

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Canterbury Primary School

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

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

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	420
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	44.5%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2025 2025-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Beth Wilson – Head of School
Pupil premium lead	Ben Hawkins
Governor / Trustee lead	Paul Swallow

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£263,612
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£263,612

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our Commitment to Disadvantaged Pupils

Our ultimate goal is to ensure that every disadvantaged pupil achieves strong academic outcomes and develops the confidence, resilience, and skills needed for future success. We are committed to closing attainment gaps and providing equal access to opportunities so that all pupils can thrive.

How Our Strategy Works

Our pupil premium strategy focuses on removing barriers to learning through targeted, evidence-based interventions. This includes high-quality teaching, tailored academic support, and wider pastoral care to promote wellbeing and engagement. We regularly review progress and adapt our approach to ensure maximum impact.

Key Principles

Our plan is built on five core principles: equity and inclusion, evidence-based practice, early intervention, holistic support for both academic and personal development, and rigorous evaluation to ensure accountability and measurable outcomes.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Limited Access to Resources Lack of books, technology, and learning materials at home reduces opportunities for independent study.
2	Lower Levels of Prior Attainment Pupils start school with gaps in literacy, numeracy, or language development compared to peers.
3	Attendance and Punctuality Issues Higher rates of absence or lateness lead to missed learning and reduced continuity.
4	Social and Emotional Barriers Issues such as low self-esteem, anxiety, or lack of confidence affect engagement and resilience.
5	Parental Engagement Limited parental support or understanding of the education system impacts homework and learning reinforcement.

6	Reduced Cultural Capital Fewer experiences outside school (e.g., museums, libraries) limit vocabulary and world knowledge.
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Intended outcomes

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

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Limited Access to Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intended Outcome: All pupils have access to essential learning resources (books, technology, and materials) to support independent study and homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School provides lending schemes or on-site access to resources. Pupils regularly use these resources for homework and independent learning. Evidence: Increased homework completion and improved independent study skills.
Lower Levels of Prior Attainment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intended Outcome: Pupils with gaps in literacy, numeracy, or language make accelerated progress to meet age-related expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted interventions (phonics, numeracy catch-up) implemented. Progress tracked through assessments showing narrowing gaps. Evidence: Pupils achieve age-related expectations or demonstrate accelerated progress.
Attendance and Punctuality Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intended Outcome: Pupils attend school regularly and punctually, ensuring continuity of learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance improves to at least 95% for targeted pupils. Reduction in lateness recorded term-on-term. Evidence: Consistent attendance data and improved engagement.
Social and Emotional Barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intended Outcome: Pupils develop resilience, confidence, and emotional well-being to engage fully in learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils access pastoral support and well-being programs. Increased engagement and positive behaviour in lessons. Evidence: Pupil voice surveys, reduced anxiety incidents, and improved participation.
Parental Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intended Outcome: Parents actively support their child's learning and understand how to reinforce schoolwork at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents attend workshops or receive regular guidance. Increased parental involvement in homework and school activities. Evidence: Attendance at parent events and positive feedback surveys.
Reduced Cultural Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils participate in trips, clubs, and cultural experiences.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended Outcome: Pupils experience a broad range of cultural and enrichment activities to enhance vocabulary and world knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary and contextual understanding improve in speaking and writing. • Evidence: Pupil work reflects broader vocabulary and cultural awareness.
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Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £131,806

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Phonics CPD and resources	Phonics has high impact (+5 months) for very low cost when implemented systematically. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) stresses professional development as a priority for improving teaching quality. EEF Phonics Toolkit The Department for Education (DfE) requires schools to use validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programmes and encourages Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to maintain quality. DfE guidance on phonics programmes	1,2
Mentoring of ECT and Initial Teacher Training (ITT)	EEF endorses mentoring and coaching as effective mechanisms for professional development. EEF Effective Professional Development The school provides weekly mentoring for its Early Career Teachers (ECTs) with a trained mentor as part of an established and effective mentoring system.	3,4

Cover for National Professional Qualification (NPQ) courses	EEF highlights leadership development as part of the tiered approach to improving teaching quality. EEF Guide to Pupil Premium	2
Curriculum resources – White Rose, Kapow, Twinkl, Digimaps, Math circle,	EEF stresses the importance of a knowledge-rich curriculum and high-quality teaching resources to improve attainment. EEF Menu of Approaches DfE guidance encourages investment in curriculum resources as part of high-quality teaching strategies. Using Pupil Premium: Guidance	1,2
Assessments – National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), Testbase, Tapestry	EEF recommends diagnostic assessment and effective feedback as key strategies for improving learning. EEF Assessment and Feedback Guidance [teacheducator.com] DfE guidance includes assessment as part of high-quality teaching and monitoring pupil progress. Pupil Premium Guidance	2

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

Budgeted cost: £65,903

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Academic tutor	The EEF recommends targeted academic support as part of its tiered approach to Pupil Premium spending. EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium Tutoring is included in the DfE's menu of approaches for Pupil Premium strategies. The guidance notes that tutoring can deliver up to 5 months additional progress for 1:1 tuition and 4 months for small group tuition when	1,2,4

	implemented well. Tutoring: guidance for education settings	
Interventions phonics	<p>Targeted phonics interventions close gaps in early reading skills for disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Delivered in small groups or 1:1, these interventions accelerate progress for those falling behind.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Phonics has high impact (+5 months) for very low cost when implemented systematically and supplemented with targeted interventions.</p> <p>EEF Phonics Toolkit</p> <p>DfE guidance:</p> <p>DfE mandates use of validated SSP programmes and supports interventions for pupils who need additional practice.</p> <p>DfE phonics programme guidance</p>	1,2,4
Interventions reading, writing and maths	<p>Structured interventions in literacy and numeracy address gaps in core skills. Effective when based on diagnostic assessment and delivered by trained staff.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Literacy: EEF guidance reports recommend systematic approaches to improving reading and writing, including targeted support for struggling readers and explicit teaching of writing strategies.</p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy KS1 & KS2</p> <p>Maths: EEF recommends manipulatives, representations, and targeted support for pupils who need extra help.</p> <p>EEF Improving Maths EY & KS1</p>	1,2
Interventions for SEND with PP	EEF's SEND in Mainstream Schools report recommends five strategies: inclusive environments, high-quality teaching, and targeted support.	1,2,4

	EEF SEND Guidance [education...ion.org.uk] DfE guidance: DfE expects PP funding to support disadvantaged pupils with SEND through evidence-based interventions and inclusive practice. Pupil Premium Overview	
Teaching assistant (TA) deployment	EEF's updated guidance (2025) recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy TAs to enable access to high-quality teaching. • Use TAs for scaffolding and independence. • Deliver well-chosen, evidence-based interventions. EEF TA Deployment Guidance DfE guidance: DfE includes TA deployment under its Pupil Premium menu, emphasizing strategic use and training. DfE Pupil Premium Guidance	1,2,5

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

Budgeted cost: £65,903

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Play therapy	Supports pupils with social and emotional barriers, improving resilience and engagement. Provides targeted emotional support for disadvantaged pupils. EEF/DfE evidence: EEF recommends addressing social and emotional needs as part of a tiered approach to Pupil Premium spending.	4

	<p>DfE guidance on mental health promotes a whole-school approach and targeted interventions for wellbeing.</p> <p>DfE Mental Health Guidance</p> <p>EEF Guide to Pupil Premium</p>	
Place2Be	<p>Provides professional counselling and mental health support in schools.</p> <p>Improves attendance, behaviour, and readiness to learn.</p> <p>EEF/DfE evidence:</p> <p>DfE endorses mental health support teams and targeted counselling as part of wellbeing strategies.</p> <p>Place2Be's model aligns with evidence-based early intervention principles.</p> <p>DfE Mental Health Guidance</p> <p>Place2Be Policy Recommendations</p>	4
Forest School	<p>Builds confidence, independence, and social skills through outdoor learning.</p> <p>Particularly beneficial for pupils with low self-esteem or limited cultural capital.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Outdoor adventure learning shows wider benefits for self-efficacy and motivation.</p> <p>EEF Outdoor Adventure Learning</p> <p>Research also highlights improved self-confidence and communication skills.</p> <p>Forest School Impact Study</p>	4,6
Breakfast and after school club	<p>Improves attendance, punctuality, and readiness to learn.</p> <p>Provides structured enrichment and homework support.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Breakfast provision linked to improved behaviour and attainment.</p> <p>EEF Breakfast Provision Review</p> <p>National rollout of free breakfast clubs aims to tackle disadvantage and improve outcomes.</p> <p>DfE Breakfast Club Guidance</p>	1,3

Swimming	<p>Builds confidence and physical health; essential life skill.</p> <p>Supports inclusion and wellbeing for disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Physical activity has small positive academic impact (+2 months) and strong wellbeing benefits.</p> <p>EEF Physical Activity Toolkit</p>	4,6
Music lessons	<p>Enhances cultural capital, confidence, and engagement.</p> <p>Supports creativity and cognitive development.</p> <p>DfE guidance:</p> <p>Music and arts education are recognised as vital for enrichment and wellbeing.</p> <p>DfE Music Guidance Summary</p>	2,6
After school clubs	<p>Provides enrichment and structured activities, improving engagement and attendance.</p> <p>Reduces barriers linked to limited cultural capital.</p> <p>18 free clubs ran in Term One of the 2025/6 academic year. 51% of PP learners have attended a club so far in the 2025/6 academic year.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Extended school time can support learning when linked to academic or enrichment goals.</p> <p>EEF Toolkit – Extended School Time</p>	3,6
Holiday clubs	<p>Addresses holiday learning loss and social isolation.</p> <p>Provides healthy meals and enrichment activities.</p> <p>DfE guidance:</p> <p>Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme supports disadvantaged pupils during breaks.</p> <p>DfE HAF Guidance</p>	6
Trips and experiences	<p>Builds cultural capital, vocabulary, and real-world knowledge.</p>	3,6

	<p>Supports engagement and aspiration.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Outdoor and experiential learning linked to improved motivation and self-confidence.</p> <p>EEF Outdoor Adventure Learning</p>	
Food vouchers for additional week in October half term	<p>Addresses food insecurity, supporting wellbeing and readiness to learn.</p> <p>Reduces stress for families during holiday periods.</p> <p>DfE guidance:</p> <p>Linked to HAF programme principles for tackling holiday hunger.</p> <p>DfE HAF Guidance</p>	1
Roots and Responses	<p>Aligns with EEF's emphasis on social and emotional learning and metacognition strategies.</p> <p>EEF evidence:</p> <p>Social and emotional learning approaches can add +4 months progress when well-implemented.</p> <p>EEF SEL Toolkit</p>	4

Total budgeted cost: £263,612

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Our school serves a community with high levels of disadvantage: around **44% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals in the last six years**, which is well above the national average of 24.7%. This context matters because it often brings additional challenges, such as attendance and engagement.

Attendance and Absence

Attendance for disadvantaged pupils is a significant concern. In the most recent year, their attendance was **88.8%**, compared to a national figure of **92.6%**. Persistent absence is particularly high: **42.9% of disadvantaged pupils were persistently absent**, almost double the national rate. This means many children are missing large amounts of learning time, which directly affects progress and attainment.

Attainment at Key Stage 2

In 2025, only **34% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined**, compared to **69% nationally for non-disadvantaged pupils and 47% for disadvantaged**. This gap has widened over time. In individual subjects:

- **Reading:** 45% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard (national disadvantaged: 63%).
- **Writing:** 55% met the expected standard (national disadvantaged: 59%).
- **Maths:** 45% met the expected standard (national disadvantaged: 61%).

While results in 2023 were stronger, recent years show a decline, especially in maths and combined reading, writing and maths.

Progress

Progress scores for disadvantaged pupils are well below national averages in all subjects:

- Reading: **-4.9** (national disadvantaged: -0.9)
- Writing: **-3.6** (national disadvantaged: -0.7)
- Maths: **-3.6** (national disadvantaged: -1.0)

These figures mean that disadvantaged pupils are not making the same gains as their peers nationally.

Phonics and Early Literacy

Phonics results are also below national averages, with **72% meeting the expected standard** compared to **80% nationally**. This early gap can affect reading confidence and later attainment.

What This Means

Our disadvantaged pupils face significant barriers, and the data shows that gaps are widening rather than narrowing. Attendance is a major issue and improving this will be key to raising achievement. The school is prioritising:

- **Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence**
- **Targeted support in reading, writing and maths**
- **Early intervention in phonics and language development**
- **Focused use of Pupil Premium funding to close gaps**

We are committed to working with families and the wider community to ensure every child has the best chance to succeed.

Progress against our intended outcomes from last year:

1. Attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths

We are **not on target** to achieve parity with national non-PP pupils. In 2025, only **34% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined**, compared to **69% nationally for non-disadvantaged pupils**. This gap has widened since 2023, when performance was stronger. Progress scores for PP pupils remain significantly below national averages in all subjects, indicating that accelerated progress is not being achieved.

2. Accelerated Progress Across Key Stages

Our strategy aimed for accelerated progress for all PP pupils, including high attainers. However, progress measures show that PP pupils are falling behind:

- Reading: **-4.9** vs national disadvantaged **-0.9**
- Writing: **-3.6** vs **-0.7**
- Maths: **-3.6** vs **-1.0**

This suggests interventions have not had the desired impact, particularly for middle and low prior attainers.

3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

We have made **some progress** here. Pastoral support and Emotional Literacy Support

Assistant (ELSA) sessions have improved individual pupils' confidence and behaviour incidents have reduced slightly. However, SEMH challenges still affect engagement and attendance, which in turn impacts attainment. Linking emotional support more closely to academic progress remains a priority.

4. Baseline Development for New Pupils

Our induction and support for new pupils is working well. Staff report smoother transitions and improved readiness for learning. This aspect of the strategy is on track.

5. Communication and Language Development

Phonics results remain below national averages (72% vs 80%), and gaps in vocabulary and language continue to affect reading and writing outcomes. While early years interventions are in place, the impact is not yet strong enough to accelerate progress for older pupils.

What's Working Well

- **Access to resources:** All pupils now have books and access to resources for home learning.
- **Enrichment and cultural capital:** Pupils have experienced a range of trips and activities, which is improving vocabulary and engagement.
- **Baseline support for new pupils:** Effective systems are in place.

What's Not Working Well

- **Attendance and persistent absence:** PP pupils' attendance is **88.8%** and persistent absence is **42.9%**, far above national averages. This undermines all other strategies. Breakfast and afterschool wrap around care are free to PP learners and attendance letters are sent to parents.
- **Academic progress:** Despite interventions, PP pupils are not closing gaps in core subjects. Closer tracking through pupil progress meetings and targeted interventions seek to close this gap.
- **Parental engagement:** Engagement remains inconsistent, especially among families facing the greatest challenges. Further opportunities for parental engagement through Parents' Evenings and other events are planned.

Summary

We have made progress in resource access and enrichment, but **attendance, progress in reading, writing and maths, and language development remain**

significant concerns. These areas will be the focus of our strategy for this academic year.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Counselling	Place2Be
Forest School	Anna Outdoors
Roots and Responses	Audrey Pantelis

Further information (optional)

Our approach to supporting disadvantaged pupils goes beyond the use of pupil premium funding. We aim to provide a wide range of opportunities that enrich learning, build confidence, and develop cultural capital.

Our pupil premium strategy is strengthened by our school promises, which ensure every child feels a sense of belonging and community while developing the skills and values needed for success. These promises benefit children by promoting respect, diversity, perseverance, responsibility, and kindness—creating an inclusive environment where every pupil can thrive.

We also have a clear behaviour curriculum and consistent expectations across the school, which provide structure, security, and fairness for all pupils. This consistency helps disadvantaged pupils feel safe, supported, and ready to learn.

Specialist staff from The Canterbury Academy work with our pupils to deliver additional sessions in performing arts, practical learning, academic subjects, and sports—giving access to experiences that might otherwise be out of reach. Fundraising activities also play an important role, helping pupils learn about community involvement and supporting others.

Performing arts pupils regularly perform at a local theatre, developing creativity and self-esteem. We teach French and Spanish from Year 1, exceeding national requirements, so pupils gain early language skills that prepare them for future academic success.

We also bring cultural experiences into school through visitors such as African drummers, authors, and animal specialists. These activities broaden horizons and strengthen cultural understanding. Caring for our school guinea pigs offers pupils emotional support and teaches responsibility through hands-on learning.

Together, these initiatives and our school promises—**respect everybody and celebrate diversity, have high expectations, give our best effort, ensure every voice is heard, care for our environment, and be charitable and considerate**—help disadvantaged pupils thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, while feeling part of a caring school community.

Our monitoring processes, including work with governors, will include a clear lens to evaluate the experiences and opportunities offered to our most disadvantaged learners, ensuring that our provision remains ambitious, inclusive, and impactful.