

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Earls High School

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	The Earls High School
Number of pupils in school	1298
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	22.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024/2025 to 2027/28
Date this statement was published	October 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2025
Statement authorised by	Jamie Fox Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Amie Houlston Deputy headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Andrew Harwood Chair of Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 329,680.00
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>	£ 329,680.00

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At The Earls High School we pride ourselves on ensuring that no child is left behind. We believe that no student should be disadvantaged by their socio-economic background. Therefore, our overall aim is for disadvantaged students to achieve both strong outcomes and make excellent progress, in line with their peers in school and nationally, whilst enhancing their Personal Development through involvement in the vast array of extracurricular and enrichment opportunities offered to them.

Guided by the Education Endowment Foundation's extensive research-based approach, our budget allocation and strategy focuses first and foremost on attendance.

Following this, we will adopt a robust diagnostic approach when evaluating individual challenges our disadvantaged students may face. This will enable identification of the most appropriate targeted academic support and wider strategies to ensure these challenges are overcome.

We have a range of provision for our students' and we will select the most appropriate based on the needs of the individual. To ensure these approaches are effective, we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged and supported in the work that they are set
- act early to intervene at the point when need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 Attendance	Attendance data for the last three years indicates a clear attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students According to attendance data in Autumn 1 of 2024-25 and national trends, disadvantaged students are more likely to be persistently absent than other students. Our observations and assessments of these students indicate that attendance is having a significant detrimental impact on disadvantaged pupils' progress.
2 Reading	According to diagnostic assessment, 7% of our Year 7 students have a Reading Percentile of 20 or lower. However, 35% of these students are Pupil Premium so there is a disproportionate amount of Pupil Premium students represented in this cohort needing intervention. Research suggests that lower reading ages will have a negative impact not only on performance in English, but across the curriculum.

	Over the last three years, 20% more of our non-disadvantaged students achieved grade 5 in both English and maths. Therefore, the reading gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged seems to be sustained throughout their time in school.
3 Improving support for SEMH students	Disadvantaged students are disproportionately represented (50%) in our identified SEMH cohort. Previous data and trends within our context suggest that these students are more likely to underperform in their GCSE examinations. Their underperformance attributable to risk factors associated with being identified as SEMH. This is representative of a national picture Outcomes for children in need, including children looked after by local authorities in England, Reporting year 2023 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK whereby disadvantaged students are more likely to be identified as SEMH and nationally they achieve lower attainment and progress in comparison to other students.
4 Self-regulation	Our observations and national research suggest many lower attaining disadvantaged pupils lack metacognitive / self-regulation strategies when faced with challenging tasks, notably in their monitoring and evaluation of their answers within a classroom setting. Therefore, ensuring students have access to high quality modelling, scaffolding and feedback is essential for disadvantaged progress. However, self-regulation also manifests within social interactions and unstructured time. In context at The Earls High School, we have noticed a correlation between poor self-regulation of behaviour from our disadvantaged students leading, historically, to a higher number of behaviour points and suspensions.
5 Personal Development	National research suggests that socio-economic status is a significant factor in determining participation in extracurricular activities. Children from more wealthy households are much more likely to take part in every type of activity, but especially music classes and sport. Barriers to taking part in extra-curricular activities for those from low-income households include their high cost, a lack of confidence, and difficulties in access. This is seen in context at The Earls High School with a historically lower percentage of disadvantaged students taking part in extracurricular activities and achieving the Earls Gold award. Analysis of our destination data also suggests that our disadvantaged students are less likely to go onto further education to study appropriate level 3 or A level courses, they are also more likely to become NEET.

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
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1) To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	- The overall absence rate for all pupils and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being no more than national average. - The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below national average and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers to have narrowed when compared to 2023/24 data.
2) A vast majority of disadvantaged students are on or above the 40th percentile for reading comprehension at end of Year 7 and as they transition to GCSE at the end of Year 9, and that those who are significantly below are making rapid progress.	Reading tests demonstrate an improved Reading Percentile Rank among disadvantaged pupils and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers by the end of year 8.
3) To improve support for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2024/25 demonstrated by: - Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. - Improved outcomes for SEMH Pupil Premium students. - Improved attendance for SEMH Pupil Premium students
4) Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills, both academic and social and emotional, among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects and within unstructured time.	Improved self-regulation in social situations through a reduction in suspensions, refocus and referrals to pastoral programmes for disadvantaged students when compared to non-disadvantaged. We would also expect a reduction in the gap between attitude to learning grades. All teaching staff completing attachment and trauma training Outcomes for disadvantaged students improve because of excellent modelling, scaffolding and systematic use of a wide range of feedback to facilitate progress. Staff developing confidence in using feedback strategies will be evidenced in ADAPTS cycle feedback.
5) To increase and sustain numbers of disadvantaged students taking part in extracurricular activities and achieving the Earls Gold Award.	Participation rates in Extracurricular between Pupil Premium and non Pupil Premium should be equal as should the proportion of students achieving The Earls Gold Award each year.

	All disadvantaged students to receive 1-1 careers guidance and there will be no NEET Pupil premium students in destination data.
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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 (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £7800

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Introduction and CPD time for the behaviour curriculum	CPD is focusing on establishing clear behaviour routines which are strategically mapped and explicitly taught to students. This equips staff and students with consistent and shared expectations for behaviour for learning. This will help students who find self-regulation a challenge. Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
ADAPTS cycle focusing on feedback for 24-25	Feedback is shown, from a strong evidence base, to have high impact on the progress of students. This year, our CPD ADAPTS cycle is focusing on improving feedback within the classroom with specific focus on live feedback and whole class feedback. Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4

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

Budgeted cost: £91,367

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Use of the MyTutor to provide academic	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method	2

support. A majority of students will be disadvantaged with particular focus on those who are borderline for English and Maths at 4+ and 5+	to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one and small group tuition is shown to be effective. Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	
Academic mentor support to focus on students with significant gaps in learning and targeted to those students who are disadvantaged and making less progress than expected in year 11.	One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) The National Tutoring Programme, supported by extensive research from the EEF has suggested that an Academic Mentor, if deployed effectively, can improve the progress of pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.	1,2,4
Introduction of EdClass to support students who are struggling to attend school full time.	5. Deliver targeted interventions to supplement universal... EEF In the supporting school attendance EEF guidance, strand 5 emphasises the importance of targeted intervention that is personalised and appropriate for persistent or particularly challenging causes of pupil absence	1
Use of the following interventions for students primarily in Year 7 and 8: Bedrock Learning Catch-Up Literacy Word-Wise Flash Academy Reading Plus (trial)	Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Catch Up Literacy EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) According to the EEF: 'Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+6 months). Alongside phonics it is a crucial component of early reading instruction'	2
Employment of a Level 2 Teaching Assistant for reading	Using the small group tuition model, and 1:1, employment of a level 2 teaching assistant with a narrow focus on delivery of small group interventions for reading. Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2
Sparx Reader	According to the Literacy Trust research in 2023, fewer than 3 in 10 (28.0%) children and young people aged 8 to 18 said that they read daily and 1 in 8 (12.4%) 8- to 18-year-olds who received free school meals	2

	(FSMs) told us that they did not have a book of their own. Sparx reader is a way to monitor and promote reading engagement and enables all students, including disadvantaged to have access to high quality reading books.	
Assertive Mentors	Mentoring EEF educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/anne-horsley.pdf (farnborough.ac.uk) Farrar and Judson have advocated their 'assertive mentoring approach' for transforming their outcomes. This assertive approach has been replicated in many schools since rather than the more traditional 'soft mentoring' option. The EEF maintains that some evidence suggests that some pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds show low engagement with or have low expectations of schooling. Mentoring interventions may be more beneficial for these pupils, as the development of trusting relationships with an adult or older peer can provide a different source of support.	1,3,4,5
Elevate sessions targeting underperforming disadvantaged students in Year 11	These sessions are designed to improve students' metacognitive and self-regulation approaches to exam preparation and revision. The EEF suggests that metacognitive approaches have a very high impact on outcomes. Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning EEF educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk	3,4,5
Small group tutoring led by class teachers during holidays	Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	4

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

Budgeted cost: £231,200

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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Embed a range of extracurricular activities and explore the use of outside agencies. Funding allocated to subsidise disadvantaged students in attending extracurricular trips and taking part in enrichment activities.	An Unequal Playing Field report.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk) This report suggests alongside research in other national contexts that there is strong evidence of a link between extra-curricular activities and educational outcomes as well as other positive outcomes, such as soft (especially social) skills.	5
Develop a diagnostic and proactive approach to tackling attendance issues with particular focus on disadvantaged students who are PA or at risk of PA. Use of attendance officer to implement any identified support needed such as increased home visits and engagement with parents.	Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.	1
Appointment of Safeguarding Officer	Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions Early Intervention Foundation (eif.org.uk)	3
3 SEMH Learning mentors trained in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) There is evidence to suggest that CBT can have a high impact on risk behaviours and behavioural difficulties: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - Youth Endowment Fund EIF's report on adolescent mental health found good evidence that CBT interventions support young people's social and emotional skills and can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression: Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions Early Intervention Foundation (eif.org.uk)	
TLR holder to strategically track	An Unequal Playing Field report.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)	5

and improve engagement of disadvantaged students in extra-curricular opportunities	This report suggests alongside, research in other national contexts that there is strong evidence of a link between extra-curricular activities and educational outcomes as well as other positive outcomes, such as soft (especially social) skills.	
Use of Class Charts to promote positive behaviours between staff and students and improve communication with parents. The attendance module will also enable more precise and timely intervention for students who are 'at-risk' of PA. Wellbeing module also purchased to support student mental health.	Treorchy Comprehensive School - ClassCharts Parental engagement EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) EEF research suggests Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. Based on the experiences of similar schools, we have adopted Class Charts this academic year to help facilitate more effective communication with parents. This year, we have included the use of the wellbeing module which provides another mechanism for students disclosing their concerns.	1,4,5
Continue to embed and refine pastoral programmes to support students who are struggling with self-regulation	Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) The average impact of behaviour interventions is four additional months' progress over the course of a year. Evidence suggests that, on average, behaviour interventions can produce moderate improvements in academic performance along with a decrease in problematic behaviours.	4
Employment of Family Support Worker to engage hard to reach families.	EEF Parental Engagement Guidance Report.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net) According to the guidance report published by the EEF, making services welcoming and less intimidating—for instance, by employing staff who can relate to parents, and making repeated attempts, if needed, to engage the families concerned can help increase parental engagement.	1,3
Increased careers provision for disadvantaged students with level 6 Yeti careers advisor	SYM873648 Careers-Education-Infographic (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net) All disadvantaged students in KS4 to have a 1-1 meeting with a level 6 careers advisor. This report from the EEF outlines the most effective ways careers advice can be utilised, particularly for disadvantaged students.	5

Loudmouth Bully4u programme	Metacognition and self-regulation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Year 7 students to receive the Bully4u programme to promote positive relationships and improved self-regulation strategies.	3,4,5
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.	1,2,3,4,5

Total budgeted cost: £341,757

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium strategy had on pupils in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Academic Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators

For 2024, the Progress 8 score for our disadvantaged students was -0.09. This represents a significant increase from -0.88 in 2023. Disadvantaged students at The Earls High School had an Attainment 8 of 44.1 in 2024 which has increased from 36.4 in 2023. The strong improvement in these key measures show that the gap between students eligible for the Pupil Premium at Teh Earls High School and other students nationally has closed.

The overall improvement in Year 11 Pupil Premium outcomes can be attributed to the 5 strands of our Pupil Premium strategy having collective impact. This cohort of students, with a similar prior attainment profile to previous cohorts, benefited from a three-year strategic focus of our previous Pupil Premium Strategy, on areas that we know were likely to prevent them from reaching their full potential. As such, although the barriers remain the same, our new strategy for 24-28 focuses on proactive measures to reduce these barriers quicker and earlier.

Over the last three years of our previous strategy, we saw positive impact and improvement in each of the five areas which we culminated in an overall improvement in outcomes. The key areas of impact are outlined below:

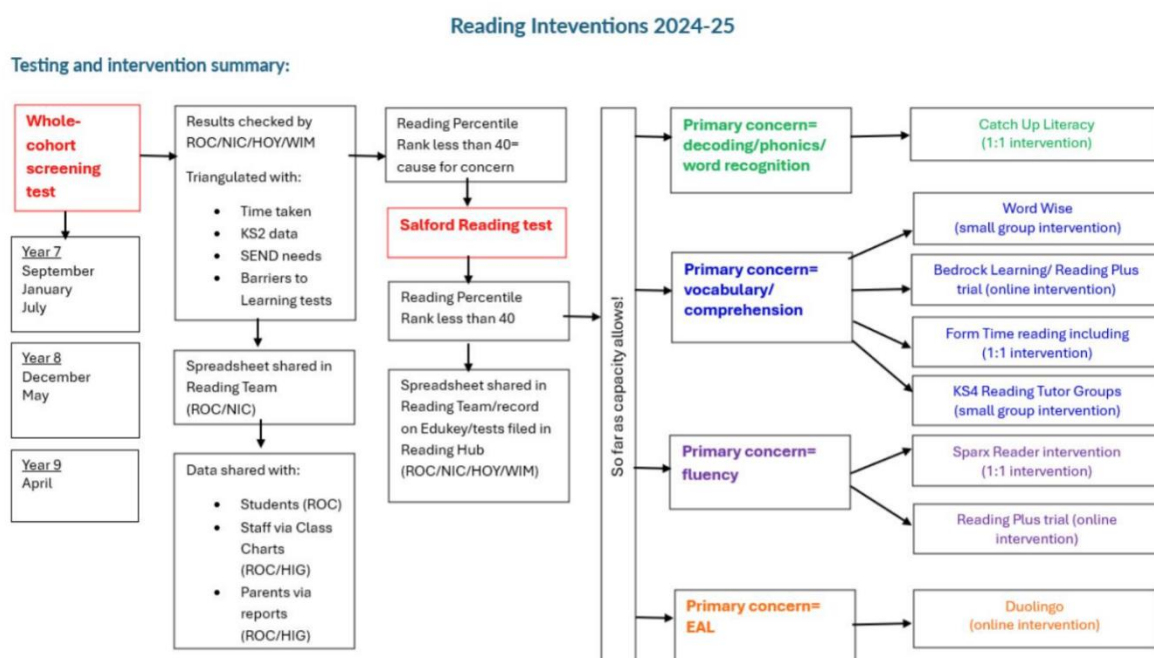
Attendance

In 2023/24 the attendance of all students was in the top 30% for all schools nationally and for those eligible for Pupil Premium it was in the top 40%. This represents a significant improvement from previous years and shows that the attendance of this group was above average. Persistent Absence for the Pupil Premium group is also on a downward trend, reducing from 44% in 2021-22 to 34% in 2022-23. The improvement was sustained in 2023-24 where this measure was again 34%.

This continual improvement can be attributed to embedded internal attendance systems which prioritise early identification of at-risk students and prioritising support for families through deployment of our Family Support Co-ordinator.

Reading

Our strategy for improving reading in 23-24 focused on embedding a formalised and strategic approach to reading which has three strands: reading across the curriculum, high-quality intervention and reading for pleasure. Further information on our reading provision can be found [here](#) and a summary of the high-quality intervention pathways can be seen below:



The average progress made by disadvantaged students across the interventions in 23-24 was +16 percentile rank. Within our current year 8 cohort, 81% of all students are now above the 40th percentile and in Year 9 86% are above the 40th percentile seeing a decrease of 6% and 4% respectively of students with a percentile rank of below 20. This improvement suggests that our interventions are having a significant impact on improving the reading of our weakest readers, the majority of which are disadvantaged.

Improving Mental Health

Achieving the silver standard of the Carnegie Mental Health Award in 21-22 has meant that our structures for supporting students with signs of poor mental health are embedded. Having six trained members of staff in Mental Health First Aid as well as two members of staff in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy means that some of our most vulnerable students can access support and guidance within school much quicker than before. We have added capacity to supporting students in this area by appointing three SEMH Teaching Assistants specialising in supporting students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health concerns. The importance of this is illustrated in the table which a clear indication of increasing need in this area:

School Year	Number of reported safeguarding concerns linked to mental health
2020-21	65

2021-22	60
2022-23	117
2023-24	176

A Mental Health and Wellbeing policy which covers our processes for supporting both staff and students was adopted not only by The Earls High School but by the Stour Vale Academy Trust in 22-23. Our work in this area was also recognised at the national ARC conference where we were nominated for the Alex Timpson award for inclusive support for all students for the academic year 22-23.

Self-Regulation

Impact from our work on improving self-regulation strategies for students, with particular focus on unstructured time has led to a substantial decrease in suspensions overall since the beginning of our last strategy. Pupil Premium students had a suspension rate of 18% with 41 suspensions last academic year. Overall, suspension rates continue to be below local and national averages. This decrease can be attributed to the six pastoral programmes that are now in place to support students who display behaviour which suggests their ability to self-regulate needs support. These programmes are:

- Healthy Relationships
- Violence prevention
- Anger Management
- Regulating Emotions
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Diversity Matters

In 23-24 63% of students who were referred to a programme were Pupil Premium students.

Personal Development

Students are exposed to a wide variety of extracurricular opportunities. Last year we were able to take all Year 7 students to the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra as part of their enrichment programme and 37% of Year 7 disadvantaged students were involved in sustained extracurricular involvement, 37% of Year 8 disadvantaged students were involved with extracurricular and 26% of disadvantaged Year 9 students were involved with extracurricular. All current Year 11 PP students have also received the opportunity for a 1-1 careers interview with a level 6 qualified careers advisor.

Our extracurricular provision can be found here [Extra-curricular-Website-V2.pdf](#). Destination data for 2021 is 93%. So, this year we will be prioritising working with our disadvantaged students on improved careers provision.

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
Accelerated Reader	Renaissance Learning
Zones of Regulation	Zones of Regulation
Catch-up literacy	Catch up literacy

Maths and English online tutoring	MyTutor
Bedrock Learning	Bedrock Learning
Flash Academy	Flash Academy
Academy 21	The Inspired Education Group
Sparks resilience	Positran

Further information

Our School Priorities for 24-25, which aligns with the focus for our Pupil Premium strategy, are to:

- Embed Rosenshine's Principle of 'Check for Student Understanding' by embedding whole class feedback and checking understanding in lessons so that teachers are able to adapt their teaching to build on prior learning.
- Develop a behaviour curriculum to teach students prosocial behaviours and to minimise the amount of learning time lost during the school day.
- Develop a range of enrichment activities to engage student groups who are, at the moment, underrepresented in their participation levels.
- Embed strategies to reduce the percentage of both Pupil Premium and SEND students who are Persistently Absent from 44% in 2021-22 to below 30% in 2024-25.
- Review and adapt the Year 9 curriculum so that the most able students are challenged and engaged in their learning, and that a culture of high expectations permeates lesson planning and delivery.