

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding for the 2025 to 2026 academic year 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	Dame Alice Owens
Number of pupils in school	1469
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	82 (5.6%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023/24-2026/27
Date this statement was published	November 2024, updated November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	Next review June 2026
Statement authorised by	H Nemko, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	S Fry, Deputy Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	R Bromley

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£155,128
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	DISCONTINUED
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	£155,128

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, regardless of their background or challenges that they face, feel a valued part of the school community, make good progress, achieve highly across the curriculum and make the most of the opportunities offered to them.

In order to support our disadvantaged students to achieve the above, including exceptional progress for those who were high attainers on entry, we will consider all the different challenges that our students face and aim to support their specific needs to as great an extent as possible.

Pupil premium funds are therefore directed towards those activities and interventions which are shown by research to be particularly effective in accelerating the progress and engagement of such pupils. The basis of this is the list of approaches drawn up by the Education Endowment Foundation from which those most appropriate and relevant to our students have been selected.

High-quality teaching is the cornerstone of our approach as this has been proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same will also benefit all students at Dame Alice Owens.

We will also use targeted support for pupils whose education continues to be affected by the lockdowns and intervene where needed to support the mental wellbeing of our students.

Also, we shall take action and use funding appropriately to ensure that all our students feel that they belong at Dame Alice Owen's.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Low prior attainment in numeracy – a number of our disadvantaged students enter the school with lower numeracy skills than their peers (all but two of our 2025 Year 7 PP students scored a lower CATS Quantitative score than the cohort average (as in 2024) and 9 of the 18 lowest scores were PP students and all but one PP student was in the lowest 25% of KS2 Maths scores with 8 of the lowest 11 KS2 Maths scores in the cohort all being PP students. Similarly, in 2024 all but 2 Year 7 PP intake scored below the cohort average CATS Quantitative score with 9 out of the lowest 18 scores were PP and the 4 lowest KS2 Maths scores in the year group were PP students)
2	Low prior attainment in literacy - a number of our disadvantaged students enter the school with lower literacy skills than their peers. All but one of our 2025 Year 7 PP students scored a lower KS2 reading score than the cohort average with the 2 lowest scores both being PP students and all but 2 of the 2025 cohort had a lower NGRT reading age than the cohort average. All but three of our 2024 Year 7 PP students scored a lower KS2 reading score than the cohort average with 4 of the lowest 7 NGRT reading ages in the cohort being PP students.
3	Metacognition and independent learning approaches – a number of our PP students feel less confident and less equipped to work independently and do not know how to revise effectively
4	Effect of lockdown still remains – some of our PP cohort were more affected than others by the lockdown and this has increased the attainment and progress gap
5	Attendance – for a few PP students their attendance levels are below our target for the school and hence this results in valuable missed learning time, this has also been exacerbated by the lockdowns
6	Well being, anxiety and low self-esteem – for some PP students, mental health issues can seriously hamper their progress at school compared to their peers
7	Low self esteem due to peer group participation – for some of our students inability to partake in activities that their peers take part in at school affects their self esteem and in turn their progress at school and limits their cultural capital
8	Resources for learning – some of our students lack access at home to the resources which will allow them to make as much progress as their peers
9	Aspiration and motivation – some students lack the long-term aspirations that provides part of the motivation to be successful at school
10	Parental engagement – in a few cases, the parents of our PP students do not attend Parents Evenings and other key events which can affect the progress of these students
11	SEND profile of our PP students – a higher % of our PP students than the whole cohort which requires extra support / adaptations. 37.5% of our 2023 Yr7 PP intake are also SEN whereas the non-PP figure is 11%. Likewise 35% of the 2024 Yr7 PP intake are on the SEN register compared to the non-PP figure of 12%. However, in the 2025 Yr7 intake only 14% of the PP students are also on the SEN register compared to the non-PP figure of 12% again.

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 rates of progress across all key stages for PP students in all subjects but especially in Maths and English	<p>Students eligible for PP will ideally make as much progress as non-PP students and this will remain our aim.</p> <p>In the move towards this aim, progress reports within year groups will show less disparity between PP and non-PP. PP results targeted as follows:</p> <p>Estimated P8 score of +0.3 in 2025; +0.35 in 2026 and actual P8 score of +0.35 in 2027 60% Grade 5+ in English and Maths in 2025 and 2026 and 65% in 2027</p> <p>Reading age gaps on entry to be narrowed by the end of Year 7 and further by the end of Key Stage 3</p>
Inclusive Quality First Teaching	All students should have access to quality first teaching and the learning is accessible to all students. Lessons are adapted to meet the needs of the specific learners. Teachers have high expectations of all their pupils.
Students feel confident that they understand how they work best and can make effective use of independent study time and are well prepared for exams	<p>Public exam results gap narrowed</p> <p>Student survey feedback positive</p> <p>Increased students' confidence in learning</p> <p>Increased feeling of belonging</p>
High levels of aspiration for our PP students	<p>Increased % of PP stay on to 6th form or at least attain places at their future study of choice</p> <p>Increased % of PP apply to university (incl Russell Group and Oxbridge if appropriate)</p>
Support for wellbeing in place	Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher and pastoral team observations show sustained, high level of well-being and improving levels of wellbeing where there have previously been difficulties.
Attendance improvement especially for key individuals.	<p>Attendance target for PP of 96%</p> <p>Gap between PP and non-PP to be reduced to 0.</p>

All students have resources and access to a device and a space to work for homework	Student survey feedback Homework records Improved student attainment and progress
All students feel that they belong at DAOS	Student survey feedback Attendance records Participation in extra-curricular activity
Attendance at Parents Evenings in line with non-PP	Increased attendance of PP parents at parents' evenings and no gap between PP attendance and non-PP attendance (ideally all PP parents attend)
Intervention identified and acted upon	Intervention activities taking place and well attended Student qualitative feedback shows students feel supported and more confident in their learning Progress results and KS4 results in line with intended outcome 1.
Participation in extra-curricular activities – all take part in something and improved cultural capital	All PP students take part in at least one voluntary extra-curricular activity. All PP students have opportunity to take part in key “cultural capital” activities over time at DAOS.
Improved communication between PP parents and school to support progress of student	All Year 7 PP parents going forward have regular contact with specific member of staff (probably form tutor). All other PP parents know who to contact.
Careers and further education guidance for all students	All PP students are supported to make informed choices about their next steps be that in education (GCSE, and A-level options, college courses, internships and university courses) or careers. Disadvantaged students also made aware of courses, opportunities and funding available to them.

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: £ 98,000

Teaching and learning continues to be a real strength of the school and an area in which the school has invested heavily, and will continue to do so; as a consequence there is a strong and stable teaching staff. Low staff turnover gives further continuity and security for all students which is particularly helpful for disadvantaged students who are able to build trusting relationships with their teachers. With very rare exceptions, all subjects are taught by very well qualified subject specialists, this is particularly evident in what are seen as shortage subjects ie Maths and Science amongst others

Excellent CPD provision is provided and staff are supported with raising their teaching skills – see below.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Lead by DHT Teaching and learning, the T&L team build and review the CPD program to increase staff engagement with CPD and allow greater staff control over CPD opportunities. Continual evolution and improvement of CPD programme to ensure opportunities are relevant and meaningful to individuals, departments and school improvement plan. Opportunities link to performance management targets and DIP/SIP ensures all are engaged with school and personal priorities. Particular focus in 2024/2025 continued work on making feedback more effective and regular assessment. In 2025/26 a variety of topics will be offered including ensuring all learners make progress. Also some work with departments about making success more visible to key students especially in Maths</p>	<p>Great teaching has a disproportionately positive effect on disadvantaged students as per EEF</p> <p>EEF research shows that effective feedback has a high impact on learning outcomes.</p> <p>Great Teaching Toolkit ideas by Evidence Based Education</p>	<p>1,2,3,4</p>
<p>Pupil Premium best/first strategies employed to ensure that PP students get excellent teacher support in their learning</p>	<p>EEF research shows prioritising PP students is beneficial and also keeps them at forefront of teachers' minds</p>	<p>1,2,3,4</p>

Learning to Learn (L2L) strategies reinforced/ taught through Y7, 9, 10 and 11 L2L programme. Students achieve more easily and motivation to learn is increased	EEF state metacognition and self-regulation strategies = +7 months progress	1,2,3
SLT to continue to work on recruitment and retention of quality teaching and support staff through relevant allowances and opportunities for career advancement eg SLT, pastoral secondment programmes opportunities to work with the University of Hertfordshire or Herts for Learning and ensuring that lessons continue to be taught by subject specialists	Great teaching has a disproportionately positive effect on disadvantaged students and that subject specialists are part of this as per EEF Research of our own students also shows that they have more confidence in a consistent staff body	1,2,3
The barriers for each individual PP student will be identified as quickly as possible and shared with all staff as will any knowledge on how each individual PP student works best in class and at home to help them progress in all lessons. All Yr7 students will complete the SDQ survey within first half term as recommended by the DfE with additional questions such as – “What do you want your teachers to know about you?”. Results of these will be shared with staff.	Great teaching has a disproportionately positive effect on disadvantaged students as per EEF. To access this, the PP students need to build rapport with their teachers and staff. Marc Rowland of Unity Research School highlights this as a key issue in 5/10/22 article Highlighted in 24/25 HfL course on Underserved Learners	1,2,3,8, 11
CPD provided by SENCo during staff meetings, briefings and INSET on how to adapt teaching for relevant SEN needs	Great teaching has a disproportionately positive effect on disadvantaged students as per EEF	11
Monitoring of PP students’ attainment	SLT PP lead, Pastoral Directors and departments analyse attainment of PP students after each data drop which then results in early intervention or other adjustments when necessary	1,2,3,8

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

Budgeted cost: £ 40,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
High quality, regular academic monitoring (through teacher mentors) for KS4 students.	Great teaching has a disproportionately positive effect on disadvantaged students as per EEF	1,2,3,4

Mentors focus on improving organisation, motivation, exam preparation as necessary.		
Small group support in areas of identified underachievement at KS3 and 4 particularly English and Maths and where possible, Science and MFL	EEF acknowledges that small group support can be of benefit	1,2,3,4
Revision programme in build up to exams to ensure guided revision and effective use of time	We know that a number of students do not always have access to a calm, quiet working environment at home with resources readily available. Getting students into good practices in HW and retrieval learning is shown to help aid revision which in turn helps exam success (University of Westminster)	1,2,3,4
NGRT to identify reading ages and gaps and then a paired reader programme and Phonics programme for reading group in Year 7 (with a view to expanding into Year 8)	EEF and HfL research show improved literacy is vital for progress of all students but especially is a barrier for PP	2
Provision of free breakfast and mentoring/tutoring with a 6 th former before school	We know that a number of our FSM students come to school having not eaten a proper breakfast and it is accepted that students work better having had a proper breakfast.	
Provision of homework club after school in the library or revision club in the main canteen.	We know that a number of students do not always have access to a calm, quiet working environment at home with resources readily available. Getting students into good practices in HW and retrieval learning is shown to help aid revision which in turn helps exam success (University of Westminster)	1,2,4,8
Zones of regulation work carried out with students who will benefit to enable them to become more aware of and hence manage their emotional responses	EEF state metacognition and self-regulation strategies = +7 months progress	4,6,9
Targeted support either by teachers or trained staff or sixth form students for pupils whose education has still been impacted most by the	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective way of supporting low attaining pupils or those falling behind. This could be 1:1 or small group (EEF)	1,2,3,4

pandemic. A significant proportion of which will be PP and some may be high attainers.		
Library / Lunchtime club for supervised study / homework.	We know that a number of students do not always have access to a calm, quiet working environment at home with resources readily available. Getting students into good practices in HW and retrieval learning is shown to help aid revision which in turn helps exam success (University of Westminster)	1,2,4,8
PP register and intervention document shared with all: facilitates better staff understanding of the PP students, their barriers to learning and interventions which are already in place	Staff awareness of PP students is key to success as per Great Expectations, Herts for Learning Highlighted in 24/25 HfL course on Underserved Learners	1,2,3,6,7,9
All PP students to have a "Spotlight" document about their 'barriers', aspirations, strategies that work best etc and shared with all staff	Staff awareness of PP students is key to success as per Great Expectations, Herts for Learning Highlighted in 24/25 HfL course on Underserved Learners Marc Rowland of Unity Research School highlights this as a key issue in 5/10/22 article	1,2,3,6,7,9
Training of student pastoral mentors and monitoring of this process to provide student pastoral mentors to help students who lack self-belief/confidence/motivation.	Student motivation and confidence in school is key as per NFER, mentoring programme as per HfL Great Expectations but in school research shows students more comfortable with support from 6 th formers than staff in many cases	7,9,10
Provision of revision material / textbooks / devices so disadvantaged students have access to same material (if not more) than their peers	Clearly this is of benefit if they are able to use the material (see above) but in school research also shows that this helps with self-confidence too	8
KS4 Study Support advice to parents	EEF research shows that parental engagement has an average positive impact of 4 month's additional progress	1,2,8

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

Budgeted cost: £ 56,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Excellent attendance is a fundamental feature of success. Ensure that PP attendance is equal to, or exceeds 96% through impactful use of attendance officer and pastoral team including home visits but also work on how to make feel welcome once return	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels. Also our own evidence suggests regular contact with the Attendance officer can help reduce absences. NFER acknowledges need for attendance	5
We have a significant number of PP+ students that have emotional issues related to their past. Ensure a strong pastoral and Learning Support department to provide the required emotional, academic and behavioural support required. Training of staff in Mental health first aid, student wellbeing. We have a Mental Health Lead who promotes this and improves delivery of this.	EEF research shows that disproportionate number of PP students require wellbeing support and that wellbeing is vital to success in school in terms of attendance, engagement and attainment	6,9
Where needs require it and in school staff not expertly qualified, access to professional Counsellors	See above	6
Whole school survey to identify if students feel they belong or not to the school community and seek ways of improving this. Set up a working group to improve the sense of belonging for all pupils IF surveys suggests an issue – (so far this has turned out to not be as big an issue as considered)		
All KS3 PP students assigned a 6 th form mentor to focus on well being, pastoral issues and to discuss any issues in school to help settle in initially in Year 7	EEF research shows that disproportionate number of PP students require wellbeing support and that wellbeing is vital to success	6,9

and to continue to feel part of the community – this is now part of a wider programme so these students do not appear to be singled out	in school in terms of attendance, engagement and attainment	
As a school with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, ensure that those students who face financial disadvantage are given support to take part in any school activity they choose such as music lessons, D of E award and generally improve cultural capital. Have a policy of “hunting not fishing” and seeking out key PP pupils and recommend they go on specific trips for them as opposed to simply offering them the opportunity.	Cultural capital is a vital part that is missing for many disadvantaged students as per HfL Great Expectations. Also the aspect that this helps the students feel more part of the community if they can access the same opportunities as their peers and therefore can maximise opportunity and engagement at school. Also research shows that the confidence gained from these activities can rub over into academic success	7
Increase Parental Engagement of disadvantaged students so that we are more aware of ways to support. Form tutors to ensure initial conversation with family is positive and to make regular contact. Online Parents Evenings have increased attendance especially of PP parents. Letter to all Year 7 PP and Yr 8 and 9 FSM students in first term to outline our offer of support and asking for advice from them about their child to open up communication.	Parental engagement is vital for success as per EEF and HfL Great Expectations course	8
From September 2026, PP students will be allocated an additional staff mentor to champion for them and check in with them.	EEF research shows that disproportionate number of PP students require wellbeing support and that wellbeing is vital to success in school in terms of attendance, engagement and attainment Research also shows that even the more able PP students can “go under the radar” when initially starting to struggle with increased demands.	3,6,9
Provide as much Cultural Capital through the curriculum and get in school exposure eg visiting theatre companies come in to school so that all students can access it	Cultural Capital is key to progress as per HfL Great Expectations	6, 9

<p>Connexions career advice for PP students in Year 11 or earlier. Advice given to PP students re GCSE and A-level options. Careers fairs and careers week talks open to all and PP students encouraged to attend. Details of background etc asked and register kept so that all students able to access opportunities, courses funding for further education or work placements can get informed of what is available to them.</p>	<p>An increasing number of courses are now available to disadvantaged students but they have no way of knowing about these courses. Research shows PP students often have lower aspirations but more to do with lack of awareness and advice than anything else.</p>	<p>9</p>
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Total budgeted cost: £ 194,500

(The school will divert resources from elsewhere to cover any shortfall and the school's 'super-curricular' offer is supported by significant contributions from the DAOS Foundation, which benefits 'all' students but also directly benefits PP)

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 academic year.

The 2025 GCSE results showed that the Attainment 8 score for our PP students was 50.5 (slightly above the 50.3 average in the whole country for non-disadvantaged students but less than the 72.7 average for our whole cohort. 32% of our disadvantaged students entered EBacc in 2025 (compared to 45% for the whole country and 73% for our whole cohort). 79% of our PP students achieved a grade 4 or better in English and Maths compared to 73% of national non-disadvantaged students. 47% of our PP students achieved Grade 5 or better in English and Maths (our target had been 55%). Please note that there is no Progress 8 data this year due to no Key Stage 2 data during Covid. 8 of our PP Yr11 cohort stayed on to 6th form at DAOS which is the same number as last year.

Teacher assessments in Summer 2025, show that the PP students are making positive progress against expectations, the Year 9 and 8 PP students are making very marginally less progress than the whole cohort but the Year 7 PP are making the same progress as the whole cohort. The estimated Attainment 8 for the Year 10s at the end of Summer term 2025 was 59 (up on last year) against a whole cohort average of 75, a narrower gap than last year.

In the student survey in November 2025, 48 out of the 57 PP students who completed the survey are happy at DAOS and 49 feel that they fit with 47 also agreeing that they feel comfortable at Owen's in terms of their academic learning with all but 5 saying they would recommend the school to others. All but 3 of the students said they agree that there are people on the school staff who support them when they need it. 52 say the school helps them to understand how they learn best and 40 out of the 57 PP students who completed the survey are confident about how to revise in all or most subjects. Over half said that they read in their own time each week and 15 more read quite a bit across a year but with breaks; 51 acknowledge the school encourages them to read more.

35 out of 57 PP students who completed the survey confirmed that they regularly take part in extra-curricular activities offered by school with 13 attending something most days. 50 out of 57 agreed that the school supports them in developing their potential.

For the academic year 2024/25, attendance was 92.52%% for PP students (compared to the National average for all students of 93.1%).

Progress is being made towards the goals but there is still some progress to be made this year.

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

Programme	Provider
N/A	