

# 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	1307
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	23.1%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	2024/2025 to 2027/28
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026
Statement authorised by	Nic Hirsch 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	£ 315,270
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years ( <i>enter £0 if not applicable</i> )	£ 0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> <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>	£315,270

## 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 2025-26 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, 10% of our Year 7 students have a Reading Percentile of 20 or lower. However, 36% 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.

	<p>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. Internal behaviour data also shows a pattern of the lowest percentile readers having higher numbers of behaviour incidents.</p>
<p>3 Improving support for SEMH students</p>	<p>Disadvantaged students are disproportionately represented (53%) 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.</p> <p>This group of students is disproportionately affected by lost learning, according to the report 'Who is losing learning?' (IPR, 2024), in the form of school exclusion (e.g. suspensions and exclusions, use of offsite direction and alternative provision, internal isolation) and self-exclusion (e.g. high levels of absence, internal truancy and lateness to lessons). The report suggests that this is due, at least in part, to their needs not being met and understood by schools. By implementing evidence-based strategies such as mentoring, targeted interventions, curriculum adaptations and restorative behaviour approaches, as well as providing high-quality staff CPD, we aim to reduce suspensions and days in refocus, improve attendance and close gaps in attainment. This will ensure that students with SEMH, particularly Pupil Premium, access learning, achieve in line with their potential, and can participate fully in our inclusive school community.</p>
<p>4 Self-regulation</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>5 Personal Development</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

## 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
<p>1) To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>3) To improve support for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health</p>	<p>Impact for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health will vary on an individual basis but improvement across the cohort may be seen in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attendance</li> <li>• lateness</li> <li>• suspensions</li> <li>• Alternative Provision access</li> <li>• refocus</li> <li>• attainment</li> <li>• Attitude to Learning</li> </ul>
<p>4) Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills, both academic and social and emotional, among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects and within unstructured time.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>We would also expect a reduction in the gap between attitude to learning grades.</p> <p>All teaching staff completing attachment and trauma training</p> <p>Outcomes for disadvantaged students improve because of excellent modelling, scaffolding and systematic use of a wide range of</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £28000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
ADAPTS cycle for 2025-26 focusing on checking for understanding	<p>Checking for understanding is an essential T&amp;L tool which has (as demonstrated by robust evidence) to have a high impact on the progress of students. Frequent checks for understanding allow teachers to give regular in-class feedback to students, as well as adapt their teaching to re-teach and re-test to meet the needs of individuals and the class. Regular checks also promote metacognition for students, again show to have a high impact on student progress.</p> <p>This year, our CPD ADAPTS cycle is focusing high quality checks for understanding at the end of lesson in order to drive adaptive teaching immediately and in future lessons.</p> <p><a href="https://www.eef.org.uk/what-we-do/our-research/teacher-feedback-to-improve-pupil-learning">Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p>	4

Improving autonomous learning	<p>As suggested by research, effective homework can have a strong impact on student outcomes and ability to self-regulate their learning. Research emphasises the need to focus on the quality of the task, the feedback given and how this links to learning in the classroom. Our ADAPTS cycle for this year will begin our focus on establishing high quality homework in each subject.</p> <p><a href="#">Homework   EEF</a></p>	
-------------------------------	--	--

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

Budgeted cost: £132,532

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Use of the MyTutor to provide academic support. A majority of students will be disadvantaged with particular focus on those who are borderline for English and Maths at 4+ and 5+	<p>Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one and small group tuition is shown to be effective.</p> <p><a href="#">Small group tuition   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a></p>	2
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.	<p><a href="#">One to one tuition   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p> <p>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.</p>	1,2,4
Use of EdClass to support students who are struggling to attend school full time.	<p><a href="#">5. Deliver targeted interventions to supplement universal...   EEF</a></p> <p>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</p>	1

<p>Use of the following interventions for students primarily in Year 7 and 8:</p> <p>Reading Plus Catch-Up Literacy Morph Mastery Sparx Reader 1:1</p>	<p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/teaching-learning-toolkit">Teaching and Learning Toolkit   EEF</a> <a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/catch-up-literacy">educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/catch-up-literacy">Catch Up Literacy   EEF</a> <a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/catch-up-literacy">educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk</a></p> <p>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'</p>	2
<p>Employment of three Teaching and Learning Assistants 2 focusing on reading and one on mathematics</p>	<p>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 and mathematics.</p> <p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/small-group-tuition">Small group tuition   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a></p>	2
<p>Sparx Reader</p>	<p>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 (FSMs) told us that they did not have a book of their own.</p> <p>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.</p>	2
<p>Small group tutoring led by class teachers during holidays</p>	<p>Targeted additional support for those pupil premium students that would benefit from additional teaching and preparation for GCSE examinations</p> <p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/small-group-tuition">Small group tuition   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a></p>	4
<p>Targeted PP interventions in Maths and English</p>	<p>Targeted additional support for those pupil premium students that would benefit from additional teaching and preparation for GCSE examinations</p> <p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/small-group-tuition">Small group tuition   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a></p>	4
<p>Maths intervention – securing foundational knowledge</p>	<p>Securing Foundations at Year 7 is underpinned by principles designed to promote more equitable outcomes for all students by closing the knowledge gaps from KS2.</p>	4

	<a href="#">Securing Foundations at Year 7: exploring a year of impact   NCETM</a>	
--	--	--

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

Budgeted cost: £167,424

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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.	<p><a href="#">An Unequal Playing Field report.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>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.</p>	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. An additional attendance officer has been employed to implement any identified support needed such as increased home visits and engagement with parents.	<p><a href="#">Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.</p>	1
Appointment of Safeguarding Officer	<p><a href="#">Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions   Early Intervention Foundation (eif.org.uk)</a></p>	3
Use of Class Charts to promote positive behaviours between staff and students	<p><a href="#">Treorchy Comprehensive School - ClassCharts Parental engagement   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p>	1,4,5

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.	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.	
Continue to embed and refine pastoral programmes to support students who are struggling with self-regulation	<a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/behaviour-interventions">Behaviour interventions   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a> 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.	<a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/parental-engagement-guidance-report">EEF Parental Engagement Guidance Report.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</a>  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	<a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/careers-education-infographic">SYM873648 Careers-Education-Infographic (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</a>  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	<a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/metacognition-and-self-regulation">Metacognition and self-regulation   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a>  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

City Year	City Year will provide capacity to offer mentoring and support to our most vulnerable students so that they can access lessons, feel a greater sense of belonging and have a consistent mentor to support them.  <a href="#">Impact report 2023-2024   City Year UK</a>	
Football Beyond Borders	Football Beyond Borders, a social inclusion and education charity that works with young people across the country who are often disengaged with education and potentially at risk of exclusion.  <a href="#">6792131100f756d8fd3d6a53_FBB Longform Impact Report 2023-24 FINAL.pdf</a>	1, 3, 4, 5
SEMH intervention provision	The EEF suggests that interventions focusing on social and emotional learning can improve academic outcomes. However, there is also positive impact in other areas such as attendance and self-regulation.  <a href="#">Social and emotional learning   EEF</a>	1,3,4
Recruitment of additional SEND manager for SEMH provision	As part of our overall strategy for improving our support for students with SEMH, we have recruited an additional SEND manager to oversee the provision and measure impact.  <a href="#">Social and emotional learning   EEF</a>	1,3,4
ELSA training x 3 staff	Emotional Literacy Support Assistants will provide one to one support to our most vulnerable students, particularly those that have been identified as needing support for SEMH.  <a href="#">Social and emotional learning   EEF</a>	1,3,4

**Total budgeted cost: £327,956**

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 2024 to 2025 academic year.

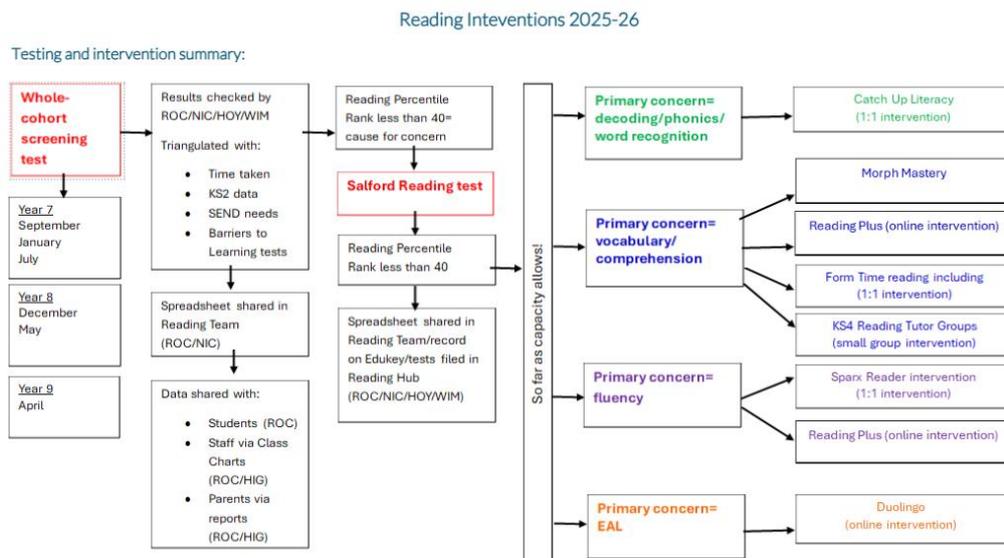
Overall, our Pupil Premium Attainment 8 for 24/25 was 38.4, placing us fifth in the Local Authority of Dudley schools. Our Overall Attainment 8 score of 48.1 places us third. As well as overall outcomes, we continue to monitor impact in the focus areas outlined in this strategy which is summarised below:

### Attendance

In 2024/25 our overall attendance of 93,3% placed us in the top 30% of schools nationally, Pupil Premium attendance was 86.7% so we will continue to focus our efforts on improving the attendance of the this group. However, Persistent Absence rates have seen a three year decline with a rate of 37.5% last year in comparison to 44.2% in 22/23 which suggests our strategy and targeted provisions are having impact.

## Reading

Our strategy for improving reading in 24-25 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 24-25 was +7 percentile rank. Within our current year 8 cohort, 91% of all students are now above the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile and in Year 9 90% are above the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile. Current year 8 saw a decrease of 4.5% 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. Our national distribution banding for disadvantaged English attainment was significantly above average with a narrowing gap trend overall.

## Improving support for SEMH students

Following the impact of our three-year implementation plan for reading, we have designed our approach to improving support for SEMH students in a similar model. Last year focused on streamlining our diagnosis and identification of SEMH students with a view to being proactive and considerate of risk and protective factors. We were also able to plan a strategic approach of support for these students which involved developing appointing an additional SEND manager at the end of the academic year whose area of responsibility will be to oversee the implementation of SEMH provision and monitor impact throughout this academic year.

## 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. 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

### **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 60% of Year 7 disadvantaged students were involved in sustained extracurricular involvement, 36% of Year 8 disadvantaged students were involved with extracurricular and 37% 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-V7.pdf](#). Destination data for 2022 is 95%. We will continue to prioritise 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*

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Provider</b>
Sparx Reader	Sparx
Zones of Regulation	Zones of Regulation
Catch-up literacy	Catch up literacy
Maths and English online tutoring	MyTutor
Morph Mastery	Louise Selby
Sparks resilience	Positran
EdClass	EdClass Ltd

## Further information

Our School Priorities for 25-26, which aligns with the focus for our Pupil Premium strategy, are to:

- Improve the attendance of key groups of students, particularly those in receipt of Pupil Premium, students in Year 11 and students falling into Attendance Band 2, **so that** they can benefit fully from the provision at The Earls.
- Embed high-quality wave-one teaching and more effectively targeted support and intervention **so that** students with SEND are more successful at reaching their learning goals independently.
- Strengthen provision for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, **so that** the amount of learning lost by these students is reduced.
- Develop effective Wave 1 and Wave 2 intervention strategies **so that** Year 11 Pupil Premium students can fulfil their academic potential.
- Embed Rosenshine's Principle of 'Check for Student Understanding' by implementing strategies **so that** that teachers know exactly what students have learned at the end of the lesson, and can plan to address any misconceptions in future teaching.
- Develop more effective homework practice and teach students explicitly how to revise in each subject area, **so that** they can develop their autonomy in learning outside the classroom.