

Pupil premium strategy statement 2025-26

This statement details our school's use of pupil 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 effect that last year's spending of the pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Redborne Upper School
Total number of students in school (years 9-13)	1658
Number of students in school (years 9-11)	1205
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible students	11.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2022/23 to 2025/26
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Olly Button: Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Nikki Brennan: Assistant headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Beth Woodward Claire Crowther

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£174 150
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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	£174 150

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is to raise the attainment and progress of all disadvantaged students such that their outcomes compare favourably with their non-disadvantaged peers.

We are concerned with all students achieving a minimum grade 4 in both English and Maths as these qualifications are the most important for securing future pathways. This gap is particularly large in Central Beds.

Our philosophy is to direct our limited resources to where they can make the biggest difference. Research and experience tell us this is in the classroom, where through high quality teaching and strong relationships with our students we have the most control over their progress and development. We can significantly improve all students' learning and sense of belonging at school if we focus relentlessly on anticipating where they might struggle and thinking carefully and deliberately about what we say and do each day. A significant focus remains the development of our students' language ability. We know that high levels of literacy and oracy are vital in unlocking success and influencing how students see themselves in relation to others and to the world around them.

We will continue to improve our teachers' ability to support students' reading comprehension and their oral language development. Tutor Time Reading, a redevelopment of the library, a phone ban in school and an emphasis on disciplinary literacy are all key components of this strand.

The key principles for our disadvantaged students:

- To support attendance to school and then to lessons.
- Narrow the attainment gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students both within school and nationally, with a focus on all achieving a minimum grade 4 in English and maths.
- Raise aspirations for all disadvantaged students, regardless of prior attainment or SEND.
- Ensure all students can read fluently and with a good understanding to enable them to access the breadth of the curriculum.
- Develop students' ability to communicate effectively and with confidence in a wide range of contexts.
- Meet students' SEMH and behavioural needs and support them to develop independence and resilience.
- To provide disadvantaged students with access to opportunities; to ensure they are aspirational for themselves and their progression.
- To work in a strong and supportive partnership with parents, carers and families.

In order to select effective strategies, we have used guidance predominantly from the [current EEF guide](#) and the [various EEF guidance reports](#) which advocate a tiered approach to supporting disadvantaged students, alongside the latest [Ofsted guidance toolkit](#) and the DfE (2015) document, 'supporting the attainment of disadvantaged students.....'

Challenges and how our current strategy works towards achieving those objectives

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 Attendance	School attendance is a powerful predictor of student outcomes. Attendance for disadvantaged students (84% 2024-25) is considerably lower than that of their non-disadvantaged peers (93% 2024-25) although the gap narrowed by 1% compared to 2023-24. We continue to monitor the barriers to attendance both to school and lessons, with a particular focus for students with a SEND who also receive the Pupil Premium.
2 Attainment	The attainment of disadvantaged students at GCSE is lower than non-disadvantaged students, particularly in subjects that rely on high levels of literacy and/or background knowledge, such as English and history. Similarly, the attainment of disadvantaged students in GCSE subjects that require problem-solving skills or contain multi-step tasks, like combined science, is lower than non-disadvantaged students. There are also a disproportionate number of disadvantaged students who do not achieve an expected grade of 4+ in maths, English and science.
3 Appropriate Alternative Provision	There are additional challenges in consistency when disadvantaged students attend alternative provisions. Roles have been created to oversee Alternative Provisions and ensure students' needs are being met and their progress is being monitored.
4 Prior attainment, especially reading and oracy	Prior attainment – supporting students who enter with lower numeracy and literacy skills than their peers. Reading data indicates that there is a higher proportion of disadvantaged students with below standardised scores than the average for the year group. There is continuing support needed at both KS3 and KS4.
5 SEMH	There is a lack of information and support for students' wellbeing and mental health, especially for EBSA. There has been a significant increase in SEMH challenges for students and a lack of places with external agencies to support these needs.
6 Dysregulated behaviour	Our data on behaviour, including internal and external suspension rates, show a disproportionate representation from disadvantaged students. Observations and data suggest a lot of these students are low-prior attaining students and that many lack self-regulation

	strategies to cope with challenging tasks and situations, which has a negative impact upon their learning.
7 Aspiration and motivation	Lack of organisational skills, self management skills and revision techniques. For some disadvantaged students there are issues surrounding long-term aspirations and role models with whom they can relate.
8 Parental engagement	Internal data shows that families of disadvantaged students are less likely to attend parent/carers events. We have seen an impact from our work on increasing attendance at parent/carers evenings. We need to continue this work to foster stronger relationships through more regular contact with families.

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
Close the gaps relative to national averages for the attendance of disadvantaged students. Close the in school (and in lesson) attendance gaps of disadvantaged students compared to non-disadvantaged students.	The gap between attendance figures of disadvantaged students (school) and disadvantaged students (national) will narrow. The gap between attendance figures of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students in school will narrow.
To deliver high quality teaching and learning for all, which improves levels of attainment and progress for all disadvantaged students.	Gap is closed between disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged students in relation to both national and school targets.
The percentage of disadvantaged students who achieve a grade 4 or above in both English and maths increases from 2025.	Close the gaps relative to national averages of achieving greater than or equal to grade 4 in English and maths.
Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills across all subjects.	Teacher reports (based on values scores) and class observations suggest disadvantaged students are more able to monitor and regulate their own learning. This finding is supported by an increased number of PP students regularly attending study club, indicating motivation and a belief that additional support for learning can make a difference.

Active participation of students in their learning across all lessons.	<p>2025/26 evidence on active participation to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative data from lesson observations • Survey results and interviews with students
Literacy and oracy support programme is expanded, reviewed and taken into middle schools.	Test data improves so there are fewer students in receipt of PP who have reading ages lower than their expected age.
Improve parent/carer attendance at events such as intervention/information evenings.	<p>Attendance at events for parents/carers of disadvantaged students increases year on year.</p> <p>All parents/carers are able to easily access information on their child's progress and attainment; know how to support their child at home; know where the extra-curricular activities are available for their child and how to access pastoral support.</p>
High levels of wellbeing and a clear sense of belonging and inclusion	<p>2025/26 evidence on wellbeing and belonging to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data from student voice, parent surveys and teacher observations. • Small disparity in internal isolation and suspension rates between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. • A significant increase in the participation of enrichment activities.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium in the 2025 to 2026 academic year to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching

Budgeted cost: £83 804

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ensure all students consistently receive high quality teaching and learning. All teachers and teaching assistants develop their pedagogy through targeted CPD and the school coaching programme. Continue to develop teachers' ability to ensure ALL students are actively participating in their learning in lessons.	<p>High quality teaching is the most important factor when it comes to improving attainment outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged students. It also means students are more likely to want to attend lessons.</p> <p>Evidence that focusing on professional development makes an impact on outcomes is provided by the EEF Guidance Report on Effective PD. There is evidence that instructional coaching is a form of PD that can make a positive impact provided key mechanisms are included.</p> <p>Schools should focus on developing teaching practice over a sustained period to drive meaningful change in their setting (EEF: 2022-23). The great teaching toolkit is used to guide our CPD agenda.</p> <p>Ensuring teachers can support students to build self-regulation and metacognition skills is crucial as the EEF toolkit shows it to have the highest impact on student outcomes.</p>	1,2,4,7
Provide an additional provision in school to support students who do not attend lessons (emotionally based	Guidance has been taken from Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools-DFE, Feb 2023 .	1,2,3,5,6

school avoidance). A weekly meeting of SENDCo, attendance officer and 4 SLT is held to decide what bespoke provision is needed for each student with attendance issues, which may involve attendance procedures.	Aiming to keep students in school and then to reintegrate back into mainstream lessons is always our long term plan. This provision can be used where students have a reduced curriculum and/or require additional tutoring support.	
Pupils are supported to manage their behaviour and attendance through access to appropriate personalised timetables.	Social and emotional learning EEF.	1,2,3,5,6
Appoint a staff member to oversee disciplinary literacy.	Disciplinary literacy tree-EEF and Improving literacy in secondary schools.	2,4

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

Budgeted cost: £15 906

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>One to one/small group graduate tutoring in maths and English</p> <p>Study club for one to one support after school for disadvantaged students who require the time, space and/or additional support of an adult or sixth form tutor to complete their work or receive tutoring.</p> <p>Small group sessions to walk through English language paper, delivered to SEND students on a regular timetabled basis by an English SLE.</p>	<p>For students in need of additional support, research suggests that providing targeted academic support finely tuned to the needs of individual students offers discernible benefits. Extended school time.</p> <p>The programme will follow the principles of the EEF Guide 'Making a difference with effective tutoring'. The publication on the efficacy of small group tuition states it can have an impact of up to 4 months progress.</p>	2,3,4,5,6,7
<p>Learning support lessons offered for KS3 and KS4.</p> <p>Year 9 offer: Students are identified from year 8 data and offered learning support lessons in year 9. These lessons (3 hours/fortnight) provide additional literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>Evidence for the role of high-quality teaching for improved outcomes, particularly for the most vulnerable students, is well established. Evidence of adaptive teaching comes from a range of different sources, including the SEND Guidance Report and the Five a Day strategies, such as explicit instruction and scaffolding.</p>	2,4,7

<p>support taught by teachers of SEND.</p> <p>KS4 offer: Identified students are offered the opportunity to be supported with additional literacy and numeracy, following the King's Trust award in year 10. 5 hours per fortnight in place of a level 2 option choice.</p>		
<p>Ensure teachers continue to support students' reading and vocabulary development. Use teacher coaching model and/or refresher training sessions in departments where necessary. Evolve the existing approach to a disciplinary-specific model.</p>	<p>There is significant evidence that improving students' reading comprehension and vocabulary skills impacts attainment at GCSE. Developing disciplinary literacy is a key recommendation in the EEF Guidance Report on Improving Secondary Literacy.</p>	2,4
<p>All year 9 sit a reading test and students with low standardised scores are identified. Selected students receive one to one reading time with a mentor, twice per week.</p>	<p>Improving reading comprehension, vocabulary development and fluent reading are strongly correlated to attainment outcomes at GCSE. Closing the word-gap (Oxford University Press). Developing reading strategies has a strong evidence base for improving outcomes. EEF Reading Strategies. Essential skills such as reading with fluency can unlock access to the entire school curriculum. EEF improving literacy in secondary schools offers core principles to which we aim to adhere.</p>	2,4

Purchase of Century Learning-an AI package that supports independent study in core subjects.	This can be used to ensure students who are out of lessons for any reason have immediate access to core learning	1,2
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £81 567

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance Improvement Officer appointed to oversee attendance; weekly attendance meetings involving Senior Leadership Team and pastoral leaders to discuss students with attendance below 90%.	Students who attend school and lessons make more progress than those who do not. Improving attendance continues to be a challenge for the school. Attendance Interventions Rapid Evidence Assessment (EEF: 2022-23). Working together to improve attendance . Gov uk We use the EEF supporting school attendance toolkit to guide practice.	1,3
Employ and deploy a student support officer for disadvantaged students	Officer to support with school/home liaison; building relationships; monitoring behaviour and offering support to teachers as needed, building on recommendations from EEF Improving behaviour in schools .	1,3

Mentoring	Offering timetabled time with trained sixth form students provides another avenue of support for a student. Mentoring-EEF	1,7
More intensive careers support given by appointing an additional careers advisor (part time).	Providing guidance and clear advice on what is needed to progress to a certain career actively supports aspirations and goals. This is even more important for disadvantaged students with SEND who are more motivated when they understand the point of learning certain topics and skills.	6,7
Workshops to support oracy, presentations skills and confidence	EEF report on oracy. Nov 2024 highlights the importance of developing good oracy skills, in particular for disadvantaged students.	2,4,7
Removal of barriers to learning, such as providing appropriate study resources	Students need resources to support their learning and allow them to work independently out of lessons.	2
Parent/carer events to engage home support both in and out of school	Parental engagement-EEF when carefully managed and strategically planned can positively impact student progress	8
Breakfast/brunch club	Providing students with food means they are more able to engage in learning and focus.	1,7,8
Identified students are offered targeted interventions for Social and Emotional learning.	Interventions which target social and emotional learning are reported by the EEF to improve progress by 4 additional months.	1,5
CPD for trauma based interventions and use of external professionals to advise on supporting students with SEMH.	Behaviour interventions designed to reduce challenging behaviour in schools have a moderate evidence base for improving outcomes, particularly those that focus on pupil self-management. EEF Behaviour Interventions Adolescent mental health: A systematic review of school-based interventions	6,7

Total budgeted cost: £181 277

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our support for disadvantaged students had on those students in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Attendance of disadvantaged students

Average attendance figures show that some disadvantaged students were not in school enough. This impacted their average grades significantly. Our year 10/11 figures were heavily skewed by students who did not attend school owing to emotionally based absence.

This year, we have continued to focus on identifying students at middle school who already have EBSA in order to ensure family support is being undertaken and to provide a more bespoke transition from middle to upper school.

Whilst our PP attendance figures continue to be far lower than we wish, there has been a 3.5% attendance improvement over the last 3 years compared to a national improvement for the same period of 1.3%.

Our focus on PP attendance and the impact of our attendance team has been significant for those who come to school. For students who have not had a mainstream education and for whom we have supplied some form of Alternative Provision, attendance has been too low.

FSM6-Attendance

Year	Cohort	School	National
2024/25 (2 term)	168	84.20%	87.30%
2023/24 (3 term)	145	83.60%	86.00%
2022/23 (3 term)	128	80.70%	86.00%

Reading programme

Being able to read fluently aids academic progress and is a necessary life skill. To support our students becoming confident readers, we continue to run a morning reading intervention. Year 9 students are invited to read one to one, 3 times per week, with a

trained sixth former. The intervention aims to strengthen their vocabulary, comprehension, inference and confidence.

11 year 9 PP students received this intervention (25% of the reading intervention cohort); 50% of the cohort had SEND. The average improvement in reading per student is +3 years. The programme runs a mixture of reciprocal reading and Toe by Toe (teaching of phonics and fluency). A handful of students have continued on the scheme into 2025/26 and will be retested this term.

Comments on English and maths GCSE scores

Using the FFT contextual value added (CVA) model

- In 2025, the school CVA progress 8 = 0.27.
- In 2025, disadvantaged students had a positive CVA progress 8 = -0.12.
- This score is disappointing and reflects the number of PP students who did not attend school regularly (56% with PA).
- In 2025, disadvantaged students had a positive CVA for % 4+ En&Ma. This means taking into account CVA, our disadvantaged students make the same progress as similar pupils nationally.
- The reason for quoting CVA is to show that strategies used in school are making a difference to our disadvantaged students.
- Absolute figures published below do not take into account any CVA or the impact of the quarter of the PP cohort who did not attend school.

2024-25 GCSE	% grade 4 and above		% grade 5 and above	
	Non-PP	PP	Non-PP	PP
English language	68	35	44	14
Maths	67	54	47	22

2024-25 GCSE	% grade 4 and above English/maths
FSM6	36
Not FSM6	73

Grade 4 plus, maths and English compared to National data

Disadvantaged pupils - English and mathematics grade 4 plus

Year	Cohort	School disadvantaged compared to national disadvantaged			School disadvantaged compared to national non-disadvantaged			Year group context
		School	National	National distribution banding	National (non dis)	Gap	Gap Trend	
2025	39	35.9%	43.5%	Close to average (non-sig)	72.7%	-36.8	Narrowing	-
2024	50	32.0%	43.4%	Below (non-sig)	72.8%	-40.8	Widening	-
2023	42	50.0%	43.4%	Close to average (non-sig)	72.8%	-22.8	Not available	-

Students with attendance greater than or equal to 95%: 2024-25

- For these students with high attendance, the disadvantage gap in maths for Redborne is approx: -0.09. This highlights that our focus on maths for disadvantaged students is working, provided students are in school. The challenge is for those who do not attend regularly.

Special mentions

Our disadvantaged students outperformed their non-disadvantaged peers in Child Development, Agriculture and as well as, or nearly as well as, their non-disadvantaged peers in Drama, French and Vocational Music.

Parents' evening appointments

In 2024-25, Sheila Grove, our PP support officer, was able to pre-book appointment slots for our PP parents/carers before the rest of the booking system opened. This slightly increased our uptake of appointments for disadvantaged students.

The attendance of Y11 parents/carers of disadvantaged students has continued to increase by approximately 11% compared to when they started with us in year 9. Parental engagement is one of the key strands on which we have been focusing. Going forwards, we have changed our MIS and so can no longer pre-book appointments. However, we send additional reminders to PP parents to encourage early booking. If we see a decline in parental attendance, this will be reviewed.

Careers provision

For the year 11 PP students who left in summer 2025, all were seen for a one to one discussion every year by the careers team on starting at Redborne.

Some of these students had such incredibly low attendance, that we engaged the Youth Support Services to visit them at the time of P16 transition. 5 of our PP students had home visits with YSS. We liaise with other AP providers to ensure that all of our PP students have appropriate and ongoing careers support to ensure we do not have disadvantaged students who are NEET.

15/41 PP students undertook a work experience placement in December 2025 and this is a significant improvement on 2024 figures.

We are delighted that we have 11 PP students who have stayed on to our sixth form. All of these had a 1:1 careers meeting every year, some more than once per year. We tracked their progress to ensure they could meet the sixth form entry criteria and when it looked like they could not, we provided additional support-usually tutoring.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
Graduate tutoring, Bedfordshire	Funded by The Connolly Foundation and led by Redborne Upper School, so free to the school.

Further support offered to disadvantaged students

For the sixth year running, The Connolly Foundation has allowed us to develop a graduate tutoring programme bespoke to Bedfordshire that we started in January 2021. In 2024-25, it covered 12 schools across the county and the programme is planned, implemented, delivered and evaluated by Nikki Brennan and Vicki Walsh at Redborne Upper School.

For 2024-25 at Redborne, we had access to 3 high calibre graduate tutors to support our disadvantaged students by providing one to one tuition once per week in English and maths. In addition, they led a team of fully trained sixth formers to run an after school study club for maths and English. Graduate tutors also provided support and guidance for parents/carers of disadvantaged students in choosing GCSE options; booking parents' evening appointments and providing online lessons for students unable to attend school. They led school sessions for parents/carers on how to support their child at home and ran mentoring sessions for students before school.

Impact data from the graduate tutoring 2024-25

- **English:** Students receiving graduate intervention improved by an average of $\frac{1}{3}$ of a grade from their mock results. In contrast, students without this intervention saw their grades drop by an average of $\frac{1}{3}$ of a grade. This creates a total positive impact of 0.6 of a grade for the intervention group.
- **Maths:** Students in the graduate intervention programme improved by an average of $\frac{1}{2}$ of a grade from their mock results. The group without this intervention dropped by approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of a grade. This delivers an average of $\frac{3}{4}$ grade improvement over the rest of the year group.
- **Pastoral:** None of the students who participated in the graduate programme are NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

This has been a highly successful scheme and we have been fortunate enough to secure funding for the academic year 2025-26. We intend to expand the provision offered by the graduate tutors for this academic year and at time of writing, impact is already tangible. Tutors are able to offer online provision to those who cannot access school at all. We also provide a nurturing space where students who cannot access the full mainstream curriculum and attend supervised study sessions. This allows students to gain support to catch up on work missed owing to absence or an inability to attend the lesson (usually anxiety) and/or to follow a more bespoke curriculum offer.