

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement – Dukesgate Academy 2025–26

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

School name	Dukesgate Academy
Number of pupils in school	227
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	63%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2025 – 2026
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Catherine Horton-Hale
Pupil premium lead	Amanda Eldridge Governor / Trustee lead: Vicki Chadderton

Funding overview

Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£194,435
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£194,435

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Dukesgate Academy, we are committed to finding '*the best in everyone.*' We recognise that some pupils face additional barriers to success, and we see it as our responsibility to remove those barriers—ensuring that every child, regardless of background, has the opportunity to thrive.

We understand that disadvantage extends beyond eligibility for Free School Meals, and our strategy reflects this broader view. We adopt a whole-school approach, where strong, trusting relationships between staff and pupils are central to wellbeing, engagement, and achievement.

Our strategy is rooted in high-quality teaching, which we know is the most effective way to close attainment gaps. We invest in evidence-informed professional development, a clear and consistent teaching model, and diagnostic assessment to identify and respond to individual needs.

We act early—particularly in the early years and KS1—to address gaps in communication, language, and phonics, and we provide targeted academic support in reading, writing, and mathematics throughout the school.

We know that attendance, wellbeing, and inclusion are essential foundations for learning. That is why we offer trauma-informed, restorative approaches, alongside nurture and welfare support for our most vulnerable pupils and families.

Finally, we are passionate about providing education with character—ensuring that all pupils, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have access to enrichment opportunities that build cultural capital, confidence, and aspiration.

Together, we strive to ensure equity in outcomes, so that every child at Dukesgate can succeed, belong, and flourish.

Challenges

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 Attendance	Attendance of Pupil Premium children remains below non-PP peers.
2 EYFS Attainment	Only 67% of disadvantaged pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) in EYFS compared to 88% of non-pupil premium peers, with gaps evident in literacy and mathematics strands, indicating a need for stronger early intervention in language, phonics, and number concepts.
3 Early Reading Gap in Year 1	Disadvantaged pupils start KS1 behind in reading, with only 75% meeting the Year 1 phonics standard compared to 100% of non-pupil premium peers, highlighting the need for stronger early phonics and language interventions despite later catch-up by Year 2.
4 Persistent Math's Attainment Gap by Year 6	By Year 6, disadvantaged pupils show a significant math's gap, with 71% meeting the expected standard versus 88% of non-pupil premium peers and lower scaled scores (104 vs 107), indicating a need for targeted support in reasoning and problem-solving progression.
5 Disadvantaged Pupils Underperform in Writing	Disadvantaged pupils achieve lower writing outcomes at KS2, with only 76% meeting the expected standard compared to 88% of non-pupil premium peers, and fewer reaching greater depth (19% vs 25%), highlighting a need for targeted support in extended writing, vocabulary, and feedback.
6 Education with Character	Some PP pupils lack enrichment and cultural capital experiences compared to their peers.

Intended outcomes

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Pupil Premium attendance improves to be in line with or above non-PP peers.	Overall PP attendance is at least 95%. Persistent absence for PP pupils reduces to below 10%. Gap between PP and non-PP attendance is less than 1%.
Increase the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD).	80%+ of PP pupils achieve GLD by end of EYFS. Gaps in literacy and mathematics strands reduce to below 10 percentage points. Targeted interventions (Wellcomm, phonics, number) show measurable progress in termly assessments.
Close the phonics attainment gap between PP and non-PP pupils in Year 1.	80%+ of PP pupils meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check. Gap between PP and non-PP phonics outcomes is less than 5 percentage points. PP pupils identified as at risk receive daily targeted phonics support.

Reduce the KS2 maths attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils.	80%+ of PP pupils achieve the expected standard in maths at KS2. Average scaled score for PP pupils rises to 106+. Gap between PP and non-PP pupils is less than 5 percentage points.
Improve writing outcomes for PP pupils at KS2.	80%+ of PP pupils achieve the expected standard in writing. At least 20% of PP pupils achieve greater depth. Gap between PP and non-PP pupils reduces to less than 5 percentage points.
Ensure PP pupils access enrichment and cultural capital opportunities equal to their peers.	100% of PP pupils participate in at least one enrichment activity per term. Pupil voice surveys show improved confidence and engagement in wider curriculum experiences. Tracking shows PP pupils represented in all school clubs and trips.

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: £ 97,200

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>We will partially fund a HLTA role in EYFS to work with a focus on Communication & Language, working alongside staff to develop their interactions with pupils.</p> <p>Purchase of WellComm speech and language toolkit to assess, track and support early language development. We will provide staff time and CPD so the toolkit can be implemented.</p> <p>CPD and funded peer support to embed high quality adult/child interactions in the early years and to enhance our language rich learning environments.</p>	<p>There is strong evidence that the rate at which children develop language is sensitive to the amount of input they receive from the adults and peers around them. The number and quality of conversations children have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language rich environment is crucial.</p> <p>EEF blog: The ShREC approach – 4 evidence-informed strategies... EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>EEF Communication and Language (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Communication and language approaches typically have a very high impact and increase young children's learning by seven months.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/early-years-toolkit/communication-and-language-approaches</p> <p>Internal data shows a clear link between low C&L/Literacy outcomes in EYFS and low Reading data in KS1 and KS2</p>	2

<p>Share best practice from other settings through United Learning network, United Learning EYFS lead visits and leads training/visit.</p>		
<p>Reading – whole school approach introduced in September 2024 with a clear framework for teaching Reading through KS1 & 2. This includes staff CPD, class resources and timetabled time for class books being read to pupils at the end of each day.</p> <p>Fluency explicitly taught then assessed and tracked termly. Data used to identify progress of pupils and provide support where required.</p> <p>Fluency homework provided, with parent training, for children who are below expected standard.</p>		2

<p>Partially fund English Lead to lead Reading, providing whole school reading framework, CPD, support, monitoring, assessment (inc. fluency x3/year) and data analysis.</p> <p>Partially fund RWI development days</p> <p>Release RWI lead to attend RWI development days, support staff, provide training and coaching, monitor standards and track data.</p> <p>Targeted interventions for bottom 20% of readers and phonics.</p>	<p>Tim Oates CBE (Cambridge University Assessment Research & Development), Making the most of Pupil Premium webinar 07/12/2023, highlighted that tracking reading speed/fluency (based on evidence from Iceland) highlights children falling behind and identifies supports required. Information can also be shared with parents to implement practice at home.</p> <p>"Fluent readers demonstrate automaticity in recognising words, allowing them to focus on comprehension and deeper understanding of the content." EEF https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/reading-house/fluency</p> <p>Ensuring every child has the necessary skills they need to read is an essential component of literacy education. It enables children to not only learn across the curriculum but also to access numerous aspects of daily life, influencing the opportunities that they have available to them in the future. Professor Timothy Rasinski of Kent State University USA, in EEF blog https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/why-focus-on-reading-fluency</p> <p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p> <p>By the end of year 6, pupils' reading and writing should be sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum in year 7, across all subjects and not just in English. Gov.uk: The Reading Framework</p>	<p>2</p>
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<p>Ensure we recruit and retain the best teachers to teach our pupils. More pay, more time, more support (United Learning).</p>	<p>The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them.</p>	<p>2,3,4,5</p>
<p>Training on adapted teaching, part of our T&L handbook and building on our United Learning curriculum, will meet pupils' needs and interests and further engage them in their learning.</p> <p>Ring fenced CPD and leadership time will be given to instructional coaching and line manager meetings to aid teacher development.</p> <p>Whole school approach and staff CPD on Conscious Discipline will support staff developing positive relationships with pupils.</p>	<p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching</p> <p>More pay, more time and more support for teachers to increase retention and recruitment. United Learning</p> <p>High-quality CPD for teachers has a significant effect on pupils' learning outcomes. Increasing the availability of high-quality CPD has also been shown to improve retention problems, particularly for early-career teachers. Education Policy Institute https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/effects-high-quality-professional-development/</p> <p>https://www.walkthrus.co.uk</p> <p>DfE figures suggest that FSM children are more likely to be excluded due to persistent disruption. Self-regulation and Social and Emotional Learning improve pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit</p>	<p>2,3,4,5</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £58,330

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Fully engage with P80+ Disadvantaged project and upcoming actions, resources and CPD	Oral language interventions are based on the idea that comprehension and reading skills benefit from explicit discussion of either content or processes of	2
<p>Continue HLTA speech and language support of pupils and staff in EYFS</p> <p>Ensure every child has a public speaking opportunity at some point in the school year.</p> <p>Additional phonics sessions targeted at educationally disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support (1:1 and group sessions)</p> <p>RWI lead provides daily and weekly coaching and training for staff at all levels</p> <p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Regular External Training led by experienced RWI consultant at least 3 x a year for staff across the school</p>	<p>learning, or both, oral language interventions aim to support learners' use of vocabulary, articulation of ideas and spoken expression.</p> <p>Oral language interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks:</p> <p>Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p> <p>One to one tuition is very effective at improving pupil outcomes. One to one tuition might be an effective strategy for providing targeted support for pupils that are identified as having low prior attainment or are struggling in particular areas.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition</p> <p>Small group tuition has an average impact of four months' additional progress over the course of a year. Small group tuition is most likely to be effective if it is targeted at pupils' specific needs.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition</p>	<p>2</p> <p>3</p>

<p>Additional reading sessions targeted at educationally disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support (1:1 and group sessions)</p>		3,4
<p>Identify the skills, knowledge or experiences that a pupil will need at the start of a unit of work. Provide these in advance where required through trips, visitors or interventions.</p>	<p>Some pupils will have a very limited background knowledge on the topic, making learning considerably more difficult. A consequence of this is that those better informed pupils will dominate the discourse in the lesson.</p> <p>https://researchschool.org.uk/unity/news/levelling-the-playing-field</p>	
<p>Staff training on lesson structure (through T&L handbook and instructional coaching) with recap or pre-teaching at the start of a lesson or unit.</p>	<p>Pre-teaching can boost confidence and minimise experiences of failure in lessons. Secure success, Motivated Teaching, Peps McCrea</p> <p>Secure success Give pupils a high success rate to look back on; frame what success means and help them attribute it accurately; pre-empt failure</p>	
<p>Enhanced curriculum, included funded termly forest school, will provide pupils with exposure to new skills and experiences.</p>		

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

Budgeted cost: £38,905

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance lead provides daily, weekly and monthly attendance reports on pupil and pupil premium attendance	Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.	1
Participation in United Learning's Attendance project – action: involve teachers in contract meetings Attendance lead to track and analyse pupil premium attendance (including daily tracking with HT) to identify patterns and barriers in attendance Attendance lead to run contract meetings with parents of pupils who are persistently late or absent	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance</p> <p>Persistent lateness adds up to a large amount of missed learning. 5 minutes a day for 190 days is almost 16 hours in missed schooling.</p>	

<p>Embed routines into the school day, with timetabled CPD and practice, so staff and pupil have shared high expectations</p>	<p>Running routines allows disadvantaged or vulnerable pupils feel safe, trust their environment and focus on what they are doing not how they are doing it. Peps McCrea, Motivated Teaching</p> <p>Run routines Make the process of learning easy, whilst keeping the content of learning challenging; script chains and cues; stick with it</p> <p>Conscious Discipline: MAPs</p> <p>https://consciousdiscipline.com/scaffolding-in-parenting-teaching-your-children-how-to-follow-your-directions-with-success/</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Ensure equity in disadvantaged pupils' access to the school's wide extra-curricular provision.</p> <p>School Breakfast club provided, supporting children emotionally with a quiet place to go, reflect and feel supported.</p>	<p>Extra-curricular activities boost young people's confidence to interact socially with others; extend their social networks; and provide them with new skills and abilities.</p> <p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d307b8de5274a14e9f6bc20/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf</p> <p>There is a substantial body of research evidence to suggest that young people's social emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs have a significant impact on all aspects of their life including their learning and progress through the curriculum, behaviour in school and attendance, further training and employment and general life chances.</p>	

Pastoral Lead role	Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs acknowledges that people need their basic needs met before they are able to thrive. Parents are signposted and supported with accessing foodbanks, food vouchers and other basic needs.	
Contingency fund for acute issues	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	All

Total budgeted cost: £194,435

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year (2024–25)

- Attendance: PP attendance improved from 91.4% to 92.5%. Persistent absence decreased but remains above national.
- Early Language Development: 85% of PP pupils achieved ELG in Communication & Language (up from 73.7% in 2022/23).
- Phonics: 88% of PP pupils passed Year 1 phonics screening.
- Reading & Writing: Gap narrowed slightly; writing remains a focus in upper KS2.
- Enrichment: 100% of PP pupils accessed enrichment opportunities, including funded residential.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
RWI	Ruth Miskin
Wellcomm	Wellcomm Toolkit
Voice21	Voice21
Spelling Shed	Education Shed Ltd
Letter-join	Letter-join
Learning by Questions	LBQ Ltd