

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 academic year. This funding is used 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	Thirsk School and Sixth Form College
Number of pupils in school	1017
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	28% (Yrs7-11)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2025
Statement authorised by	Emma Lambden
Pupil premium lead	George Hollis
Governor / Trustee lead	Amy Binks

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£232,354
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£13,110
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	£245,464

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Over the past three years we have focused on responding to the disproportionate impact that lengthy periods of school closure had upon our disadvantaged students. This pupil premium strategy, which looks to build on what we have done in that last three-year plan, is continuing to focus on eliminating this impact, working to close the gap in attainment and progress levels. It also looks to go beyond the classroom, to support the mental and physical health of our disadvantaged students, to develop their engagement in extra-curricular activities, to inspire them to attend school and to help develop their social and cultural capital.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance and levels of persistent absence.
2	Behaviour incidences including exclusions
3	Academic engagement and ambition, leading to poorer levels of achievement
4	Wellbeing, mental health and safeguarding concerns.
5	Parental engagement
6	Extra-curricular involvement, including the building of greater social and cultural capital
7	Literacy and numeracy levels

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
Attendance is brought in line with all other students	Attendance data shows a gap between PP and all students in all year groups. Although this gap has closed in the last year, the attendance of PP students is still far too low. We will aim to eliminate this gap, whilst also raising the attendance of all students.
There is a reduction of behaviour incidences including exclusions	Behaviour data will show that we have reduced the number of fixed term exclusions for our PP students.

Academic progress is brought in line with all other students	There will be a closing of the gap in both our P8 and A8 score, with the aim that all students achieve highly, regardless of their situation
Our PP students engage with the full range of extra-curricular activities, in line with all other students	Attendance monitoring of extra-curricular activities will show that our PP students are attending on the same level as all other students.
Our capacity to both strategically and reactively deal with any mental health issues enables mental health issues to be less of a barrier to a successful time in school	Through working with our pastoral team, inclusion unit and external agencies we will see less lesson time missed due to mental health issues.
Parental engagement with the school is strong and positive	Parental surveys will continue to show consistently positive views of the school, and attendance at events such as parent consultation evenings will be equally high for all students.
Literacy levels rise as students move up from school, so that by year 11 there is no longer a PP literacy gap.	Data will show that our PP students are making swift progress in literacy, so that they are measurably in line with their peers by Year 11.

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)

The Sutton Trust report of 2011 assessed the impact of teachers on pupil achievement. This found that the effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Over a school year, these students gain 1.5 years' worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers. In other words, for our disadvantaged students the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher can be the equivalent of a whole year's learning. Therefore, the single most important thing we can do to support vulnerable students is consistently work to maintain and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The actions listed below reflect our strategic engagement with improving teaching and learning for all our disadvantaged students.

Budgeted cost: £69,938

Actions <i>NB: Not all of these actions are directly funded out of money received for our Pupil Premium students. However, they are all relevant to the development of our teaching and learning strategy.</i>	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>The continued employment of a literacy and numeracy coordinator</i>	The impact of improving literacy and numeracy levels is widely acknowledged. The coordinator will continue to strategically sharpen our explicit engagement with this.	3 and 7
<i>Build on our strategic overhaul of the teaching and learning strategy to ensure best quality first teaching.</i>	The greatest impact on progress and attainment comes from high quality first teaching. This is widely cited in reports by institutions such as the EEF and Sutton Trust. This strategic overhaul will look to ensure that our disadvantaged students receive the best teaching possible in every classroom	3 and 7
<i>Proactively developing the monitoring of teaching and learning, distributed across all levels of leadership.</i>	In order to ensure that all teaching reaches the high standards that we expect, the need to monitor and feedback is crucial. This needs to be a part of leadership at all levels in the school, and will support our drive to	3 and 7

	ensure that all our disadvantaged students receive the best teaching possible in every classroom	
<i>Providing extra time for teachers in Maths, English and Science in order to both reduce class sizes and allow for greater small group/individual support.</i>	The EEF and Sutton Trust both acknowledge that smaller group intervention can have significant impact. This time allows for greater strategic engagement with the curriculum and targeting of students who have been identified as needing extra support.	3 and 7
<i>Purchasing of resources to support pupil premium students in certain subjects (eg: extra revision guides).</i>	Whilst all the resources that students need are provided by the school, there are times when we appreciate the need to support our disadvantaged students.	1, 3, 4, 5, and 7
<i>Continuing to fund the use of the accelerated reader scheme.</i>	Accelerated reader provides an impetus to support reading. It provides us with regular data about reading age and, following a report by our librarian in March 2021, we can see evidence that it engages our students and supports their literacy.	3 and 7
<i>Lexia</i>	This is a more targeted literacy strategy than accelerated reader, and will allow us to support individuals more.	3 and 7
<i>Providing relevant CPD for staff.</i>	We want our staff to be highly trained in the most current pedagogy. This ensures that students get the best experience in the classroom. We also fund specific courses/reading and research that are targeted to individuals with specific roles and responsibilities.	Potentially all
<i>Providing relevant pedagogic research and reading for staff.</i>		Potentially all

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

Whilst we have our greatest impact through our teaching and learning, we also understand the importance of more individualised academic support, both individually and in small groups. These actions below represent how we are academically supporting students beyond the classroom

Budgeted cost: £73,230

Action	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<i>The provision of holiday school to students</i>	In the period since Covid we have used a range of holiday schools to support our disadvantaged students.	3, 7 and 8
<i>Exploring options for one to one/small group tuition, mentoring and support</i>	One to one mentoring is mentioned by the EEF as an effective strategy for supporting students. This mentoring is mainly academic, and supports revision strategies and attitude to learning. We have previously used 'pupils are people for this approach' and are now exploring new options to support this.	Potentially all
<i>Covering tutor time for the Heads of English and Maths, enabling them to strategically intervene with individuals/groups.</i>	This strategy provides expert support to small targeted groups. The impact of such an approach is widely cited.	3, 7 and 8

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

Education is not simply about academic progress and attainment. We want to develop students who engage positively with our school values. We want to support our students with their mental sense of wellbeing. We hope that all our students will leave Thirsk with a strong sense of positive social and cultural capital, and an enthusiasm for engaging in extra-curricular activity. In order to achieve this we need to firstly work to raise attendance, and then provide every opportunity for our disadvantaged students to engage in all the opportunities that education offers.

Budgeted cost: £105,075

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Attendance manager and parent support advisor appointment</i>	Attendance at school enables our students to access all of the other opportunities we offer, both in and outside of the classroom. There is currently a gap between the attendance of our disadvantaged students and all	1 and 5

	other students. These appointments will help us close this gap.	
<i>Inclusion mentoring</i>	Our inclusion unit is designed to support the mental wellbeing of all our students. Proportionately this support is given to large numbers of our disadvantaged students. By supporting their mental wellbeing, and training them to be resilient, we support their learning in the classroom and approach to extra-curricular activities.	4
<i>Extra-curricular funding (eg: provision of musical instruments for students)</i>	Extra-curricular engagement can open up huge opportunities for young people. Wider research is needed on the correlation between engagement in sport/music etc and academic achievement/progress. However, it is anecdotally noted as being important in Thirsk. Therefore we will support our disadvantaged students in engaging with all extra-curricular opportunities.	5 and 6
<i>Transport for students to certain activities/clubs etc.</i>	We provide opportunities for our students that go beyond school, such as engagement with the Thirsk Clock, or outdoor education courses. These opportunities will always be funded for our disadvantaged students.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
<i>Supporting students with resources for school including uniform.</i>	If students struggle to wear our uniform then this can have huge impacts on self-esteem and mental wellbeing. We will therefore support students who are struggling with this.	1, 2, 4, 5 and 6
<i>Funding of extra-courses (eg: agricultural course at Cargill).</i>	We provide educational opportunities for our students that go beyond school, such as the Cargill agricultural course. These opportunities will always be funded.	Potentially all
<i>Funding of extra opportunities in supporting work experience, understanding of career opportunities and potential apprenticeships.</i>	We provide huge opportunities for our students to engage with work experience and careers education. Programmes such as the construction course organised by Willmott Dixon. These opportunities will always be funded for our disadvantaged students.	Potentially all
<i>Funding of cashless catering</i>	Some students feel stigmatised for receiving free school meals. The cashless catering system prevents this.	4, 5 and 6

Total budgeted cost: £248,243

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 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Over the last three years we have followed a Pupil Premium strategy which was built in response to Covid. A detailed report of the impact of Covid was researched and discussed, and formed the basis of our strategic interventions in the period 2021-24. A key focus of this plan was on improving the quality of teaching, as consistent evidence from research bodies such as the EEF point to the fact that the best way of achieving success for our disadvantaged students is through consistently strong teaching in the classroom. Some evidence of successes in this teaching and learning strategy were indicated in our positive Ofsted report in 2022, and this has continued to be a priority in 2023-24, with the use of IRIS and training to support all staff in meeting our teaching and learning model.

Beyond these strategies, students have also been supported individually in their academic performance. This has taken place through targeted tutoring, provided after school in supervised, online sessions from www.mytutor.com, and through individual mentoring, as well as through numerous other strategies. This was in addition to ideas such as the annual Easter schools, to which all our disadvantaged year eleven students were invited. Internal tracking data in previous years has shown impact of these interventions, with a rise in P8 being marked in the internal assessments and the GCSE results. However, in 2024 the results for our disadvantaged students continue to be lower than we would like, with all students gaining an attainment score of 43.6, versus our disadvantaged students, who gained 30.5. Our PP students are also not making as much progress as other students with an estimated P8 gap of -0.81. This has happened despite significant tutoring, mentoring, and extra support, alongside the work on teaching and learning. Following evidence of a narrowing of the gap in the first couple of years of this PP plan, this is now a larger gap than in 2022-23, and will need to be an urgent area to address as we build on the planning of the past three years. As a key part of doing this, we are looking to develop on our literacy strategy, which has been in place now for three years, and are looking to expand the use of Lexia. This scheme, which is separate to the accelerated reader scheme, give us the ability to strategically support more individuals in this area, and is intended to overcome some of the literacy barriers that students may be facing.

Whilst strong teaching is intended to be the basis of success for our disadvantaged students, we are aware that attendance can be a significant barrier. Numerous aspects of this plan are designed to support strong attendance because, if students are not in lessons, then they cannot benefit from the quality of the teaching. In 2022 there was an attendance gap, with PP students attending 89.2% in contrast to our overall attendance

of 92.8 (December 2022). In December 2023 the attendance of PP students had further dropped from the previous year to 87.1%, with a similar drop occurring for all students, who were attending 91.5% of the time. By July 2024 we had seen a drop in the attendance of all students to 87.9%. In this same period, our PP students continued to attend 87.2% of the time. Whilst PP attendance has not dropped in line with the rest of the school, both the figure for PP students, and for all students is way too low, and is acknowledged as a key strategic area to develop in 2024. It is noted that students are less likely to attend as they move up the school, and significant work will need to continue with our upper school students, as we support them in getting into school. Attendance will be a key feature of our planning over the next three years. One issue that has continued to develop in 2023-34 is that of internal truancy, with students attending school but missing lessons. The Growing Up in North Yorkshire survey, conducted in 2024, has indicated that our school scores lower in terms of resilience than other local educational settings, and this is something that we need to work on through the planning of our personal development strategy

Considerable focus has gone on supporting our disadvantaged students in engaging with the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities offered by the school. Many trips are fully funded from this budget, and we have also purchased numerous amounts of kit and equipment which students have needed. Following these actions, in 2023-24 it was more likely for a disadvantaged student to regularly attend an extra-curricular club or go on a trip than for the rest of the school, with 79.4% of our PP students taking advantage of these opportunities, as opposed to 77.7% overall. These PP statistics are strongest amongst our Year 7 students (83%), where the Year 7 choir had considerable impact in the first term, and in our Year 10 students (85%), where D of E and several curriculum trips have had strong PP engagement. We are now looking at ways of engaging Year 8 and 9 students on similar levels, and hope that strategies such as the new radio station, and the wider development of the house competitions will support this.

Overall our three year plan has seen successes in terms of engagement with the extra-opportunities laid on by the school. However, we will need to strategically address issues in attainment, progress and attendance, all of which are below what we would hope to achieve.;p

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
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National Tutoring Programme 3-1 and 1-1
tutoring

www.mytutor.co.uk