

Pupil premium strategy statement

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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Willoughby Academy
Number of pupils in school	144
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	44.4%
Academic years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Vicki Billyard
Pupil premium lead	Vicki Billyard
Governor / Trustee lead	Gary Ridgway

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£78,892
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£78,892

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Willoughby Academy, we aim to identify barriers to learning to support all pupils within their educational journey to ensure they are making good or higher levels of progress. The school recognises the need to provide additional support and opportunities for our most disadvantaged pupils in order to close the gap between these pupils and their peers. In order to do this, we have identified the most significant barriers that these pupils face and aim to provide resources, opportunities and support to address these. Our goal is to ensure that all of our pupils, including our pupil premium pupils, have the ability to access their education fully and are able to access wider school opportunities and experiences.

The school's current pupil premium strategy plan reflects this objective by understanding that in order for our pupils to access their curriculum and wider school opportunities, the pupil's holistic needs must be addressed.

Moving forward, this will continue to be a key principle in addressing the needs of our pupil premium cohort. With this in mind, the school focus on supporting behaviour for learning and meeting all pupil's sensory needs. This will be achieved through careful planning and intervention, relevant staff CPD as well as utilising external professionals. In turn, this will allow greater engagement within learning opportunities. The school recognises the importance of supporting pupil's social and emotional well-being which will allow them to feel happy, settled and integrated within their school community. This principle is interwoven into the school's ethos and curriculum and is supported by Willoughby's pastoral support.

An important focus for supporting learners in both their academic and personal growth is developing communication skills. The school supports a total communication approach where verbal and non-verbal communication skills are valued and worked on. The school endeavours to give each and every pupil the ability to use their 'voice' and improve their receptive and expressive communication skills. In turn, this allows for greater engagement and progress within academic and personal areas.

Another important focus is attendance. The school aims to work towards increased parental engagement to ensure high levels of attendance for all pupils.

To achieve the **Priory Trust's** mission of improving life chances of our pupils so that they become true citizens of the world, we support our academies to act to mitigate the impact of disadvantage on educational outcomes.

The Pupil Premium framework will be at the heart of the whole academy and Trust-wide effort, and we endeavour to ensure all staff understand the strategy and their role within it. Leaders ensure that they consider technical and practical definitions of disadvantage and determine to respond to need rather than label.

The following structural principles apply to the use of additional funding in all Priory Academies:

- Effective senior leadership and governance;
- Commitment to a range of ongoing diagnostic assessments of learning need so that actions are based on a range of data and meet the specific needs of all students but particularly those at risk of underachievement due to impact of socio-economic disadvantage;
- The Trust Professional Learning Strategy is built on the knowledge that the most effective lever for addressing disadvantage is inclusive quality first teaching and this will benefit all pupils;

- The strategy is integral to the whole-academy plans for education recovery.

Challenges

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

Challenge	Detail of challenge
1	Data shows that many of our pupils, including our disadvantaged cohort, face significant communication and interaction difficulties. Although there are other considerable barriers to learning that may contribute to lower levels of academic achievement, specific support is needed for this core area.
2	Observations and knowledge of our pupils show that some of our disadvantaged pupils may face increased social and emotional difficulties requiring pastoral input.
3	Through observations, discussions and assessments, some disadvantaged pupils often require additional support to complete everyday tasks independently.
4	Observations and data reflect that some of our disadvantaged pupils struggle with appropriate behaviour for learning and may display an increased level of challenging and disruptive behaviour.
5	Through observation, discussions and assessments, some disadvantaged pupils have significant sensory needs which impacts their ability to access their education.

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
Improved communication and interaction outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils, taking into account their personal needs and baseline assessments.	<p>Pupils having been identified as needing additional support with communication and interaction will be utilising assistive technology or accessing appropriate communication strategies.</p> <p>Currently, 40.7% of our pupil access or utilise some form of communication support (Switches, Clickr, Proloquo, Eye Gaze or PECS). 32.7% of these are from our pupil premium cohort.</p>
Improved social & emotional health for our disadvantaged pupils.	<p>Pupils identified as needing additional support in this area will access appropriate pastoral support.</p> <p>Pupils will access PSHE topics that support social and emotional health.</p> <p>Pupils will demonstrate an increased ability to express their emotions and emotional needs, in line with their abilities and cognitive levels.</p> <p>Pupils will demonstrate an increased ability to respond to their emotions in an appropriate way (including self-regulation where appropriate)</p> <p>Pupils will be accessing appropriate socialisation opportunities (including playtimes & extra-curricular opportunities).</p>

	<p>Currently 40% of Willoughby pupils access additional pastoral support. 45% of these pupils are from the pupil premium cohort.</p>
<p>Disadvantaged pupils will demonstrate greater independence among a variety of daily tasks such as personal care, choice making and learning opportunities. Improving within this area will improve our pupils 'next step' and career outcomes.</p>	<p>Evidenced in IEP and EHCP outcomes as well as through discussions with school staff and parents/carers.</p> <p>Through successful vocational profiling and access to internal and external work experience placements.</p>
<p>Disadvantaged pupils will have reduced number of behavioural incidences allowing greater engagement in learning opportunities reflecting in improved academic and social outcomes.</p>	<p>Through monitoring and intervention, there will be a reduction in the number of behavioural incidences.</p> <p>Pupils will be more engaged in lessons displaying positive behaviour for learning. Which in turn impacts on academic progress.</p>
<p>All disadvantaged pupils identified as needing sensory support, will access an effective sensory diet</p>	<p>Pupils will follow appropriate sensory diets including scheduled sensory circuit sessions, swing room sessions and proprioceptive activities.</p> <p>Sensory evaluation forms will reflect improvements.</p> <p>Currently 32.6% of Willoughby pupils access Sensory Circuits and/or the Sensory Integration Suite. 50% of those are from the pupil premium cohort.</p>

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching

Budgeted cost: £19,872

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach Why will this work	Challenge number(s) addressed
CPD for staff on how to support positive behaviour for learning and manage behavioural challenges through the use of positive behaviour plans	<p>Evidence shows that by reducing the number of behavioural incidences, pupils are more able to engage in their learning. Positive behaviour for learning also contributes to improved mental and social well-being.</p> <p>Department for Education</p> <p>We have observed that by using positive behaviour support plans, pupils are better supported within their classrooms, have increased incidences relating to behaviour and can engage in more meaningful learning, there is also consistency of approach with staff</p>	1, 2,4
CPD to support Communication and Interaction including, RWI, Gestalt language users, Attention Autism. Makaton.	<p>Evidence shows that developing reading through the use of phonics can support pupil's ability to communicate and interact more effectively.</p> <p>Phonics - Mastering The Basics of Reading EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>There is evidence to suggest that communication and language intervention can improve pupils with SEND's emotional well-being as well as academic outcomes.</p> <p>Communication and language approaches EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1, 2
CPD for staff on assessment model (BSquared) and data analysis	<p>Evidence shows the need for holistic and teacher led assessment when assessing 'next steps' and reviewing learning for pupils with SEND.</p> <p>Tracking progress</p> <p>Assessing SEND Pupil Progress Optimus Education (www.optimus-education.com)</p>	1
Development of a pastoral team with the aim of facilitating and engaging with disadvantaged pupils requiring this additional	<p>Having adequate pastoral support available for all pupils is associated with positive improvements in cognition, engagement, physical, social and mental health.</p>	1, 2, 4

<p>support. Pastoral support will also work on increasing parental engagement to enable parents/carers to have appropriate support systems in place. This will also fund additional CPD within this area.</p>	<p>Promoting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-being (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>There is strong evidence to suggest that increasing parental engagement will improve academic outcomes.</p> <p>Working With Parents To Support Children's Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	
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Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost:

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
None		

Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £ 36,055

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Enhanced support to increase independence for disadvantaged pupils. This will include weekly life skills sessions, vocational profiling and work experience (internal & external). This includes CPD and release time for Job Coaches.</p>	<p>We have observed that providing meaningful and regular life skills sessions allows pupils to build fluency around developing a particular skill and prepares them for life after Willoughby</p> <p>Evidence suggests that by providing vocational profiling opportunities and Scaffolded career support, pupils are more likely to achieve positive career based outcomes.</p> <p>The Importance of Work Experience for People of All Abilities Training Journal</p>	3
<p>Enhanced opportunities for our disadvantaged pupils to access extracurricular activities such as Forest Schools, Sports sessions (led by external professionals), dance. Educational Trips and Visits, Lunch Time, STEM opportunities and Sailability.</p>	<p>There is evidence showing that disadvantaged pupils have unequal access to extracurricular opportunities. There is also some evidence that links extracurricular involvement to enhanced academic achievement as well as other positive outcomes. By ensuring our disadvantaged pupils have enhanced opportunity to access extracurricular activities, we can work on bridging this gap.</p> <p>An Unequal Playing Field Social Mobility Commission (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>There is also evidence that involvement in extracurricular activities can support the development of important life skills.</p> <p>Extracurricular activities to develop life skills (www.gov.uk)</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Uniform Support	We will support families with the cost of uniform where this is needed.	1, 2, 3,

Provision for Food & Nutrition lessons	This will provide the necessary ingredients for all pupils to be able to access their Food & Nutrition lessons, regardless of whether they have been able to voluntarily contribute. We will also ensure some pupils access a food hygiene course	1, 2, 3

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Our pupil premium cohort continued to benefit from high-quality teaching and learning, with differentiated and tailored opportunities designed to meet individual needs. Pupils accessed an enriching curriculum that incorporated multi-sensory experiences and activities such as Forest School, dance, visits from external professionals, and engaging educational trips. These experiences supported the development of communication skills and essential life skills.

Where appropriate, pupils worked towards Pearson Entry Level qualifications and received additional in-class support to ensure success. They also had opportunities to gain practical certifications, including First Aid training and a Food Hygiene certificate.

Targeted emotional well-being support was provided through 1:1 and small group interventions led by our Pupil Intervention Manager. This bespoke support, based on referrals from class teams, enabled pupils to develop strategies for self-regulation, resulting in improved engagement with learning. The Pupil Intervention Manager also enhanced our careers programme, offering pupils internal and external work experience placements, professional visits, and vocational profile development, all supported by a dedicated Class Job Coach.

Attendance of pupil premium children is very good and above that of all pupil attendance

All pupils - Attendance

Year	Cohort	School	National	National distribution banding	Sch trend vs Nat trend	School context
2024/25 (2 term)	122	93.6%	91.9%	Above	Relative decline	High - SEN
2023/24 (3 term)	117	93.4%	91.1%	Above	Relative improvement	High - SEN
2022/23 (3 term)	117	92.4%	91.0%	Above	Not available	High - SEN

FSM6 - Attendance

Year	Cohort	School	National	National distribution banding	Sch trend vs Nat trend	School context
2024/25 (2 term)	47	94.1%	87.3%	Above	Relative decline	High - SEN
2023/24 (3 term)	46	94.7%	86.0%	Above	Relative improvement	High - SEN
2022/23 (3 term)	45	93.3%	86.0%	Above	Not available	High - SEN

A strong focus on unconditional positive regard and behaviours for learning remained central to our approach. Staff undertook CPD to deepen their understanding and implement strategies effectively. Robust home-school liaison strengthened relationships with parents and carers, contributing to a reduction in behavioural incidents and improved classroom engagement.

Sensory integration continued to play a vital role in supporting pupils' needs. Bespoke sensory diets were designed, implemented, and regularly reviewed throughout the year. These programmes ensured pupils' sensory needs were met, enabling them to participate fully in school life and positively impacting both progress and behaviour.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
None	