiastically (and effectively) in lessons throughout the day
6 - Cultural Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey of pupil experiences shows that disadvantaged children have had access to a broad range of key experiences (see school's Cultural Capital Plan for further details on what these include) - Children are able to use these experiences to enhance their understanding of what they have read and learnt about, and can talk and write about their experiences in detail
7 - Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance of disadvantaged children in Years 1-6 is at least 96%, with no significant gap between them and their peers - No more than 10% of disadvantaged children are persistently absent (measured as having attendance below 90%)

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.

Tier 1 - Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £56,400

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge(s) addressed
<p>Developing the teaching of writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing the use of HfL Essentials for Writing scheme to enhance writing curriculum, with Writing Leader delivering CPD on use and implementation - building teacher & TA understanding of progression in grammar and correct sentence formation - training for TAs on grammar fundamentals - modelling and demonstrating clear sentence construction through oral rehearsal - explicit teaching of editing skills, ensuring children are given time to edit & redraft - developing provision of Early writing opportunities in EYFS 	<p>From EEF Guidance Report, Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 : <i>It is important to promote the basic skills of writing - skills that need to become increasingly automatic so that pupils can concentrate on writing composition. This includes the transcription skills of handwriting (or typing, where appropriate) and spelling, as well as sentence construction... If these skills are slow or effortful then this will hinder progress in writing composition. High quality practice is essential to develop fluent transcription. Practice should be: extensive... motivating and engaging... and supported by effective feedback.</i></p>	1, 2, 3
<p>Enhancing phonics teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - phonics leader running a programme of monitoring, supporting and team-teaching with all staff delivering Read Write Inc - additional staffing to provide for small-group teaching 	<p>From EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit: <i>Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills,</i></p>	2

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - phonics assessment of children from Nursery - Y3 every 6 weeks - purchase of Read Write Inc resources and consultant time - training for all new staff 	<p><i>particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</i></p> <p><i>The teaching of phonics should be explicit and systematic to support children in making connections between the sound patterns they hear in words and the way that these words are written.</i></p>	
<p>Building a 'Reading for Pleasure' culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging adults and children to talk positively about books - sharing reviews, building knowledge of new books and current authors, using post-it recommendations etc. - Keeping reading high-profile through themed weeks, visits to local library, linking books to assembly themes - auditing class libraries and updating stock, developing diversity of authors, characters and themes that matches that of our school community 	<p>From a summary of research carried out by Barbara Sahakian from the University of Cambridge, published in <i>Psychological Medicine</i>:</p> <p><i>Children who begin reading for pleasure early in life tend to perform better at cognitive tests and have better mental health when they enter adolescence, a study of more than 10,000 young adolescents in the US has found.</i></p> <p><i>...The team found a strong link between reading for pleasure at an early age and a positive performance in adolescence on cognitive tests that measured such factors as verbal learning, memory and speech development, and at school academic achievement.</i></p> <p><i>These children also had better mental wellbeing... showing fewer signs of stress and depression, as well as improved attention and fewer behavioural problems such as aggression and rule-breaking.</i></p>	1, 2, 5
<p>Developing the teaching of maths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring an appropriate level of challenge is provided for children in all groups, building on 	<p>From EEF Guidance Report, <i>Improving Maths in the Early Years and Key Stage 1</i> :</p> <p><i>Effective mathematics teaching requires knowledge of mathematics</i></p>	4

<p>HfL Essentials scheme, in order to accelerate progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - planning support for teachers of lower attaining groups in KS2 - building mathematical fluency through daily use of HfL fluency slides and associated resources - developing maths teaching, language development and learning environments in EYFS 	<p><i>pedagogy and learning as well as of mathematics itself. This includes knowledge of how children learn mathematical concepts, connections between mathematical concepts, likely difficulties children may have, and different approaches to solving problems or tasks.</i></p> <p><i>Professional development should therefore focus on the integration of three areas: mathematics itself, children's mathematical development, and of effective mathematical pedagogy.</i></p>	
<p>Improving provision for children with SEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Termly training for all staff, looking at effective strategies to support key areas of need (dyslexia, trauma, anxiety) - Regular meetings between SENDCo, teachers and TA teams, discussing current practice, what is / isn't working and suggesting new strategies and sources for external support - SENDCo & DHT to research & develop systems to measure / evidence small steps in progress made by children with SEND - CPD on effective use of Assess-Plan-Do-Review (APDR) cycle, focussing on use of in-class support / adaptations 	<p>From Ofsted Research & Analysis Report, Supporting SEND :</p> <p><i>This report has shown that school practitioners need regular continuous professional development to strengthen and update subject and curriculum knowledge. This is important so that all practitioners working with children with SEND, including TAs... receive training to help them teach effectively. This report has highlighted, however, that curriculum knowledge is not the only area that training could fruitfully focus on... It is more important to understand pupils as individuals with unique strengths, removing barriers to learning and providing support that meets needs and makes a positive difference.</i></p>	1, 2, 3
<p>In school experiences and events to enhance cultural capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - themed days in each year group, linked to humanities topics 	<p>From the Social Mobility Commission's report, An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular</p>	6, 1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visiting theatre in education groups - speakers / presenters / workshops for Reading Week and Science Week - release time for subject leaders and class teachers - a wide range of clubs on offer, all of which are free to join, providing a broad range of experiences (eg. science, art, computing, Forest Club, gymnastics, street dance) 	<p>Activities, Soft Skills and Social Mobility:</p> <p><i>Extra-curricular activities are a positive and enriching experience for young people, promoting not only positive educational outcomes but also offering the possibility for developing a wider set of skills beyond the qualifications obtained from school... Importantly, our findings also reveal the unequal opportunities young people have to take part in extra-curricular activities. It is not so much a question of choosing not to participate, but rather a question of an unequal playing field in the opportunities and chance of participating. The overlapping effects of social class, school attended, gender, ethnicity and geography are key drivers shaping these unequal opportunities.</i></p>	
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Tier 2 - Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £41,820

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge(s) addressed
Phonics catch-up <ul style="list-style-type: none">- additional one-to-one phonics sessions for those who are not on track to pass Y1 phonics screening	<p>From EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit:</p> <p><i>Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive similar or slightly greater benefit from phonics interventions and approaches. This is likely to be due to the explicit nature of the instruction and the intensive support provided....</i></p> <p><i>Where phonics is delivered as an intervention targeted at specific pupils, regular sessions (up to four times a week), of 30 minutes or so over a period of up to 12 weeks appear to be the most successful structure.</i></p>	2
Small-group tutoring in Y6 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- in-school Booster sessions in maths, with children working in groups of 6-8- after-school reading sessions for targeted groups of children, delivered by a teacher the children in that group know well	<p>From EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit:</p> <p><i>Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive additional benefits from small group tuition. Small group tuition approaches can support pupils to make effective progress by providing intensive, targeted academic support... The approach allows the teacher to focus on the needs of a small number of learners and provide teaching that is closely matched to pupil understanding. Small group tuition offers an opportunity for</i></p>	1, 3, 4

	<p><i>greater levels of interaction and feedback compared to whole class teaching which can support pupils to overcome barriers to learning and increase their access to the curriculum.</i></p>	
<p>Speech & language support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personalised intervention programmes delivered by specialist Speech & Language TA - use of WellComm toolkit to provide targeted support to children in EYFS - delivering Nuffield Early Language Intervention in EYFS 	<p>From EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit:</p> <p><i>The average impact of Oral language interventions is approximately an additional six months' progress over the course of a year. Some studies also often report improved classroom climate and fewer behavioural issues following work on oral language.</i></p> <p><i>The studies in the Toolkit indicate that language interventions with frequent sessions over a sustained period may have a larger impact, overall. Approaches that are delivered one-to-one also have larger impacts.</i></p>	1
<p>Spelling support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use end-of-year assessments in Years 3-5 to identify target groups within each cohort - targeted use of RWInc Spelling online tasks and programmes to support individual children - writing lead to regularly monitor provision & progress 	<p>From EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit:</p> <p><i>Fast and accurate spelling of an extensive vocabulary is a key component of writing fluency... It is clear that spelling should be actively taught rather than simply tested. The teaching of spelling is likely to work best when related to the current content being studied in school and when teachers encourage pupils to use new spellings in their writing</i></p>	3

Tier 3 - Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £63,885

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge(s) addressed
<p>Developing Relational Practice approaches to behaviour management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training for all staff on the importance of developing positive relationships with children, linked to the concept of Unconditional Positive Regard - building understanding of impact of stress states, trauma, conflict and other experiences on our children - developing the use of regulation strategies, so children are ready to talk about / discuss issues - understanding neuroscience underpinning these approaches - reflecting on current use of sanctions and reviewing where these are / are not effective 	<p>Carl Rogers, quoted by Dave Whitaker in <i>The Kindness Principle</i>: <i>For a person to 'grow' they need an environment that provides them with genuineness (openness and self-disclosure), acceptance (being seen with unconditional positive regard) and empathy (being listened to and understood).</i> <i>Without these, relationships and healthy personalities will not develop as they should, much like a tree will not grow without sunlight and water.</i></p> <p>From EEF Guidance Report, <i>Improving Behaviour in Schools</i>: <i>There is a strong evidence base that teacher-pupil relationships are key to good pupil behaviour and that these relationships can affect effort and academic attainment.</i></p>	4, 5, 7
<p>Supporting wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - counselling sessions (with in-house, qualified counsellor) - Family Support Worker delivering targeted interventions & providing support to children and families 	<p>From Public Health England guidance report on <i>The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment</i>: <i>The health and wellbeing of children and young people contributes to their ability to benefit from good quality teaching and to achieve their full potential... Promoting physical and mental health in schools creates a virtuous</i></p>	5

	<i>circle reinforcing children's attainment and achievement that in turn improves their wellbeing, enabling children to thrive and achieve their full potential.</i>	
<p>Monitoring, supporting and responding to attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - member of admin team given specific attendance role, checking and chasing reasons for non-attendance - planning meetings held with targeted families to identify reasons for non-attendance & agree action plans - regular meetings between admin team, Headteacher & Attendance Improvement Officer to monitor attendance & identify next steps - rewards for excellent attendance at end of each term 	<p>This follows the principles of good practice set out in the DfE <i>Working Together to Improve School Attendance</i> guidance, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Monitor - Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level)</i> - <i>Listen and understand - When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.</i> - <i>Facilitate support - Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school.</i> - <i>Formalise support - Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond.</i> 	7
<p>Developing positive home-school links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - programme of parent events throughout year - a range of formats, including practical activities, Stay & 	<p>From EEF Guidance Report, <i>Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning: Parental engagement in children's learning and the quality of the home learning environment</i> are</p>	1, 2, 3

<p>sessions to show how we learn and parent workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - share classroom practice, including strategies and resources to use outside of school - termly topic maps sent home to keep parents informed on current learning 	<p>associated with improved academic outcomes at all ages. The evidence suggests that three areas are particularly worth focusing on: supporting parents to have high academic expectations for their children; developing and maintaining communication with parents about school activities and schoolwork; and promoting the development of reading habits.</p>	
<p>Providing a good start to the day through Breakfast Club</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided free of charge to disadvantaged children - encourages attendance, arriving on time and being ready to learn at the start of school - increasing staffing levels, so that more spaces are available and more Early Years children are able to attend 	<p>From DfE report: Evaluation of Breakfast Clubs in Schools with High Levels of Deprivation:</p> <p><i>Schools perceived important benefits from having a breakfast club. As well as reducing hunger, breakfast clubs were perceived to improve concentration and behaviour in class and to improve punctuality for some pupils... Additional positive impacts on pupils' social development and the way in which they helped some pupils make wider friendship groups and become more confident were also highlighted by schools.</i></p>	<p>7, 5</p>
<p>Delivering a programme of off-site trips and visits to enhance Cultural Capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - trips are subsidised for disadvantaged children - includes residential trip for Y6 - planning and preparation time for adults involved in trips - key questions to ask, vocabulary to use during the day 	<p>See evidence from Social Mobility Commission's <i>An Unequal Playing Field</i> report identified in Tier 1, above.</p>	<p>6</p>

Total budgeted cost: £162,105

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

*Our attainment and progress data from summer 2025 still shows the impact of time lost due to Covid-19, which had a particularly marked impact on children from disadvantaged backgrounds (see EEF report *The Impact of COVID-19 on Learning*), with the Year 6 cohort having missed much foundational learning in Years 1 and 2. Across the school, attainment gaps are narrower than those observed nationally, but the fluctuating year-to-year picture makes it hard to identify concrete patterns.*

EYFS

56% of disadvantaged children reached a Good Level of Development, up 10% on the previous year, while 67% of non-disadvantaged children reached this level (no change on the previous year). There was no gap in Communication and Language (where there had been a 27% gap the previous year), suggesting that the school's work in this area, particularly through the work of our Speech and Language TA and use of the WellComm programme, are having a positive impact. There was, however, a gap of 20% in attainment in PSED, showing the challenges that our disadvantaged children face in this area.

Phonics

Phonics has historically been an area of strength for the school, and in 2024 disadvantaged children out-performed non-disadvantaged, with 78% of disadvantaged children reaching the expected standard (compared with 73% for non-disadvantaged). However, in 2025 there was a very large gap in attainment, with just 46% of disadvantaged children achieving the expected standard, while 93% of non-disadvantaged children achieved this level. There was a strong overlap between disadvantage, SEND and mobility, and we are exploring ways in which to better support these children in future.

Years 1-5 internal data

Attainment gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children had been reduced in maths and reading, but had widened in writing (where the number reaching expected standards was low across the school). Very few disadvantaged children reached 'Greater Depth' standards in any subjects.

KS2

Overall, 50% of disadvantaged children achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (compared to 48% of disadvantaged children nationally). However, non-

disadvantaged children still out-performed them, with 57% achieving the expected standard in all three subjects. The attainment gap was widest in maths and narrowest in reading (a reversal on last year, where reading had the widest gap).

Subject	% of disadvantaged children reaching the expected standard	% of non-disadvantaged children reaching the expected standard
Reading	64%	68%
Writing	57%	64%
Maths	64%	75%
RWM combined	50%	57%

There was an improvement in the attainment of 'Greater Depth' standards amongst disadvantaged pupils - for example, in writing 21% achieved this standard (compared to 7% of non-disadvantaged children).

Attendance

Attendance of disadvantaged children rose to 93.7% in 2024-25. This has been aided by daily monitoring from admin staff, meetings between parents, our Attendance Administrator and Headteacher to emphasise the importance of attendance and create action plans for improvement and, for families facing particular short-term difficulties, school staff making pick-ups and drop-offs. Work around wellbeing and the provision of daily (free) Breakfast Club for disadvantaged children has also supported improvements in attendance. The rate of persistent absence remained high for disadvantaged children last year, however, and will continue to be a focus going forward.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Read Write Inc	Oxford Owl
Read Write Inc Spelling	Oxford Owl
WellComm	GL Assessment
HfL Essentials Maths	Herts for Learning
HfL Essential Writing	Herts for Learning