Pupil premium strategy statement – Hermitage Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding (and the recovery premium) 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 had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1017
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	27.73%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2021 - 2024
Date this statement was published	November 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2024
Statement authorised by	Y Weston
Pupil premium lead	C Boyce
Governor / Trustee lead	J Blower

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation academic year 2023/24	£312,520
Recovery premium funding allocation 2022/23 only	*£73,675*
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	£386,195

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Hermitage Academy is working to support disadvantaged students in all areas of their education from the moment that they arrive in school. Our aim is that every disadvantaged student will achieve at least as well as their peers, have every opportunity to excel and be fully prepared for the next stage in their education and future employment. It is vital that we support our students' physical and mental health and wellbeing to enable them to fully engage in learning. Students need to experience a wealth of enrichment experiences to widen their horizons and unlock future opportunities.

Some disadvantaged students face many and complex barriers during their education which make effective learning very difficult. Other students have very specific, individual needs and others, have few barriers at all. Below are some of the main difficulties faced, although it must also be said that the difficulties encountered are not unique to those who are disadvantaged. We aim to meet and support students at their point of need, wherever possible and feasible.

Common barriers to learning for disadvantaged students include less support at home, especially during the pandemic, weak language and communication skills, fewer opportunities to read books, fewer resources to help with learning (e.g. text books / internet access), lack of confidence, more frequent behaviour difficulties. Attendance and punctuality concerns. Some students have struggled with their physical and mental well-being, and this has been significantly exacerbated as a result of the previous pandemic. There may be complex family situations that prevent children from flourishing. Some students have limited opportunities to experience cultural trips and visits so that their cultural capital and experiences are widened as broad as possible. Some have fewer opportunities to learn about the wide range of opportunities once they leave school for higher education and employment. The challenges are varied and there is no "one size fits all".

Pupil Premium (and the Recovery Premium) Funding contributes to the work of the school in meeting the needs of disadvantaged students by:

- − working with students and their families to identify the causes of attendance which may be of concern and support good attendance
- − ensuring that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all the students
- − ensuring that all students benefit from high-quality teaching in the classroom
- − ensuring all students have a place to study in school where they can access adult support, class texts and the internet
- − offering tuition in small groups or 1-to-1, where there is an identified need
- − developing the resilience of students, building their self-esteem and enabling them to develop the skills that will enable them to learn effectively in the classroom environment
- − providing therapeutic intervention, where needed, through the use of personal intervention programmes (PIPs) and counselling, where appropriate
- − working closely with students who need additional support to manage their behaviour
- − ensuring students have every opportunity to access enrichment programmes

- ensuring students receive high-quality careers information, advice and guidance so that they have high aspirations for themselves and for their future, with additional support and guidance wherever needed
- ensuring students' personal development is well-supported and that they are ready for post-16 education/training/employment or apprenticeships
- meeting individual needs, wherever possible and feasible.

Challenges

The below details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged students.

Our assessments and observations indicate that the education, well-being and regular attendance of many of our disadvantaged students have been impacted by the previous pandemic and school closures, to a greater extent than for other students. These findings are supported by national studies.

Through our observations and discussions with students and their families, we know that many students struggle with social and emotional issues and heightened anxiety, which was significantly exacerbated by school closures during the course of the pandemic.

All students, of course, have suffered from gaps in their knowledge due to absences historically. Although, despite our best efforts with on-line learning, it is still no replacement for time in the classroom. We have undertaken significant work around our curriculum planning to evaluate where each student had gaps in their knowledge, and then plans have been swift to support them in closing these gaps. We recognise that the additional challenges faced by disadvantaged students makes it harder to fill these gaps and to catch-up with their lost learning.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	All students need the highest quality of teaching in every classroom. High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school.
2	Our internal data shows that some students struggle to attend regularly, some are often late, and some are persistently absent (exacerbated by the pandemic).
3	Some students struggle to manage their behaviour.
4	Some students need extensive pastoral support for a variety of reasons.
5	Some students struggle with the increased complexity of organisation with a secondary environment and increased demands for independent work.
6	Some students face significant challenges in their lives and have social, emotional and mental health needs that prevent them from learning.
7	Some students need additional adult support to help and enable them to fully achieve their potential both during the school day and after school with managing homework.

8	Some students need individual tuition and/or teaching in small groups to enable them to achieve.
9	Some students have little aspiration for the future and are in need of additional adult support and additional careers guidance so that they do not limit their own potential.
10	Some students have very low expectations of themselves. In order to respond to the school's high expectations, they need constant re-enforcement and encouragement. Some families need support so that they are able to raise their expectations for their children and this may require targeted intervention and support, including around appearance and equipment.
11	Some students have low levels of literacy and numeracy which impedes their learning and their confidence.
12	Some students lack access to the internet and the use of computers to support their studies.
13	Some students lack space to study, support from an adult or both.
14	Some students need to experience a wealth of enrichment experiences in-order to widen their horizons and unlock future opportunities.
15	Some students do not have access to a healthy diet which impacts on their general well-being. Some do not participate regularly in sports and need proactive, individual support in order to overcome barriers.
16	Some students need additional personal development so that they have the resilience to cope with everyday challenges, form strong, positive relationships and are ready emotionally for key transitions.
17	Some students arrive from KS2, already significantly behind their expected levels in Reading, Writing, Maths and Science.
18	Some children arrive from KS2 less able to express themselves verbally due to a combination of a more limited vocabulary and a lack of social confidence both of which have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

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
Students who are disadvantaged achieve well and at least in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 4	✓ Progress 8 score of disadvantaged cohort is positive and they attain well.
Attendance	✓ Average attendance of disadvantaged cohort is in-line with the national averages, or above for all students. ✓ Persistent absence is in-line with the national average for all students or below.
Transition ready	✓ Students complete transition matrix to assess and evidence readiness for post-16 progression. ✓ All students have transition plans in place in-line with career development strategy.

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: £111,996

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
High quality professional development for all staff to secure high quality teaching strategies underpinned by metacognitive strategies, planning for interleaving and retrieval practice and grounded through a rich knowledge-based curriculum	EEF guide to pupil premium – tiered approach – teaching is the top priority, including CPD EEF guide to improving working memory EEF : Metacognition and Self Regulated Learning	1, 11, 16, 17, 18

Staffing costs to provide coaching support and lead professional development.	EEF guide to pupil premium – tiered approach – teaching is the top priority, including CPD Sutton Trust – quality first teaching has direct impact on student outcomes.	1, 11, 16, 17, 18
Deepen teacher's understanding of pedagogy across each curriculum area by engagement with subject specialists in their field. Visits to a main feeder primary schools to observe Y5/6 pupils will be undertaken to enhance teacher's understanding of how knowledge builds in readiness for the next key stage and make amendments as needed to the curriculum. Staff to work with feeder primaries to support transition curriculum links	EEF : Effective Professional Development EEF: Teaching and Learning Toolkit Ofsted: Subject Curriculum research reviews	1, 4, 11, 16, 17, 18
Staff training to improve tier 2/3 vocabulary acquisition across the curriculum so that pupils are able to access the full curriculum and articulate their understanding. Training to close the deficit in vocabulary on entry so that all pupils can engage in high level classroom discussions and read/write at a suitable level to access the secondary curriculum	EEF: Preparing for Literacy EEF: Improving Literacy – Supporting oral language development KS1/KS2 EEF: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	1, 11, 16, 17, 18
Learning resources: Expenditure on textbooks and training to support bespoke subjects. Expenditure on development and Maintenance of online learning platforms for pupils to support learning (Student POD/Teams)	EEF: Teaching and Learning Toolkit The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3	1, 5, 11,12, 16, 17, 18

Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring support and structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £114,812

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Gaps in maths and English identified by teaching staff. Maths and English tuition leads plan for bespoke intervention to enable pupils to catch up on earlier work that is missed or poorly understood, due to the pandemic. Deliver series of lessons (1-1 or small group) to enable pupils to consolidate insecure learning and catch up with the schemes of learning. Where appropriate and possible, classes to be reduced in size to increase individual support and facilitate recovery of learning. (This is a whole school priority that encompasses all pupils)	EEF : Teaching and Learning Toolkit - One to one tuition & Small Group Tuition	1, 8, 11, 17, 18
In all other subjects, Heads of Department to identify pupils who need bespoke curricular intervention Pupils should be taught in small groups where there are common areas or individual 1-1 tuition arranged as appropriate.	EEF : Teaching and Learning Toolkit - One to one tuition & Small Group Tuition	1, 8, 11, 17, 18
Professional development for all staff in developing a love of reading for pleasure and for learning within their specialist subject areas. Identified pupils - 1-1 regular reading planned into curriculum. Support for pupils to learn is provided through the library and Laurea Centre	EEF: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	1, 8, 11, 17, 18
To provide students with adult mentoring support, access to workspace and IT facilities to support their learning and support with the completion of homework.	EEF : Mentoring	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17
To identify students with low levels of literacy and numeracy which impedes their learning and their confidence and facilitate / enable bespoke provision to meet the identified needs.	EEF: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	8, 11
Provision and deployment of teaching assistants appropriately is essential to supporting learning 'in the moment' and being able to respond to pupils who need additional support to keep up and catch up.	EEF: Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants	1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11

Provision and staffing of safe spaces available to targeted pupils throughout the day.	NFER: Recovery during a pandemic	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16
Social and Emotional Learning – interventions to support pupils with a range of skills including for example, emotional regulation, managing grief. Deployment of Senior Mental Health Lead.	NFER: Recovery during a pandemic	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16

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

Budgeted cost: £160,271

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance team to work with families to reduce the absence of pupils who struggle to attend regularly.	EEF: Guide to the pupil premium DfE: Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities Sutton Trust: Learning in Lockdown	2
Pastoral teams to support pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour including provision of personal intervention programmes.	EEF: Teaching and Learning Toolkit – Learning behaviours EEF :Improving Behaviour in Schools	3,4,5,6,7, 9, 10, 14, 15
To provide the pastoral support to pupils who need additional help, including those who face significant challenges in their lives and have social, emotional and mental health needs that prevent them from learning well (this includes support for those who have experienced bereavement) Provision of bespoke fitness activities for identified pupils to engage with sports and improve their health and fitness.	EEF: Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools EEF: Guide to the pupil premium EEF: Healthy Minds DFE: Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges	3,4,5,6,7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16
Encourage pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities (onsite) to widen their experiences and broaden their horizons. Facilitate pupils in taking part in range of enrichment experiences (off site) in-order to widen their horizons and unlock future opportunities.	EEF: Guide to the pupil premium	14, 15
Provision of breakfast club to support students before school.	National School Breakfast Programme (NSBP)	15

| Planned opportunities for Character Education | DfE: Developing character skills in schools
NFER: Leading Character Education in Schools | 16, 18 |

Total budgeted cost: £386,195

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.

The vast majority of students engage well in learning, enjoy lessons and work hard. Where there are identified issues, this is where we direct efforts so that individuals get targeted pastoral and academic support.

Attainment and progress for disadvantaged students is below that of their non-disadvantaged peers in the external examinations in 2023. However, the gap is closing year on year and we aim for there to be no gap by the end of this academic year because of the approaches that we have embedded. Absence has a negative impact on both attainment and progress, although we have a suite of support available from dedicated teams.

The vast majority of students have progressed to post-16 education, employment or training. Two students are working with 'Durham Works' to support them with their needs and next steps. The deployment of pupil premium funding has been utterly crucial in supporting our students throughout the pandemic and its aftermath.