

Pupil premium strategy statement – Open Academy

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	558
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	38%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	3 Years 2024/25 – Year 1 of 3.
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	Jon Ford, Principal
Pupil premium lead	Scott Richardson, Assistant Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Mark Hurren, governing board

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£210,000
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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>	£210,000

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Open Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil, regardless of their background or personal circumstances, has access to the best possible education and opportunities to succeed. The Pupil Premium funding enables us to address the specific challenges faced by our disadvantaged pupils, ensuring they achieve academic success and thrive both socially and emotionally.

Our Pupil Premium strategy is based on the belief that disadvantaged pupils should receive a high-quality education that allows them to meet their full potential. We will use the Pupil Premium funding to support these pupils in overcoming the barriers to their learning and to narrow the attainment gap with their peers.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our academy. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

To ensure our approach is responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment and pastoral care we will spend a significant amount of the premium on providing assessment and pastoral support for those in crisis and in trauma. We will:

1. Ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
2. Act early to intervene at the point need is identified
3. Adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve
4. Ensure support is offered for pupil's basic pastoral needs to be able to access classrooms and learning.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The prediction of Year 11 disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English is 25%. This is generally lower than that of their non-disadvantaged peers and based on FFT50.
2	Assessments, observations, and discussion with KS3 pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils generally have lower levels of reading comprehension than peers. Accelerated reader indicates an 8-month gap typically. This impacts their progress in all subjects. On entry to year 7 in the last 6 years, 69% of our disadvantaged pupils arrive below age-related expectations compared to 59% of their peers. This gap remains steady during pupils' time at our school.
3	Our observations 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. This is indicated across the curriculum, particularly with Literacy.
4	Our assessments (including wellbeing survey), observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem. Although this is partly driven by concern about catching up lost learning and exams/future prospects, and the lack of enrichment opportunities due to the pandemic. In our community it is more frequently a result of poverty and all the challenges which go with it for both the students and their families These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment, their mental health, and their ability to attend and focus in school.
5	Our attendance data over the last 5 years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been between 3-6% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. 11 - 13% of disadvantaged pupils have been 'persistently absent' compared to 5 - 6% of their peers during that period. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved outcomes among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of KS4, particularly in English.	KS4 performance measures in 2024/25 demonstrate that disadvantaged pupils achieve an average Attainment 8 score of at least 40.0 and at least 25% pass GCSE English at grade 5 or above.
Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across KS3.	Reading comprehension tests demonstrate improved comprehension skills among disadvantaged pupils and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers. Teachers should also have recognised this improvement through engagement in lessons and progress folder/homework scrutiny.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2025/26 demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations, Thrive and MHST. • Thrive assessments and action plans improve student wellbeing and mental health with qualitative and quantitative data used for evidence. • A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. • Trauma Informed practitioners positively explain student's wellbeing through reports and surveys. <p>Disadvantaged students always have access to an emotionally available adult.</p>
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	<p>Sustained high attendance from 2024/25 demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 4%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced by 3%. The percentage of all pupils who are persistently or severely absent being below 10% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 4% lower than their peers.

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: £89,206

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Further improve the Open Way lesson planning and teacher self-evaluation tool to ensure accessibility and challenge for PP students is explicitly considered.</p> <p>This requires ongoing teacher training and use of systems such as Microsoft TEAMS and performance management processes/CPD development via Bluesky.</p> <p>Use of CPD time with differentiated need informed through performance management processes.</p>	<p>Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children’s outcomes. Indeed, research tells us that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development</p>	<p>1,2,3,4</p>
<p>Further develop use of knowledge organisers in the classroom as a basis for effective retrieval practice strategies.</p> <p>This requires ongoing teacher training, time to develop and amend resources and dedicated time for subject specific developments via PiXL, PTI or similar.</p>	<p>Consistent research has shown that retrieval practice can benefit pupils’ learning. The recently published EEF report on Cognitive Science and associated articles has examined the evidence underpinning retrieval practice, highlighting its potential to support pupil learning:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/cognitive-science-approaches-in-the-classroom</p> <p>Research has shown that teaching a knowledge-rich curriculum should be designed to help pupils remember what they have been taught</p>	<p>1,2,3,4</p>

	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-what-do-we-mean-by-knowledge-rich-anyway	
<p>Moderation of internal examination assessments and PPE's to ensure gaps in knowledge and skills are identified and understood correctly.</p> <p>Develop and implement use of PLCs across all year groups for individual feedback and next steps.</p> <p>This requires the use of Raising Attainment and Progress (RAP) groups to moderate and standardise and further collaboration with middle leaders using data and quality assurance to improve provision.</p> <p>Findings from this work will involve ongoing teacher training and support and release time.</p>	<p>Providing high-quality feedback to students is integral to effective teaching. Equally, gathering feedback on how well pupils have learned a topic is important in enabling teachers to address any misunderstanding and provide the right level of challenge in future lessons</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/assessment-feedback</p>	1, 2, 3
<p>Developing metacognitive and self-regulation skills in all students via Progress Folders as part of Assessment and Feedback policy</p> <p>This will involve ongoing teacher training and support and release time.</p>	<p>Teaching metacognitive strategies to pupils can be an inexpensive method to help pupils become more independent learners. There is particularly strong evidence that it can have a positive impact on maths attainment:</p> <p>Metacognition and self-regulation Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	4
<p>Embed consistency of marking and feedback using the homework and progress folder model.</p> <p>Continue ongoing teacher training and support and release time for middle leaders to quality assure approach i.e. faculty reviews.</p>	<p>Homework has an impact by enabling pupils to undertake independent learning to practice and consolidate skills, conduct in-depth inquiry, prepare for lessons or revise for exams. Rubric scores show progress and next steps.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework</p>	2,3,4
<p>Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in</p>	<p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject:</p>	2

<p>Secondary Schools guidance.</p> <p>We will fund professional development and instructional coaching focussed on each teacher's subject area. It will be rolled out first in English to help raise attainment for disadvantaged pupils, followed by subjects identified as priorities.</p>	<p>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</p> <p>Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in all subjects.</p> <p>Reading intervention groups are shown to improve pupil progress by 6 months.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies</p> <p>Currently our first focus group sees 56.3% Y7 PP students 50% Y8 30% Y9</p>	
<p>Effective responses through Teaching & Learning to assessment information on literacy needs in all subject areas.</p> <p>Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance.</p> <p>We will fund professional development and instructional coaching focussed on each teacher's subject area.</p>	<p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject:</p> <p>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</p> <p>Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English:</p> <p>word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)</p>	1,2,3,4,
<p>Directing staff towards specialist NPQ's to inform our tiered approach for PP students. We will fund CPD time for staff to engage with course requirements and to share and implement best practice.</p>	<p>Effective and timely CPD is key to motivating teachers and improving student outcomes. A clear explanation of why, how and when PD is likely to be most effective, can be found in the EEF's review of the 'Characteristics of Effective Teacher Professional Development', published in October 2021.</p> <p>The review makes a strong case for the inclusion of four groups of mechanisms in a PD programme:</p> <p>1. Build teachers' knowledge,</p>	1, 2, 3, 4

	<p>2. Motivate teachers to want to learn and improve their practice.</p> <p>3. Develop teaching techniques in a structured and forgiving learning environment.</p> <p>4. Embed practice, to establish it as habitual, automatic and routine.</p> <p>NPQ's support talented practitioners in honing their practice and influencing whole-school provision</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £51,975

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Maintaining staffed homework hub sessions and homework clubs, providing space and resources for targeted students to complete work with support.</p> <p>Funding time for pastoral teams to supervise sessions and engage students in learning.</p>	<p>Evidence shows that activities such as homework clubs' where students have the opportunity to complete homework in school but outside normal school hours can have a positive impact on progress and promote independent learning. A homework club is run twice per week in a computer room.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework</p>	1,2,3,4
<p>Making approach to homework consistent and effective to ensure learning hubs positively impact progress.</p> <p>Guidance and monitoring to share practise in setting purposeful homework.</p>	<p>Homework works best when it is a targeted, well-designed strategy to support learning and understanding.</p> <p>https://my.chartered.college/2019/09/improving-the-quality-of-homework/</p>	1,2,3,4
<p>Adopting a targeted reciprocal teaching programme as a reading intervention for disadvantaged pupils who need additional help to</p>	<p>Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on pupils' ability to understand a text, and this is particularly the case when interventions are delivered over a shorter timespan:</p>	2

<p>comprehend texts and address vocabulary gaps.</p> <p>Reading intervention groups created to improve reading ages and confidence.</p>	<p>Reading comprehension strategies Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p> <p>Reading intervention groups are shown to improve pupil progress by 6 months.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies</p> <p>Currently our first focus group sees 56.3% Y7 PP students 50% Y8 30% Y9</p>	
<p>Dyslexia Gold tutor time sessions 4 times per week</p> <p>Year 8 have an Intervention English class (Dyslexia Gold and supported curriculum)</p> <p>Year 9 have an Intervention English class (supported curriculum)</p>	<p>Teachers across all faculties are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving opportunities for reading KS3 reading in class to be modelled by teacher or HAP student as stretch and challenge. • High 5 Reading Skills utilised by teachers • KS3 Reciprocal Reading lesson once per fortnight • DEAR days • Library initiatives – campaigns include: various book clubs; enrichment clubs; writing club; external writing competitions and other ad hoc events throughout the school year. • More focused reading activities across curriculums through staff CPD and twilight training. 	2
<p>Deploying literacy interventions appropriately according to accurate assessment information; Guided Reading, Accelerated Reader, use of HLTA's, Rubric information (Teams).</p>	<p>Evidence shows that given SEN pupils and low-attaining pupils are more likely to claim Free School Meals (FSM)¹. TAs also work more closely with pupils from low-income backgrounds. At Open, we are working to do this effectively according to the latest research</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/teaching-assistants</p> <p>Our SEN Department lead a tutor group for specific students each morning.</p>	2,3,4

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

Budgeted cost: £60,802

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Evolving year teams/pastoral system that positively impacts attendance and student engagement.</p> <p>Attendance rewards to reward high attendance and support motivation of lower attendees.</p>	<p>Research shows that there is a clear need for school to have consistent and clear behaviour policies that promote positive behaviour in lessons.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_schools_Report.pdf</p>	5
<p>Developing a range of suitable responses to the pastoral needs of our students.</p> <p>This will involve ongoing teacher training and support and release time for pastoral staff to develop expertise.</p>	<p>There is evidence to suggest that CBT can have a high impact on risk behaviours and behavioural difficulties:</p> <p>Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - Youth Endowment Fund</p> <p>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:</p> <p>Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions Early Intervention Foundation (eif.org.uk)</p>	5
<p>Developing systems and approach to improving levels of attendance.</p> <p>Staff will get training and release time to develop and implement new procedures.</p>	<p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE's working together advice in 2024.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance</p> <p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.</p>	5
<p>Offering a wide range of high-quality extracurricular activities to boost wellbeing, behaviour, attendance, and aspiration. Activities (e.g.,</p>	<p>Inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.</p>	5

<p>The Duke of Edinburgh's Award), will focus on building life skills such as confidence, resilience, and socialising. PP to be encouraged to participate.</p> <p>NEACO programmes supporting pathways into higher and further education.</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/school-inspection-handbook</p> <p>https://www.dofe.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/DofE-and-Pupil-Premium-2018.pdf</p>	
<p>THRIVE & ELSA Resources</p> <p>Training pastoral and SEND staff in ELSA and THRIVE processes to accurately assess needs and help shape the pastoral support offer.</p>	<p>Thrive was described as a well-founded tool that attempts to assess social and emotional skills in schools and classrooms. Source: Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) for Secondary Schools: Tools for Profiling, Monitoring and Evaluation. Crown publications 2007:7</p> <p>This recommendation is included in the SEAL Guidance: Master's Level Research: The Educational Psychology Service in Torbay evaluated the impact of the Thrive training on staff attitudes, confidence and competence to deal with the issues and behaviours presented by children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.</p>	4, 5
<p>Contingency fund for acute issues.</p>	<p>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.</p>	All

Total budgeted cost: £201,983

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed and evaluated our current position with disadvantaged pupils, looking at the previous academic year and identifying the needs for this year. Our internal assessments as well as external data has been used to provide a detailed assessment for our academy compared to national data as a comparison.

Data shows that performance of disadvantaged pupils is significantly below those of non-disadvantaged pupils. This is largely due to poor English performance. Data demonstrates 40% of disadvantaged pupils achieved grades 9-4 compared to 53% non-disadvantaged pupils (GCSE outcomes 2024). The national disadvantage gap in 2024 was 3.92, which was a slight decrease from 2023. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and Maths nationally was 25.8% with an average attainment 8 score of 34.5. Disadvantaged pupils at Open Academy achieving grade 5 or above in English and Maths was 17% With an attainment 8 score of 28.58.

63% of all suspensions in 2023/24 were disadvantaged pupils, compared to 37% non-disadvantaged. Days of suspension for disadvantaged pupils was 248.

Attendance of disadvantaged pupils in 2023/24 was 82.0% compared to non-disadvantaged pupils at 87.3%.

Both suspensions and lower attendance had a negative impact on outcomes across all year groups for disadvantaged pupils.

The attainment of disadvantaged students is a key priority. Recent forecasts show gradual improvement in core areas due to targeted support strategies such as HUBS, Pastoral support, and Study programs. Despite this, there remains an attainment gap, with further focus needed to ensure disadvantaged students reach expected outcomes.

Disadvantaged pupils progress 8 data -0.49, compared to non-disadvantaged 0.39

The actions we have taken to address these issues are:

- All Faculties have submitted an action plan per subject regarding the improvement of PP students in their subjects.
- Reviewed access arrangements to make sure the right provision is in place. Set up a HUB and revision structure to support disadvantaged pupils.
- Quality assurance using KS4 RAP meetings to monitor faculties and pupil's progress including those who are disadvantaged.

We triangulated evidence from multiple sources of data including assessments, engagement in homework and progress folder scrutiny, conversations with parents, students and teachers in order to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils. Our approach is proving to be successful, and we are on target to achieve key aspects of our strategy. We looked at several reports and studies about effective use of pupil premium, the impact of disadvantage on education outcomes and how to address challenges to learning presented by socio-economic disadvantage. Our biggest challenge remains to improve outcomes at KS4 for disadvantaged pupils, with attendance and progress data informing our approach.

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.

Programme	Provider

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<p><i>For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year</i></p>
<p>The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils</p>

Further information (optional)

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