

# Pupil premium strategy statement – Ashcombe Primary 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
Number of pupils in school	624
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	22.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year</b> )	2025-26
Date this statement was published	31.12.25
Date on which it will be reviewed	31.12.26
Statement authorised by	Chris Penny
Pupil premium lead	Chris Penny
Governor / Trustee lead	Leila Henry-Thorne & Michael Latham

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£217,350
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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>	£217,350

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

Our pupil premium strategy at Ashcombe is to reduce or mitigate the disadvantages our pupils face day to day. Pupil premium pupils are not a homogenous group of pupils with a common set of barriers – for this reason strategy encompasses many elements of what we do as a school and staff body. We can summarise our key strategy as being encompassed by three overarching aims.

### **1) Wave 1 teaching and intervention:**

The area in which staff can affect the greatest difference for all pupils is through quality wave 1 provision. For this reason, our long term strategy is about securing the best pedagogical approaches and embedding these across our staffing team. The EEF writes: 'The Quality of teaching is the single most important driver of pupil attainment and a range of other positive outcomes.' The primacy of wave 1 teaching is backed with short specialised interventions to meet gaps in learning.

### **2) Curricula opportunities:**

Sitting alongside this objective is our aim to reduce and mitigate the broader effects of disadvantage which might inhibit our pupils' life chances. Many disadvantaged pupils do not arrive into school from reading rich environment. Alex Quigley writes that 'Reading is the master skill' of the curriculum because it unlocks the rest of the academic curriculum – for that reason our strategy has prioritised reading over the last few years. Our knowledge rich curriculum is aimed at deliberately equipping pupils with the powerful knowledge they need to navigate the world when they leave us. We also aim to support disadvantaged pupils in accessing the experiences that their non-disadvantaged peers can access more readily.

### **3) Pastoral Support:**

Children in school are living through a challenging time nationally. The pandemic, cost of living crisis, energy crisis and mental health crisis have put a strain on families. Disadvantaged families have been hit hardest and there are a range of complex issues pupils and their families are facing. Another key element of our Pupil Premium strategy is to provide robust pastoral support through a behaviour curriculum which teaches children what good behaviour looks like, a pastoral team trained in the interventions needed to support pupils and a mental health and wellbeing strategy to meet the needs of all pupils.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<b><u>Attainment of disadvantaged pupils</u></b> – There is an in school and national trend of disadvantaged pupils attaining less than their non-disadvantaged peers. Our assessments, observations and discussions have highlighted the importance of enabling conditions for developing English through vocabulary, reading and writing as a priority as well as embedding a knowledge rich curriculum to support the acquisition of further knowledge.
2	<b><u>Attendance of disadvantaged pupils</u></b> – Our records have shown that our disadvantaged pupils have a higher rate of absence and our disadvantaged pupils have a higher percentage of persistent absenteeism than pupils who are not disadvantaged. Our assessments, observations and discussions have found that some disadvantaged pupils need further support and intervention for improved attendance.
3	<b><u>Mental Health and wellbeing of disadvantaged pupils</u></b> - Our records and tracking has shown that disadvantaged pupils have needed more referrals and interventions for mental health support than their non-disadvantaged peers. This is backed by national studies which have indicated this is a national problem Working with the MHST has highlighted the need for a whole-school approach coupled with pupil and parental interventions.
4	<b><u>Behaviour incidents of disadvantaged pupils</u></b> – Our behaviour records show that disadvantaged pupils are involved in behaviour incidents at a disproportionately high level compared with their non-disadvantaged peers. Our assessments, observations and discussions have found that a whole school approach coupled with additional pastoral support is needed to support our pupils.
5	<b><u>Play provision for disadvantaged pupils</u></b> – Pupil voice and our own observations and assessments indicated that our previous play provision was not adequately meeting the needs of our disadvantaged pupils, many of whom have gaps in their development as a legacy of the pandemic which has compounded their disadvantage

## 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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<p>Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils in national assessments including Phonics, the Y4 Multiplication Check and KS2 writing, reading and maths</p>	<p>Phonics attainment for pupils in year 1 meets or exceeds national comparators by 2025/26</p> <p>Reading attainment in KS2 meets or exceeds national comparators for disadvantaged pupils by 2025/26</p> <p>Attainment for in the Y4 MTC for disadvantaged pupils matches or exceeds national comparators by 2025/26</p> <p>Maths attainment by the end of KS2 for disadvantaged meets or exceeds national comparators for disadvantaged pupils by 2025/26</p>
<p>Secure 'strong foundations' for disadvantaged pupils in EYFS and KS1</p>	<p>SALT screenings indicate improvements in Speech and Language for disadvantaged pupils at the end of EYFS.</p> <p>Handwriting assessments indicate that a majority of disadvantaged pupils in EYFS and KS1 meeting expected standards by the end of their academic years.</p> <p>Spelling assessments indicate more disadvantaged pupils are meeting the expected standard by the end of their academic years.</p> <p>Standardised assessments in maths indicate that the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and non disadvantaged pupils is narrowing.</p>
<p>Wellbeing and Behaviour – Improve the wellbeing, mental health and behaviour of our disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of behaviour incidents involving disadvantaged pupils at the end of 2025/26.</p> <p>Mental health curriculum surveys indicate that pupils have an improved retention of Decider skills by the end of KS2.</p> <p>Pupil voice indicates improvement in wellbeing and happiness.</p> <p>Staff surveys indicate an improvement in behaviour.</p>

Attendance - To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils and especially our disadvantaged pupils.	<p>The gap in attendance between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils is reducing and showing reduction by 2025/26</p> <p>Persistent absenteeism is reduced for disadvantaged pupils.</p>
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## Activity in this academic year

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

### Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 58,651.50

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Training in a DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils.	<p>'Phonics approaches have been consistently found to be effective in supporting younger pupils to master the basics of reading, with an average impact of an additional five months' progress.' EEF. Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading particularly for disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</a></p>	1
Support teachers to provide high quality wave 1 teaching in class by participating in CPD	<p>Good and Outstanding teaching are the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Using the PPG funding to improve teaching quality benefits all pupils and has a particularly positive effect on children eligible for Pupil Premium. Our priority at Ashcombe Primary School is to ensure that a highly effective teacher is in front of every class, and that every teacher is supported to keep improving. The EEF writes: 'One factor – the quality of teaching in formal education – holds huge potential in reducing, and in some</p>	1

<p>through the WALKTHRU Us</p> <p>Release senior leaders to develop WAVE 1 practice</p>	<p>cases even eliminating, the attainment gap.  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching</a></p>	
<p>Deploy Teaching Assistants or Learning Support Assistants to every classroom.</p>	<p>Providing high quality wave one teaching to all pupils (including PPG eligible children) will ensure children have adequate support across all areas of the curriculum. The EEF note that: 'Teaching assistants can provide a large positive impact on learner outcomes' Senior leaders have taken part in a course based on the EEF Report on the deployment of teaching assistants to maximise their impact in class. 'The average impact of the deployment of teaching assistants is about an additional four months' progress over the course of a year.' Due to school closures during the pandemic, children have large gaps in their learning and may have additional emotional and behavioural needs that extra adults can support with. Our teaching assistants and learning support assistants support the classroom teacher to teacher responsively to deliver 'keep up' intervention and 'catch up interventions'  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistantinterventions">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistantinterventions</a></p>	<p>1, 3, 4</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £ 58651.50

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>ELS Phonics Interventions</p>	<p>Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.   <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-</a></p>	<p>1</p>

	<a href="#">toolkit/phonics#:~:text=This%20involves%20the%20skills%20of,or%20gra</a>	
PiXL Reading , Writing and Maths Therapies	Small group tuition has an average impact of four months' additional progress over the course of a year.  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition</a>	1
NELI Whole class screening and intervention	All pupils made an average of +4 months progress with disadvantaged pupils making an average of +7 months progress  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</a>  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/nuffield-early-language-intervention-scale-up-impact-evaluation">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/nuffield-early-language-intervention-scale-up-impact-evaluation</a>	1
Mastering number EYFS, KS1 and KS2	The EEF full report on mastering number will not be published until September 2027 but limited evidence is offered by NCETM and the approached has been recommended to us by our local Maths Hub.  <a href="https://www.ncetm.org.uk/features/how-mastering-number-supports-eal-and-disadvantaged-pupils/">https://www.ncetm.org.uk/features/how-mastering-number-supports-eal-and-disadvantaged-pupils/</a>	1
Accelerated Reader	The study found that Year 7 pupils who were offered Accelerated Reader made 3 months' additional progress in reading compared to other similar pupils. For pupils eligible for free school meals the figure was 5 months' additional progress.  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/accelerated-reader">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/accelerated-reader</a>	1

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

Budgeted cost: £100,047

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number (s) addressed
Use of learning	Providing tailored help with low attendance by working alongside Learning Mentors will support children get back into	2, 3, 4

<p>mentors to improve attendance of disadvantaged pupils and ensure they are in line with national expectations</p>	<p>school. Good practice institutions commit a great deal of sustained energy and resource to working with and supporting parents. (Ofsted, 2020)</p> <p><a href="#">Public Health England - HT briefing</a></p>	
<p>Structured interventions delivered by pastoral staff to support children's emotional wellbeing and behaviour.</p>	<p>67% of young people surveyed by Young Minds (2021) believed that the pandemic will have a long-term negative effect on their mental health. Learning mentors will provide a range of interventions to support children with their mental health and emotional wellbeing. Some of these interventions will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Emotional Health and Wellbeing Support:</b> Children are identified through SDQs (Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires) and are RAG rated. Children causing concern are the allocated an intervention group which aims to support children's self-awareness, managing feelings, motivation, empathy. Social skills and self-esteem'</li> <li>- <b>Social Detectives:</b> A tool to figure out the hidden rules for expected behaviours, as well as to understand how children feel and think about others in a situation.</li> <li>- <b>Drawing and Talking:</b> Drawing and Talking Therapy is a safe and gentle therapeutic intervention. It provides an effective way for children and young people to process emotional pain or trauma they may be experiencing.</li> </ul> <p>The EEF writes: 'on average, behaviour interventions can produce moderate improvements in academic performance along with a decrease in problematic behaviours. With an increase of +3months.'</p>	<p>2, 3 and 4</p>
<p>Embedding a whole school approach to mental health</p>	<p>Effective social and emotional learning (SEL) can increase positive pupil behaviour, mental health and well-being, and academic performance. However, despite being seen as one of their top priorities by almost all primary schools, only just over one-third say that dedicated planning for SEL is central to their practice</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/prioritise-social-and-emotional-learning">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/prioritise-social-and-emotional-learning</a></p>	<p>2, 3 and 4</p>
<p>Implementing a whole-school</p>	<p>Both targeted interventions and universal approaches have positive overall effects (+ 4 months). Schools should consider the appropriate combination of behaviour approaches to</p>	<p>2, 3 and 4</p>

behaviour curriculum	<p>reduce overall disruption and provide tailored support where required.</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions</a></p>	
Improving play provision by implementing OPAL Play	<p>"OPAL is one of the most impactful transformations on children's lives that we've seen in the UK in the last 10 years- not just in schools, not just in education but just as a way of making a positive difference in children's lives...I'm in awe actually."</p> <p>Tim Gill former Director of Play England</p> <p><a href="https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/the-opal-primary-programme/#">https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/the-opal-primary-programme/#</a></p>	5
Enhance pupils' cultural capital by providing a breadth of experiences	<p>We aim to provide greater enrichment opportunities for disadvantaged 4 7 providing a breadth of experiences. PPG pupils are supported to attend a school residential trip in year 5 as a way of widening their experiences and offering them opportunities they may not have the chance to do elsewhere. Research shows that residential trips play a fundamental role in the school experience. 'Residential experiences can lead to individual growth and improvements in social skills, as well as higher order learning.' (CUREE, 2010)</p>	3
Support families with the cost of equipment and uniform.	<p>The EEF state that: 'School uniform policies are thought to complement the development and support of a whole school culture and approach, which in turn may assist pupil discipline and motivation.' Belonging and feeling part of a community is an important part of what makes up our school. Because of this, we aim to help our disadvantaged families with the costs associated with this.</p>	3
Allocation of spaces for disadvantaged pupils into school after-school enrichment clubs	<p>25% of extra curricula clubs are earmarked for disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are also supported to access music tuition.</p> <p><a href="#">DfE Report</a></p>	2, 3 and 4
Deploy internal and external support for pupils with persistent absence –	<p>The evidence around attendance interventions is currently limited but the trust participates in the local Attendance hubs, working to their recommendations and is also linking with local schools where attendance is better.</p> <p><a href="https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/pages/Attendance-REA-report.pdf?v=1702317638">https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/pages/Attendance-REA-report.pdf?v=1702317638</a></p>	2

EWO Gold package in addition to enhanced Learning Mentor attendance time		
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**Total budgeted cost: £ £217,350**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments. In addition to this we've analysed the outcomes of wellbeing interventions for our disadvantaged pupils. To help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils we compared their results to those for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at national level where these are available (though these comparisons are to be considered with caution given ongoing pandemic impacts) and to results achieved by our non-disadvantaged pupils.

#### 1) **Improved reading attainment for disadvantaged pupils in national assessments including Phonics and KS2 reading**

(National Averages are shown in brackets)

**EYFS - Comprehension 78% (77.4% national disadvantaged) Word Reading - 61% (74.6% national disadvantaged)** With SEND removed this rises to 80% Comprehension and falls to 60% word reading – 56% of our PP pupils attained both ELGs for reading. This rises to 67% when SEND pupils are removed.

**Year 1 Phonics 82% (68% national disadvantaged)** When SEND pupils are removed 92% of PP pupils passed the phonics check.

**KS2 Reading 59% (63% national disadvantaged)** When SEND pupils are removed, this figure rises to 65%.

In EYFS pupil premium pupils attained closely to peers for comprehension but last year there was a significant gap for word reading – this had a knock on effect for reading of disadvantaged pupils overall. In year 1, our PP pupils attained in line with non PP pupils and significantly outperformed disadvantaged peers. In Key Stage 2 Reading last year, our PP pupils attained broadly in line with other PP peers. When SEND is removed our PP pupils are outperforming their peers nationally).

#### 2) **Improving writing attainment for disadvantaged pupils by the end of KS2**

**EYFS – Writing ELG 56% (64% national disadvantaged)** This rises to 62% when SEND pupils are removed.

**KS2 - Writing 47% (59% national disadvantaged)** – When SEND pupils are removed, 60% of our PP pupils met the expected standard.

In EYFS, pupil premium pupils were behind peers nationally, broadly in line when SEND pupils are removed. In Key Stage 2 last year, there was a significant gap to national peers – which

In all years except last year's year 4 cohort, pupil premium pupils were either outperforming or matching their national comparators.

### **3) Improve the wellbeing, mental health and behaviour of our disadvantaged pupils.**

Following assessment of all pupils by class teachers using the BIP (Behaviour Improvement Plan) questionnaire compared to last year we have seen a decrease in children being assessed as Red or Amber in Years 1 - 5

November survey 76 children (Y1 - 6, Y2 - 14, Y3 - 18, Y4 - 20, Y5 - 18)

June survey 54 of the above identified children are now rated Amber /Red. (Y1 - 4 , Y2 - 11 , Y3 - 14 , Y4 - 12 , Y5 - 13 )

So, a decrease of 22 pupils (30%) which demonstrates that the interventions across the school as well as whole school initiatives like the behaviour curriculum and whole school mental health curriculum are supporting improvement for the EHWP outcomes.

In a staff survey focused on pupil behaviour and wellbeing, 16 of 18 possible respondents replied.

- 1) Describe how the behaviour for the majority of pupils (your overview of pupils across the school) has changed over the last academic year and the start of this one 2024-25.
  - 80% of respondents felt behaviour for the majority had either remained the same or improved. (47% – the same, 27% some improvement, 7% significant improvement)
- 2) Describe how the behaviour for the minority of high need pupils (your overview of pupils across the school) has changed over the last academic year and the start of this one 2024-25
  - 93% of respondents felt behaviour for the minority of high need pupils had either remained the same or improved (33% – the same, 53% some improvement, 7% significant improvement)
- 3) Describe how pupil wellbeing for majority of pupils (your overview of pupils across the school) has changed over the last academic year and the start of this one 2024-25.
  - 94% of respondents felt wellbeing for the majority of pupils had either remained the same or improved (47% – the same, 40% some improvement, 7% significant improvement)
- 4) Describe how pupil wellbeing for minority of high need pupils (your overview of pupils across the school) has changed over the last academic year and the start of this one 2024-25.
  - 100% of respondents felt wellbeing for the minority of high need pupils had either remained the same or improved (47% – the same, 53% some improvement).

A pupil voice study was carried out in the Autumn term focused purely on PP pupils. It was carried out 1:1 by the Headteacher 93 pupils were interviewed over two weeks from years 1-6 as Reception children did not have a point of comparison with last year.

- 1) 'How happy do you feel coming to school?' – pupils were asked to give this a rating out of 5 stars. The rating system was explained by the Headteacher. The average rating was 4.04 stars. Of the 93 pupils interviewed, 4 responded with a score less than 3 stars.
- 2) 'Do you feel happier about school this year or last year?' 70% of pupils said that they preferred this year to last year.

- 4) To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils and especially our disadvantaged pupils.

#### 2023-24 Academic Year

- National attendance: 92.9%
- National PP pupil attendance: 88.9%
- Persistent Absence PP pupils: 34%
- Whole school overall attendance: 93%
- PP Overall attendance: 90.2%

#### 2024-25 Academic Year

- National attendance: 93.4%
- National PP pupil attendance: 88.6%
- Persistent Absence PP pupils: 31.2%
- Whole school overall attendance: 94%
- Whole school Persistent Absence: 15.3%
- PP Overall attendance: 90.2%

#### 2025-26 Academic Year up to December 19<sup>th</sup>

- National attendance: 93.99%
- Whole school overall attendance: 95.1%
- Whole school Persistent Absence: 12.6%
- PP Overall attendance: 91.1%

Based on attendance data for the Autumn term of this year, we are currently in decile 5, the top 40-50% of schools for attendance.

Attendance remains a priority for the school but metrics are demonstrating an improving picture for whole school and pupil premium pupils.

## Externally provided programmes

*Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.*

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Provider</b>
PiXL Primarywise	PiXL
WALKTHRU	John Catt
Accelerated Reader/STAR reading	Renaissance Learning

## Further information (optional)

Additional funds have been sourced between 2021- 2024 from the EIS Project which involves Ashcombe Primary School working with The Hargreaves Foundation. The Foundation's objectives were underpinned by the desire to give those under the age of 18, and living with a mental health condition, disability, or growing up in poverty, the opportunity to fulfil their potential whilst improving wellbeing, self-esteem and independence. The Foundation aimed to develop a programme of interventions to support a number of the school's most disadvantaged children. The project came to an end in the 2023-24 academic year. Over the three years of the project there were several outcomes:

- Creation of a Literacy Hub - an immersive, imaginative and literacy-rich space within our school building - with a range of enticing books for children to develop their love of reading.
- Creation of spaces which impact on behaviour for most vulnerable high need pupils – Sensory room, nurture room and water and sand play area.
- Investment in high-quality nonfiction texts linked to Ashcombe's knowledge rich curriculum
- Training with Alex Quigley on how to develop 'gold standard' Literacy teaching at Ashcombe (author of Closing the Reading Gap and EEF content manager). Teachers and TA's will receive training throughout this academic year with a focus on closing the disadvantage gap through literacy.
- Support assessment - STAR assessments used to track reading progress across the school with extra provision of accelerated reader to encourage reading for pleasure.
- Employment of mentors from the Jack Hazeldine Foundation to work with the children most at risk of exclusion in their transition from primary to secondary school. (No-longer in action)
- Investment into ARROW spellings - a reading and spelling intervention for children needing support with these literacy skills specifically. (No-longer in action)