

Pupil premium strategy statement – Stewards Academy

This statement details Stewards Academy's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1016
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	33% (337 pupils)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2024
Statement authorised by	Helen Ginger, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Sally Goddard, AHT
Governor / Trustee lead	Stephen Dodd, Chair of Pupils & Curriculum Committee

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£320,333
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£85,698
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£406,031

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Stewards we are committed to improving the progress of all of pupils, irrespective of their background or prior attainment. Our pupil premium strategy is designed to help our most disadvantaged students close the progress and attainment gap between themselves and their non-disadvantaged peers. Our approach is rooted in tackling the literacy gap in the classroom and other significant causes of disadvantage.

Our strategy does not stand alone but is integral to our school plan. It is not any one person's responsibility to address disadvantage but everyone who works at our academy. This plan, and indeed our school plan, is built to address the needs of our pupils and draws upon the research of Marc Rowland in his book 'Addressing Educational Disadvantage'.

We have identified the main barriers to learning for our disadvantaged students and work collectively as a team to address these. We have selected strategies to address each barrier and assess these regularly. Teaching and feedback of the highest quality is at the centre of our approach, a strategy proven to promote progress amongst all learners. We are investing in targeted academic support for those that need it most through in-house small group sessions. We are ensuring through our wider strategies that our students are prepared and ready to engage with school life by providing targeted support related to wellbeing, attendance and behaviour.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Gap in attainment (and progress) between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. There is a large gap in attainment nationally between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. This has been made worse by the effects of the pandemic.
2	Language, reading, oracy and communication skills are lower for disadvantaged pupils. Pupil work samples, feedback from staff and classroom visits continue to show us that disadvantages students have a reduced general and also subject specific vocabulary. This is because they have lacked exposure to age-appropriate vocabulary in their everyday lives. Our reading data also shows

	that for many of our disadvantaged pupils their reading age is not keeping pace with chronological age. This is a trend which is reflected nationally, showing the gap between a pupil's reading age and their chronological age widening as they progress through KS3 to KS4.
3	Complex family situations, lack of learning experiences and opportunities outside school and families unable to support learning outside of school. Lack of parental engagement with the school / support of education generally. Our data shows that a lower proportion of disadvantaged parents attend parents' evenings and curriculum information evenings.
4	Aspirations and levels of behaviour are generally lower for disadvantaged pupils.
5	Regular attendance can be a challenge for a significant proportion of our disadvantaged pupils for a variety of reasons. Nationally, disadvantaged students' attendance is lower than non-disadvantaged, this is replicated within Stewards. Our attendance data over the past year has shown that disadvantaged pupils' attendance is 6.1% lower than the school average (whole school 90.7%, PP 84.6%). Absenteeism amongst this cohort is having a negative impact upon their attainment and academic progress.
6	Our assessments and observations with pupils and families has shown a marked increase in those pupils being identified with social and emotional issues. This has been further impacted upon by an increase in pupils being admitted to our school at KS3 with more severe SEND and SEMH needs. The former is largely driven by issues caused by the pandemic. The latter is a result of fewer places being available in the education system to cater for pupils with increasingly difficult SEND & SEMH needs .

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
1. Improved outcomes for educational disadvantaged pupils across the school.	An increase in the amount of disadvantaged pupils attaining in English and maths across key stages 3 & 4.
2. Increase the rate of attendance for disadvantaged pupils.	Disadvantaged pupils attend similarly to their peers.
3. Close the attainment and progress gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils across the school.	The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils will be at least similar to their peers by the end of key stages 3 & 4.
4. Disadvantaged pupils have the same opportunities and experiences as their peers.	An increase in disadvantaged children attending additional experiences/activities/trips provided by the school.

5. Parents/carers have the tools to support children's learning.	Increased parental engagement with learning.
6. Increase the rate of attendance for disadvantaged pupils during extra-curricular	Disadvantaged pupils attend similarly to their peers.
7. Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across KS3.	Our Reading Assessment data will show an improved level of comprehension skills among disadvantaged pupils and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers.

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: £26,091

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Improved school-wide reading strategy – Stewards Academy Teaching First – Reading</i>	Improved disciplinary literacy is key for students to improve in all subject areas. Comprehension and vocabulary are skills linked directly to attainment. Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) reading_for_pleasure.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk) Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 2, 6
<i>Pupil Premium Champion</i>	In a busy working week, regular reminders of strategies, students and priorities is useful in ensuring we remain focused. The Pupil Premium Champion will be in place to provide this.	1-6
<i>Staff CPD on feeding back to students ensures clear next step learning (targets to improve). Oral feedback will be given in line with teacher workload planner.</i>	Staff have ongoing CPD in supporting students learning through effective feedback. Our assessment method of giving feedback ensures that students are always given the next step to challenge themselves and further their learning. Feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 2

<p><i>Full CPD programme for staff, often delivered by our own staff, sharing best practice with bespoke sessions tailored to the needs of the individual includes “research-based teaching and learning”, “adaptive teaching”, “reading skills and oracy”.</i></p>	<p>Best practice shared amongst our own staff with experience of our own students.</p> <p>Collaborative learning approaches EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>EEF Blog: Assess, adjust, adapt – what does adaptive teaching... EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1, 2
<p><i>Progress Teaching Software – Training and use of this software package will be cascaded through the academy. The use of this software will enable accurate monitoring and strategies to be put in place to tackle the challenges outlined in this statement. The software will become a fundamental tool in collating evidence for the staff appraisal process which is central to improving the standard of teaching.</i></p>	<p>Progress Teaching can be used by staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning – from creating roadmaps for CPD, recording feedback from lesson observations, to planning targeted interventions, and engaging with parents.</p> <p>Good and outstanding teachers are fundamental to a great education. Good and outstanding teaching comes from a culture of regular, focussed feedback and well-planned CPD.</p> <p>According to research by the Sutton Trust the effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds: over a school year, these pupils gain 1.5 years' worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers.</p>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
<p><i>Study Skills Programme – This programme will be delivered once a half term providing students with study and revision techniques designed to support students in becoming more independent learners. The programme also consists of parent student revision evenings aimed at increasing parental engagement with pupils' studies. Four parent pupils' revision evenings are planned for Year 10 and 11 students.</i></p>	<p>According to the EEF the average impact of Parental engagement approaches is about an additional four months' progress over the course of a year. There are also higher impacts for pupils with low prior attainment.</p> <p>There is some evidence that supporting parents with their first child will have benefits for siblings</p>	1, 2, 4
<p><i>Reading Assessment Software – NGRT testing software will be</i></p>	<p>Reading comprehensions strategies involve the teaching of explicit approaches and techniques a pupil can</p>	1, 2

used to provide an accurate baseline for wider reading strategy.	use to improve their comprehension of written text. There is strong evidence from the EEF to suggest that reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+6 months). In order to appropriately target reading interventions to make the necessary gains in reading age an appropriate assessment package will be necessary.	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £55,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Thinking, Reading Programme – This programme will initially be used to support the weakest 35% of readers in Years 7 & 10. The programme will be implemented, by 6 specialist trained tutors, in line with the school's reading strategy.</i>	Reading comprehensions strategies involve the teaching of explicit approaches and techniques a pupil can use to improve their comprehension of written text. There is strong evidence from the EEF to suggest that reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+6 months). Thinking and reading is particularly focused on the bottom 35% of readers.	2
<i>Herts for Learning – A fluency reading programme for KS3 pupils. This will be delivered by English teachers and an English HILTA in line with the schools reading strategy.</i>	<p>Reading comprehensions strategies involve the teaching of explicit approaches and techniques a pupil can use to improve their comprehension of written text.</p> <p>EEF research indicates that supporting struggling readers is likely to require a coordinated effort across the curriculum and a combination of approaches. No particular strategy should be seen as a panacea, and careful diagnosis of the reasons why an individual pupil is struggling should guide the choice of intervention strategies. Herts for learning aims to support pupils</p> <p>Students who have participated in KS3 project have made an average of 18 months progress in reading comprehension age over the 8-week project*.</p> <p>*as measured by the YARC assessment tool based on 147 students.</p>	2

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	<p>The Education Endowment Foundation - Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools document suggests, as one of the top recommendations that</p> <p>'Training focused on teaching reading is likely to help secondary school teachers teach their subject more effectively'. And that 'Schools should expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Year 7.'</p>	
<i>Inclusion – 'The Bridge' support for pupils with increasingly difficult and complex SEMH needs.</i>	<p>Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>English and Maths support and intervention – in-house programme during Morning Prep for KS4 students with specialist teachers.</i>	<p>According to the EEF the average impact of the small group tuition is four additional months' progress, on average, over the course of a year.</p> <p>Evidence shows that small group tuition is effective and, as a rule of thumb, the smaller the group the better. Some studies suggest that greater feedback from the teacher, more sustained the engagement in smaller groups, or work which is more closely matched to learners' needs explains this impact. Once group size increases above six or seven there is a noticeable reduction in effectiveness.</p>	1, 2, 4, 5
<i>Pupil Premium Champion – to maximise the academic achievement of Key Stage 4 students in receipt of the Pupil Premium.</i>	<p>To provide regular one-to-one support for Year 10 and Year 11 Pupil Premium students, implementing individual action plans for underachievement, identifying specific targets and strategies to enable students to realise their potential.</p> <p>To have ongoing active contact with students and parents / carers in order to increase attendance and engagement with learning activities so as to ensure improved outcomes for KS4 Pupil Premium students.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Easter Revision School</i> <i>KS3 Summer School – Year 7 students</i>	<p>On average, evidence suggests that pupils who attend a summer school make approximately three additional months' progress compared to similar pupils who do not attend a summer school.</p> <p>Greater impact can be achieved when summer schools are intensive, well-resourced, and involve small group or one to one teaching by trained and experienced teachers. It does appear to be an advantage to have</p>	1, 2, 4, 5

	teachers who are known to the pupils (typically +4 months overall). In contrast, summer schools without a clear academic component are not usually associated with learning gains, though they may have other benefits.	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £324,940

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Pastoral Support Mentors and Level 1, 2 & 3 Pastoral support – Five level 3 trained PSMs to support with the pastoral care of students at level 1.</i> <i>One member of staff to support with pastoral care at L2 and 3 providing a range of interventions to support pupils with SEMH related issues.</i>	The average impact of successful social and emotional interventions is an additional four months' progress over the course of a year. We do acknowledge the low level of security that the research states come with this evidence and so any interventions should be carefully monitored. However, the research does note that alongside academic outcomes, social and emotional interventions have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Place2Be Counselling service – Two full time Counsellors employed to support pupils with mental health and wellbeing.</i>	Following the pandemic, it is evident from both staff daily interactions with pupils and pupil surveys, that there is a higher level of pupil anxiety and mental health related issues. The positive impact of the Place2Be counselling service has been noted at a national level.	3, 4, 5
<i>Attendance Team – An additional attendance officers focusing on reducing persistent absenteeism and the number of school refusers.</i>	Our school data and experiences show that pupils who attend school regularly have higher levels of attainment and progress.	5
<i>SEMH SENDCo – The SEMH SENDCo will, amongst their other duties, focus on removing the barriers to</i>	Social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions seek to improve pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly	6

<i>pupils accessing the curriculum and improving their social and emotional wellbeing.</i>	<p>on the academic or cognitive elements of learning.</p> <p>A need to identify pupils with SEMH needs and provide support was identified prior to the pandemic however post pandemic the need has greatly increased.</p>	
<p><i>Essex Closing the Gap Pilot</i></p> <p><i>April 2024</i></p>	<p>The research study completed on the programme method showed a 63% increase in successful use of critical thinking and metacognitive skills through enquiry over just one term. The Education Endowment Foundation found that the potential impact of meta-cognition and self-regulation approaches has more than seven months additional progress in learning.</p> <p>Studies also show that engaging pupils, including the most disadvantaged, in philosophical activities can improve their achievements, and provide young people the crucial skills needed to scrutinise and challenge fake news. Impacts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops analytical, critical and problem-solving capabilities • Develops speaking and listening skills, verbal reasoning and metacognition • Develops collaborative, creative and critical enquiry skills • Gives people confidence in dealing with fundamental and challenging questions • Helps close the attainment gap. Philosophical enquiry helps raise attainment in pupils most affected by poverty. <p>[There are 8 modules available within the bronze programme.]</p>	1-6
<i>Rising Futures National Citizen Service courses (£24,000) EEF commissioned report shows that educational experiences outside of the classroom benefit attainment, and skills crucial to school performance.</i>	<p>Rising Futures National Citizen Service courses (£24,000) EEF commissioned report shows that educational experiences outside of the classroom benefit attainment, and skills crucial to school performance.</p>	1, 4, 5

Total budgeted cost: £406,031

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Intended outcome	Progress to date
School progress data, 2022/23:	
PP students:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A Progress 8 score of -1.76	
All pupils = Standard Pass EM of 38%	
PP pupils = Standard Pass EM of 20%	
Gap = 18%	
All pupils = Strong Pass EM of 21%	
PP pupils = Standard Pass EM of 7%	
Gap = 14%	