



Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium for the 2024 to 2025 academic year) 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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Castleford Academy
Number of pupils in school	1,480
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	30.7%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2024/25 – 2026/27
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Dates on which it will be reviewed	December 2025 (done) December 2026
Statement authorised by	W Bush
Pupil premium lead	A Wright/M Till
Governor / Trustee lead	Sarah Brown

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£486, 085
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£486, 085



Part A: Pupil Premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Castleford Academy our vision is working together to achieve excellence for all, this is demonstrated by our relentless effort to ensure barriers are removed for all pupils in order that they can access the full curriculum offer. Our values of care, aspire and succeed mean we ensure that pupils are supported through a highly effective pastoral system which holds personal development at its core to ensure all pupils, especially the most disadvantaged, are supported to be part of the school community. Through maintaining high aspirations for all, we are mindful not to make the label of disadvantage an excuse for lower outcomes but instead challenge ourselves to overcome the barriers which might hold our pupils back from achieving their full potential. We want all our pupils to have success in both personal and academic outcomes, engage positively with school life and be able to be upstanding citizens of the future.

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 disadvantaged attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. 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.

At the centre of our strategy will be:

- the promotion of school attendance,
- the power of language; to develop fluency and comprehension in reading, writing and oracy.
- adaptive teaching approaches,
- knowledge and cultural capital acquisition as a result of excellent curriculum planning and assessment, and
- a rigorous parental engagement plan to build a positive home-school culture.

All interventions will be targeted, timely and matched to pupil need.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance data shows that a significant minority of our disadvantaged pupils do not attend school sufficiently and this impacts on their academic achievement. Low family income makes pupils at greater risk of being classed as PA compared to their non-disadvantaged peers and a greater proportion are significantly absent. Attendance in the academy has always been a priority. However, national attendance figures have been lowered in light of the global pandemic. Disadvantaged pupils have been disproportionately affected.
2	Overall attainment and progress is lower for disadvantaged pupils than for non-disadvantaged pupils in most subjects. The gap is particularly evident in literacy heavy based subjects such as English, history, geography where pupils reading ages and comprehension skills have a greater impact on outcomes. The progress of disadvantaged pupils in science, maths, health & social care, PE and computing is positive.
3	The NGRT assessment has identified that pupils eligible for Pupil Premium whose reading age is below their chronological age often face significant challenges in developing reading comprehension skills . Our disadvantaged pupils struggle to understand and retain the meaning of texts, which affects their ability to engage with the curriculum across subjects. Their difficulties often stem from a lack of vocabulary, limited background knowledge, or weak decoding skills that hinder their ability to make inferences and draw conclusions.



4	Internal data around behaviour, suspensions, wellbeing survey data and teacher referrals suggest a rise in social and emotional issues for a significant minority of pupils , which lead to increase barriers in fully participating in lessons/learning. Disadvantaged pupils, especially girls have shown to be at greater risk of experiencing mental health issues around anxiety and low self-esteem which manifest in small minority of pupils struggling to meet school expectations.
5	There is an in-school gap for pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium around homework behaviour logs and performance in exams meaning that pupils need support with homework and further strategies on revision. Knowledge retention and recall has also been identified through curriculum implementation scrutinies, exam results and teacher feedback.
6	Some of our disadvantaged pupils have a lack of support at home with academic progress, cultural capital, aspirations, uniform, food and social skills. Parental engagement has a high impact on pupil progress according to the EEF.

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
High attendance levels for all pupils	- Attendance of disadvantaged pupils is increasing. - The attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils is reducing. - Attendance of disadvantaged pupils is above national. - Rate of persistent absenteeism is reducing. - Fewer broken weeks for key pupil groups.
Above national average progress and attainment	2024/25 KS4 outcomes to show: - A8 gap to be reducing - A8 to be in line with others nationally - Attainment of PP pupils in subjects to be improving and/or in line with others nationally.
High reading, writing and oracy levels	- Reduction in numbers of pupils reading below their chronological reading ages from NGRT testing. - Reduction in the variance in attainment data between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers from reading assessments. - Attainment of disadvantaged pupils in English language at or above the national average for non-disadvantaged pupils. - Curriculum Implementation scrutiny / observation analysis shows quality of work of disadvantaged pupils in line with non-disadvantaged peers.
High participation in all areas of learning and school life due to high levels of wellbeing.	- Stakeholder surveys to show disadvantaged pupils have high levels of well in line with non-disadvantaged peers nationally. - Suspension rates for disadvantaged pupils are reducing.



	• Behaviour data patterns show positive trends for disadvantaged pupils. • Increase in extra-curricular activities for disadvantaged pupils.
High levels of homework completion and independent learning.	• Reduction in homework logs. • Positive pupil voice around independent learning and revision. • Increased outcomes at KS4. • Increase in pupils/parents accessing SMHW.
High levels of parental engagement	• Attendance of disadvantaged parents into school for parents evening in line with non-disadvantaged peers. • Reduction in behaviour logs. • Improved outcomes for pupils.

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £242,293

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ensure all staff understand the challenges faced by our disadvantaged pupils and know their role in addressing this to remove barriers. Funding of CPD courses for lead staff. Funding of INSET for all staff delivered at key times during the year.	Evidence from the EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium report suggests that high quality teaching is key to reducing educational disadvantage. To achieve this CPD is required to support the implementation of evidence-based approaches. Behavioural science suggests underlying values and beliefs need changing in order to make sustained changes to human behaviour. To change teacher's classroom behaviour they also need regular reminders so the changes become embedded.	1,2,3,4,5,6
Recruitment and Retention Develop people strategy so we have a clear response to workload and well-being so that we are an employer of choice. Build and sustain capacity as the Trust grows.	EEF recommends improving teaching as having the largest impact on disadvantaged pupils. Pupils in our school work better with staff they have built relationships with, therefore it is key we recruit the right calibre of staff and keep those we have developed.	1,2,3,4,5,6
Improve the subject-specific teaching and support of vocabulary and oracy in lessons. This will be delivered through our Power of Language strategy which is led by an English Lead Practitioner. We will continue to embed the use of Frayer	Developing disciplinary literacy is a key recommendation in the EEF Guidance report on Improving Secondary Literacy. There is significant evidence that improving pupils' vocabulary skills impacts upon attainment. If pupils' can say it, they can write it.	2, 3



models, formality scales and ABC oracy to enhance pupils understanding & use of key words and develop their confidence and fluency in academic speaking and writing.		
Improve the subject-specific teaching and support of reading in lessons. This will be led by an English Lead Practitioner and will focus on form time reading and The Big Write strategy for pupils in Y7-Y10. We want pupils to experience high quality reading from a range of diverse text to improve their own reading ability, increase their cultural capital and develop their vocabulary.	Developing disciplinary literacy is a key recommendation in the EEF Guidance report on Improving Secondary Literacy. There is significant evidence that improving pupils' reading comprehension and fluency impacts upon attainment.	2, 3
Make better use of assessment data to inform interventions in a timely manner. Update the results analysis of KS3 data following the new assessment system. Training for staff on how to interpret the data. Parent voice on the new format of KS3 reports. Systems reviewed and improved.	High quality testing can provide reliable insight into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions and teacher instruction.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Review the quality assurance processes to ensure the feedback given to staff has the greatest impact on teachers' ability to model and provide high quality teaching, especially around the Academy's areas for development.	Guidance Report on Effective PD from the EEF states that focusing on professional development makes and impact on outcomes. Therefore, the professional development, CPD and feedback should all triangulate.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



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

Budgeted cost: £181,156

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted Intervention across the curriculum. Including one to one tuition. This could be one to one support, Coursework catch-up sessions additional booster sessions, independent study. External providers and visits.	EEF states that on average one to one tuition is very effective at improving pupil outcomes. One to one tuition can be effective strategies for providing targeted support for pupils that are identified as having low prior attainment.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Reading interventions Reading buddies, Big Write, Reading Plus, reading intervention (SEND) mentor, English Mentor wake up and read intervention, phonics & Ruth Miskin.	Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+6 months). Effective diagnosis of reading difficulties is important in identifying possible solutions, particularly for older struggling readers. NGRT data will be used to direct the interventions.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £69,169

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Evening sessions for each year group on how to support your child's learning.	The EEF states that parental engagement has a positive impact on pupil's progress.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Rigorous waves of intervention linked to attendance.	Pupils' attendance has a direct correlation to academic success. The disadvantaged pupils are prioritised for support.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Well-being Wednesday, assemblies, form time program and personal development days planned to meeting the needs of the local context and respond to emerging needs. Informed by pupils voice from surveys and questionnaires. CPD as needed for staff training to deliver and follow up on activities.	The Early Intervention report on adolescent mental health found evidence that social and emotional learning interventions can impact on pupils social and emotional skills, therefore addressing anxiety. Pupils who are better developed in their social and emotional skills have better resilience. Disadvantaged pupils were disproportionately hit in terms of their development in these areas due to Covid and this is reflected in attendance figures both at our Academy and nationally.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
Ensure adequate provision and support for the successful completion of homework for all pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.	EEF toolkit suggests evidence that under the right conditions, regular completion of homework can have a positive impact on pupil learning.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



Homework support through after school clubs, booster sessions in all subject areas and other in school strategies.		
Recruitment and training to build capacity within the attendance team.	To continue to embed the principles of good practice set out in the EEF guidance report in working with parents. EEF shows quality first teaching as the most effective tool for improving outcomes for pupils, therefore pupils need to be in school to access this. Disadvantaged pupils are more at risk of becoming severely absent.	1, 6

Total budgeted cost: £492,618 (Pupil Premium only)

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 year.

A8 for disadvantaged pupils in 2024/2025 was 36.06 which is just above the national disadvantaged average. We also had seven anomalous PP pupils, and when these are removed the A8 shadow data increases to 39.05, which is significantly above national disadvantaged. However, we acknowledge that the A8 gap has widened between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils and there is still work to be done to narrow this gap. The data also shows us that when pupils attend at our Academy, pupils achieve well. This is why we have increased the attendance team capacity over the past couple of years and are committed to increasing capacity further this year.

PP pupils made positive progress in maths, sciences, computing, geography, art, construction, drama, health & social care, media, food PE and textiles. PP pupils did not perform as strongly in subjects where greater extended writing is required. We are continuing to address this through the power of language strategy which has already shown to have impact on outcomes in these subjects.

Attendance was a large focus at the Academy but continues to be a stubborn figure to move back towards pre-pandemic figures. For disadvantaged pupils' attendance was 87.76%, which was an improvement on last year and above national disadvantage figure but below others nationally and in school. The disadvantage persistent absence figure was 36.89% which again is an improvement on last year and is above national, however this is still a key area of focus which is being addressed in both the Academy development plan as well as the PP strategy over the next 3 years.

Despite the push on enrichment and invite only sessions to raise participation for disadvantaged pupils, only 46% of PP pupils engaged with enrichment. For 2025/26 there will be an increased offer and there are now opportunities to access enrichment before school (as a response to pupil voice) and at lunch times. In HT1 this year the proportion of PP pupils engaging is already above last years figure with 47% engagement.

Externally provided programmes

This list is a flavour of the programmes used by the Academy- many others are changeable through the academic year.

Programme	Provider
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Show My Homework	Satchel one
Hegarty maths	
Mathswatch	Mathswatch
MyTutor	MyTutor
Educake	Educake
GCSE Pod	GCSE Pod
Reading Plus	Reading Plus
Ruth Miskin	Ruth Miskin

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	Last year this funding was used within the pupil premium provision. Moving forward we are planning some more bespoke provision. We celebrated week of the military child in school and had a headteachers breakfast with service pupils. There are 12 pupils in receipt of the service pupil premium allocation, they benefit from the whole school approach to address disadvantaged pupils.