

Pupil premium strategy statement – Underwood West Academy

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	455 (503 with nursery)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	53%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024 - 2027
Date this statement was published	September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	Laura Jones
Pupil premium lead	Kate Evans
Governor / Trustee lead	Anthony Noden

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£330,780
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£ 0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£330,780

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Underwood West Academy is a vibrant and happy school with a hardworking, enthusiastic and dedicated staff team. We have a very well established and experienced senior leadership team and a school ethos where the children are at the heart of everything we do.

We are a large two/three form entry school in Crewe, Cheshire, in an area of significant deprivation and children can start school with us, in our nursery, from the age of 2. Currently, 31.6% of our children speak English as an additional language and a large majority of our children start school with very low-level language skills.

Early intervention is key at Underwood West and we are focusing on language development in all its forms with a clear emphasis on vocabulary, oracy/speaking and reading. We constantly look to refine and improve practice in this area whilst also providing targeted interventions to struggling learners in addition to their daily lessons. We strongly believe that our curriculum should provide all our children with as many opportunities as possible and we aim to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding to create a level playing field and improve the life chances for all our educationally disadvantaged children.

A high proportion of our children also face social and emotional barriers to their learning so we have built a strong pastoral team to overcome these barriers. Pastoral care is an integral part of our school's ethos and plays a crucial role in fostering a holistic approach to education. It encompasses the well-being of pupils ensuring their physical, emotional, social, and mental needs are met, creating a supportive and nurturing environment where they can thrive both academically and personally.

A clear, shared understanding of strategic milestones and goals, set out at the start of this strategy, enable constructive conversations between staff members, governors, executive leaders and Trustees and ensures that we remain focussed on the main thing, improving teaching, learning and outcomes for our children.

We believe in maximising the use of the pupil premium grant (PPG) by utilising a long-term strategy linked to the Academy Development Plan. This enables us to implement a blend of short, medium and long-term interventions linked to wider school improvements and improving readiness to learn.

The PPG is used to ensure that every child receives the best possible quality of education and achieves the highest possible standards. The activities outlined in this statement are intended to support the needs of all socially and emotionally disadvantaged children and those who are vulnerable; those now and previously known to social care, those with a special educational need or disability, those with English as an additional language and those who identify as a young carer.

Our priorities

- To support our pupil's health and wellbeing to enable them to access learning at an appropriate level
- Raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils to be at least in line with attainment nationally
- Providing targeted academic support for pupils who are not achieving the expected standard or are not making expected progress
- Addressing non-academic barriers to attainment, including attendance, well-being and behaviour
- Developing the early language development of the most disadvantaged

Implementation

- Ensuring that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all the pupils
- Ensuring that appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, this includes ensuring that the needs of disadvantaged children are adequately assessed and addressed
- When making provision for disadvantaged pupils, we recognise that not only all pupils who receive free school meals will be disadvantaged
- We also recognise that not all pupils who are disadvantaged are registered for or qualify for free school meals. We reserve the right to allocate the PPG to support any pupils or groups of pupils the school has legitimately identified as being disadvantaged.

Our tiered approach

To prioritise spending, we have used a tiered approach for many years to define our priorities and ensure balance. The tiered approach comprises of three categories:

1. Teaching – ensuring outstanding teaching for all pupils
2. Targeted Academic Support – evidence informed interventions
3. Other Wider Strategies – addressing non-academic barriers to learning

The range of provision for these categories include but are not inclusive of:

Teaching strategies

- Reading for pleasure focus across school
- Further development of the Take One Book scheme supported by expert consultant Nikki Gamble
- Further development of Talk for Writing across school supported by a consultant expert Emma Caulfield
- Development of early readers
- Use of high-quality literature to supplement the text library of resources in school and continued use of our School library
- Use of the White Rose Maths workbooks to develop stamina
- Regular training in staff meetings throughout the year to support the continued development of the reading, writing and maths approaches used
- Smaller class sizes in Y6
- Smaller class sizes in Y1
- Bespoke teacher-led Nurture group for KS2 pupils with EHCPs
- Bespoke teacher-led SEND group for EYFS/KS1 pupils with EHCPs
- Use of PIVATs and the Engagement model to plan individual support for pupils with SEND

Targeted Academic Support

- Pupils are identified through pupil progress meetings to provide targeted individual and small group support for their barriers

- Reading squads have been set up to deliver phonics and early reading
- Phonics and early reading interventions are in place every afternoon
- Additional Speech and Language provided in school
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) practitioner employed for 3 afternoons per week
- Mediating Learning Support Assistant (MeLSA) practitioner employed for 2 afternoons per week

Wider Strategies

- Universal daily breakfast club
- Forest schools 1 afternoon per week
- Full time family support worker
- 2 x full time Learning mentors
- Full time counsellor to provide bespoke therapeutic support to identified pupils
- Speech therapist employed 1 day a week
- On site lending library
- Spanish tutor 1 afternoon per week
- Educational visits accessible to all
- Employment of additional SENDCo

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	English – vocabulary

	<p>On entry to Reception in 2023, only 24% of our cohort of pupils were assessed as on track in speaking (20% of PP children) which is a familiar story for us.</p> <p>Assessments, observations and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils from N2 through to KS2 and in general are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils than their peers in the Early Years and KS1.</p>
2	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Overall attendance in 2023-24 was 94.05% (93.63% for PP children) which has risen from 93% in 2022-23. However, we are still below the national average of 95% and aspire to reaching 96%. Attendance for all our pupils needs to improve which is why whole school attendance and persistent absenteeism remains a focus on this current plan. Assessments and observations indicate absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress and we know that what goes on in the classroom on a daily basis makes the biggest difference to our children so will always strive for excellent attendance for all.</p>
3	<p>Social and emotional barriers to learning</p> <p>Assessments, observations and discussions with pupils, families and external agencies have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils. These issues particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment. Teacher referrals to our pastoral team remain high and there is often a waiting list to access our pastoral interventions. 53% of our pupils were identified as vulnerable in 2023-24 and of these 61% were pupil premium.</p> <p>14 children attend our Nurture group this year, 70% of these are pupil premium. 19 children accessed 1:1 counselling sessions in 2023-24. Learning mentors had 43 children on their caseload which does not include the children they see on a daily meet and greet basis and our ELSA specialist saw 19 children in 2023-24</p>
4	<p>Wider opportunities</p> <p>A large percentage of our pupils have limited access to enriching life experiences owing to social deprivation and we aim to provide all children with the opportunity for these experiences as a stimulus for learning and enabling links between learning. Additionally, we aspire to provide opportunities for those pupil premium children who have been identified as talented in other areas of the curriculum through afterschool clubs and expert-led coaching,</p>
5	<p>Raising attainment in reading, writing and maths</p>

	<p>On entry to Reception in 2023, there were no children at the expected standard for word reading from the baseline assessment, no children at the expected standard for writing and only 7% at the expected standard for number (10% of PP children).</p> <p>These statistics show the low starting levels at which the children enter school and we are incredibly proud that in May 2024, 47% of our PP children achieved the expected standard in all subjects; reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2, which is higher than the national average from 2023.</p>
6	<p>SEND needs</p> <p>There are so many more SEND referrals being made and more children have entered our early years provision with EHCPS in place. The challenges are more complex and more extreme with a much higher level of significant need. This year we will have 17 children with an EHCP which is an increase of approximately 30% this in turn generates additional meetings with parents and external agencies alongside reviews, assessments and reports</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	Review 2024-25
Improved oral and language skills and vocabulary among our disadvantaged pupils	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved language among disadvantaged pupils. This will be evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence including oral language assessments, engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment	
To ensure that speech and language development does not affect the outcomes for any pupil	Identified children receive specialist support during the school day	

<p>Improved reading, writing and maths attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS1 and KS2</p>	<p>Assessments will show no gap in attainment between the PP and Non-PP children at the end of KS1</p> <p>Y2 children will have made accelerated progress from the start of the year levels of attainment</p> <p>KS2 reading, writing and maths standards are at least in line with but we aspire to be above with the national statistic for disadvantaged children (45% combined in 2024)</p> <p>Observations indicate pupils identified at pupil progress meetings will make good or better progress</p>	
<p>To improve attainment and progress in EYFS</p>	<p>Starting points will be higher in September 2025 as children move through our nursery</p> <p>GLD at the end of Reception will be in line with the national average</p>	
<p>To ensure high quality intervention takes place throughout school</p>	<p>Identified children accessing intervention will make good or better progress, tracked through pupil progress meetings termly.</p>	
<p>To ensure that a socially and economically disadvantaged home life does not have a negative impact on pupil's progress and attainment</p>	<p>Targeted children attend breakfast club daily</p> <p>Disadvantaged children are making progress and attaining in line with non-disadvantaged</p> <p>Qualitative data from pupil voice, pupil and parent surveys and teacher observations</p> <p>There will be a significant increase in participation of enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils</p>	
<p>To ensure that mental health is not a barrier to children making expected progress and achieving age related expectations</p>	<p>Children with need are identified early and access support on the mental health pathway</p> <p>Children identified will then receive the necessary support to remove barriers to</p>	

	learning and this will positively impact on their progress and attainment	
Provide pastoral support and intervention for those most vulnerable and at risk of underachievement	Children in receipt of pastoral support make at least expected progress	
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged children	Sustained growth in our attendance figure in 2024-25 The overall absence rate for all pupils will be no more than 4% and there will be no gap in attendance for our disadvantaged children Persistent absenteeism will be no more than 10% in 2024-25 and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no lower than their peers	

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: £ 25,383

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<p>Continued CPD consultancy support with Monster Phonics, Take One Book and Talk for Writing</p> <p>Investment in whole class sets of books to use with the Take One Book scheme</p> <p>Investment in further Monster Phonics books as engagement in the e-book system is much lower than we would like, ensuring all children have the opportunity to practice reading at home</p> <p>Investment in further books – Reading Spine and Page turners to develop reading areas in the classroom and promote reading for pleasure</p> <p>Investment in visualisers for all classrooms to support the ongoing implementation of Talk for Writing</p> <p>Investment in White Rose Maths workbooks</p>	<p>DFE Evidence on Reading for pleasure</p> <p>Evidence suggests that reading for pleasure is an activity that has emotional and social consequences (Clark and Rumbold, 2006).</p> <p>Other benefits to reading for pleasure include: text comprehension and grammar, positive reading attitudes, pleasure in reading in later life, increased general knowledge (Clark and Rumbold, 2006).</p> <p>Young people who receive 1 free school meals (FSM) are less likely to read fiction outside of the classroom (Clark 2011).</p> <p>Book trust has published an evidence-based report on the importance of shared early reading</p> <p>‘The growing disadvantage gap between children from low-income families and their more affluent peers starts in the early years and persists throughout childhood. As a matter of urgency, any discussion about supporting children in their early years needs to include measures that will motivate and encourage children and families to share stories together so they can experience both the immediate and longer-term benefits of reading.’</p> <p>EEF – Improving Literacy in KS2</p> <p>Evidence has consistently highlighted that both decoding (the ability to translate written words into the spoken the</p>	<p>Challenge 1</p> <p>Challenge 5</p>
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<p>We will support the cost of NPQ qualifications to further develop teachers</p> <p>We will continue to subscribe to subject associations to provide ongoing CPDL opportunities for all teachers in many areas of the curriculum</p> <p>We will provide cover for teachers to ensure that leaders can lead their subjects successfully and we will ensure that teams have time to work together collaboratively to ensure the sharing of best practice by employing subject experts in some areas of the curriculum</p>	<p>sounds of spoken language) and comprehension (the ability to understand the meaning of the language being read) skills are necessary for confident and competent reading.</p> <p>The EEF's Early Years Toolkit estimates that effective early numeracy approaches typically increase children's learning by about seven months.</p> <p>EEF Improving mathematics in KS2 and KS3</p> <p>EEF guide to pupil premium – tiered approach, teaching is the top priority, including CPD</p> <p>The EEF's Effective Professional Development guidance report highlights essential building blocks – or mechanisms – which can help to bring about changes in teacher behaviours and improve pupil outcomes. The mechanisms can be divided into four key groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Knowledge, • Motivate teachers, • Develop teacher techniques • Embed practice (Sims et al 2021) <p>What Makes Great teaching Coe et al 2014</p> <p>Evidence shows the most effective teachers have deep knowledge of the subjects they teach. As well as a strong understanding of the material being taught, teachers must also understand the way students think about the content,</p>	
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	be able to evaluate the thinking behind students' own methods and identify students' common misconceptions.	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £159,098

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>We will ensure that phonics and early reading interventions take place every afternoon in addition to the main classroom teaching</p> <p>We will use a specialist Nurture group teacher to support those children in KS2 with an EHCP</p> <p>We will use the Vice Principal alongside a part time teacher to create 3 smaller classes in Y6</p> <p>A fully trained ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) practitioner is employed for 4 hours a week</p> <p>A full time Learning Mentor will provide pastoral support for disadvantaged children identified</p>	<p>EEF: Phonics Toolkit strand</p> <p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from a disadvantaged background. Targeted phonics and reading interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period of up to 12 weeks</p> <p>Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for FSM typically receive similar or slightly greater benefit from phonics interventions and approaches. It is possible that some disadvantaged pupils may not develop phonological awareness at the same rate as other pupils, having been exposed to fewer words spoken and books read in the home. Targeted phonics may therefore improve decoding skills more quickly for pupils who have experienced those barriers to learning.</p> <p>EEF Teaching and Learning toolkit: Social and emotional</p> <p>Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely</p>	<p>Challenge 3</p> <p>Challenge 5</p>

<p>with social and emotional barriers to learning</p> <p>We will use the GL Assessment Dyslexic screener and Dyslexic Guidance to identify need more quickly</p>	<p>to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment.</p> <p>SEL interventions in education are shown to improve SEL skills and are therefore likely to support disadvantaged pupils to understand and engage in healthy relationships with peers and emotional self-regulation, both of which may subsequently increase academic attainment.</p>	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £134,648

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>An attendance admin will be employed to support SLT and manage the day to day attendance calls and attendance visits as per the schools attendance policy</p> <p>A full time Family Support Worker is employed to work with our most vulnerable children and their families alongside external agencies</p> <p>After school clubs will target disadvantaged children who excel in other areas of the curriculum</p>	<p>EEF Attendance – Rapid Evidence Review</p> <p>‘Three quarters of schools in England say poor attendance and low-reading levels are the biggest challenges affecting their socio-economically disadvantaged pupils’ academic achievement.’</p> <p>There is evidence to suggest that targeted school-based interventions have led to improvements in well-being and mental health, yielding reduced levels of school exclusion and improved pupil attainment (Banjeree et al 2014)</p> <p>Research indicates that school-based counselling is perceived by children and pastoral care staff as a highly accessible, non-stigmatising and effective form of early intervention for reducing psychological distress (Cooper, 2009)</p>	<p>Challenge 2</p> <p>Challenge 3</p> <p>Challenge 4</p>

<p>A Spanish tutor will be employed to facilitate cover of classes so that subject leaders can implement change and lead their subjects successfully</p> <p>A Forest Schools leader will be employed to provide enrichment activities</p> <p>All educational visits will be funded by school to ensure that all children actively engage in curriculum enrichment activities and they are building their cultural capital</p> <p>Additional SENDCo hours have been provided so that the needs of the children can be assessed quickly and school can engage with the appropriate outside agencies. The SENDCo will also support all staff in school to ensure consistent adaptive practices are in place for all disadvantaged children with SEND</p> <p>We will provide a universal breakfast club, to ensure that all children have had a healthy start to their day and are not coming starting their school day hungry</p>	<p>The EEF's Effective Professional Development guidance report highlights essential building blocks – or mechanisms – which can help to bring about changes in teacher behaviours and improve pupil outcomes. The mechanisms can be divided into four key groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Knowledge, • Motivate teachers, • Develop teacher techniques • Embed practice (Sims et al 2021) <p>EEF Guide to Pupil Premium – Wider strategies</p> <p>EEF Evaluation report: Breakfast clubs that offer pupils in primary schools a free and nutritious meal before school can boost their reading, writing and maths results by the equivalent of two months' progress over the course of a year.</p> <p>Evidence from the Nuffield foundation highlight the potential value of after school clubs for increasing opportunities for disadvantaged pupils as well as supporting positive outcomes. And states:</p> <p>After school club attendance was associated with positive academic and social outcomes for disadvantaged children in particular.</p>	
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	Organised physical activities were associated with higher attainment and better social, emotional and behavioural outcomes at age 11.	
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Total budgeted cost: £ 319,129.00

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Outline the performance of your disadvantaged pupils in the previous academic year and explain how it has been assessed. You should draw on:

- *Data from the previous academic year's national assessments and qualifications, once published (including school attainment and progress measures)*
- *EBacc entry data for secondary schools*
- *Comparison to local and national averages (a note of caution can be added to signal that there are ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected schools, and pupils, differently) and outcomes achieved by your school's non-disadvantaged pupils*
- *Information from summative and formative assessments the school has undertaken.*
- *School data and observations used to assess wider issues impacting disadvantaged pupils' performance, including attendance, behaviour and wellbeing*

You should state whether you are on target to achieve the outcomes of your strategy (as outlined in the Intended Outcomes section above) and outline your analysis of what aspects of your strategy are/are not working well.

If last year marked the end of a previous pupil premium strategy plan, you should set out your assessment of how successfully the intended outcomes of that plan were met.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider