



Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

Birch Copse Primary School

This statement details our school's use of Pupil Premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged children.

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	Birch Copse Primary
Number of pupils in school	420
Proportion (%) of Pupil Premium eligible pupils	32 PP children (7.6%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024/2025 2025/2026 2026/2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	John Micklewhite Headteacher
Pupil Premium lead	Sarah Smith
Governor lead	Eve Hubert

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount		
	2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027 (predicted)
Pupil Premium funding allocation this academic year	£52,810	£58,600	£58,600
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£1,680	£1,839	£241
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	£54,490	£60,439	£58,842

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of Intent

Our aim at Birch Copse Primary School is to provide all children with the opportunity to reach their potential, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face. This was recognised in the recent OFSTED inspection (July 2024) where it was reported “*The school has a highly ambitious curriculum which supports all pupils to achieve exceptionally well*”. Our intention is to provide an inspirational and inclusive teaching and learning environment, with outstanding teaching and learning.

Our key objectives are to raise the attainment for the children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and to continue to diminish any gaps between themselves and their peers. We employ strategies and interventions to remove barriers, which can be caused by personal circumstances or gaps in their knowledge and understanding of subjects. We ensure all children have full access to the rich extra-curricular provision on offer at Birch Copse School and are supported in all aspects of school life, enabling them to develop socially and emotionally, as well as academically. As a result, we develop well rounded individuals who achieve their ambitions and flourish in life.

Rigorous tracking, careful planning and targeted support and intervention, provide all children the access and opportunities they need to enjoy personal success.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 Children's wellbeing and experiences	Discussions, observations and assessments indicate that some of our disadvantaged children's personal experiences, have had a detrimental effect on their social and emotional development. Also, many of our disadvantaged children do not have the rich and varied experiences as non-disadvantaged children seem to have, meaning their knowledge of the world and vocabulary acquisition is limited which impacts the children academically and socially.
2 Reading attainment	Despite good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, our internal assessments indicate that Reading attainment is lower for some of our disadvantaged children, including the % of children attaining Greater Depth in Reading.
3 Writing attainment	Despite good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, our internal assessments indicate that Writing attainment is lower for some of our disadvantaged children, including the % of children attaining Greater Depth in Writing.
4 Maths attainment	Despite good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, our internal assessments indicate that Maths attainment is lower for some of our disadvantaged children, including the % of children attaining Greater Depth in Maths.
5 Attendance	Attendance of disadvantaged children at Birch Copse (2024-2025) is 95.2% which is above the National 2024 figures for all children (92.9%) and significantly above the National figure for PP children (89%) but it is below the non-disadvantaged children at Birch Copse (96.7%). There is a sense of apathy amongst some families and a lack of encouragement to ensure their children attend school regularly.
6 Family support	Some families lack the financial means and academic confidence to support their children at home and at school. Also, some disadvantaged children's home experiences have meant that children come to school hungry, without the appropriate uniform and are unable to access educational and extra-curricular activities.

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 - To further develop our support in order to improve the wellbeing and experiences for our disadvantaged children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions with each child, the results of the student/parent surveys and teacher observations are positive; and the child is happy and able to learn, enabling them to reach their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. Participation in enrichment activities by disadvantaged children (for example: school clubs, educational visits and residential stays, learning a musical instrument, learning to swim, representing the school in sports events, leadership opportunities, higher potential learners' events and opportunities in the wider community). Feedback received from the specialist adult providing any targeted intervention e.g. ELSA, Lego Therapy, Social groups, Sensory Circuits and counselling is positive and the child's well-being is improved. The child is able to use strategies they have learned within their targeted intervention, to help them to manage their emotions and behaviour and address any worries or concerns. Also, feedback received from the targeted children is positive. Disadvantaged children have demonstrated increased self-confidence and self-esteem, enabling them to contribute more in class, feel positive about themselves and have higher aspirations for their future.
2 - To further improve our disadvantaged children's fluency in reading , the ability to infer meaning in a text and to develop the understanding of a wider vocabulary. To further develop the children's enjoyment of reading .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged children achieve or exceed the expected level of progress in Reading across all year groups, including the following key timepoints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in the phonics screening check at the end of KS1. (<i>teacher assessed</i>) at the end of KS2. (<i>in SATs tests</i>) Progress from KS1 to KS2 in Reading for our disadvantaged children, continues to exceed the progress of both Local and National disadvantaged children. [<i>where data is available (2025/2026 and 2026/2027 only)</i>] Teachers report that disadvantaged children engage with a range of texts and join in class discussion. Children can choose a variety of appropriate texts to read and are able to discuss their enjoyment of the text. Disadvantaged children are regularly heard read by an adult in school and by an adult at home.
3 - To further develop our disadvantaged children's understanding of the terminology used in spelling, punctuation and grammar and being able to transfer the knowledge into their own writing .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged children achieve or exceed the expected level of progress in Writing across all year groups, including the following key timepoints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at the end of KS1. (<i>teacher assessed</i>) at the end of KS2. (<i>teacher assessed</i>) at the end of KS2 in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling Standard Assessment Test. (<i>in SATs tests</i>) Progress from KS1 to KS2 in Writing for our disadvantaged children, continues to exceed the progress of both Local and National disadvantaged children [<i>where data is available (2025/2026 and 2026/2027 only)</i>] Disadvantaged children demonstrate a range of spelling, punctuation, grammar and writing style skills in their own writing. Teachers report that disadvantaged children engage with class discussion and writing activities.
4 - To further develop and challenge our disadvantaged children's learning in maths , enabling them to understand and apply mathematical concepts to real life situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged children achieve or exceed the expected level of progress in Maths across all year groups, including the following key timepoints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at the end of KS1. (<i>teacher assessed</i>) in the Year 4 multiplication tables check at the end of KS2. (<i>in SATs tests</i>) Progress from KS1 to KS2 in Maths for our disadvantaged children, continues to exceed the progress of both Local and National disadvantaged children [<i>where data is available (2025/2026 and 2026/2027 only)</i>] Teachers report that disadvantaged children engage with class discussion in the maths lessons.
5 - To improve attendance for our	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The attendance of our disadvantaged children continues to be above the national schools' average (the most up-to-date national average attendance figure is for 2023-2024 is 89% for disadvantaged children).

disadvantaged children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The attendance of our disadvantaged children is equal to the attendance of non-disadvantaged children attending the school. (This was 96.7% in 2024-2025.) The number of disadvantaged children considered as persistent absentees (attendance less than 90%) continues to reduce (8.1% in 2024-2025). Family Liaison Officer and Pupil Premium Lead report higher levels of engagement between parents/carers and school with children being encouraged to attend school regularly.
6 - To continue to support the families of our disadvantaged children who require additional support with behaviour, homework, financing school activities and other financial difficulties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents and carers report higher levels of confidence in their ability to support their children at home and at school Family Liaison Officer and Pupil Premium Lead report higher levels of confidence in the parents/carers' ability to support their children at home and at school Parents and carers have been supported financially when necessary so that their children come to school and are not hungry, wear the appropriate uniform and can access educational and extra-curricular activities. Disadvantaged children have completed homework set by the class teacher. Disadvantaged children are regularly heard read by an adult at home. Our disadvantaged children demonstrate a good understanding of our School Values by: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> their positive attitude to learning being good role models within our school and being good citizens when they leave Birch Copse Primary School.

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 - Budgeted cost: £13,659

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Review the standardised diagnostic assessments to ensure they accurately reflect the children's ability. Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly.	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction:	2,3,4
CPD for staff to help embed dialogic activities across the school curriculum but especially within Reading and Writing lessons. These can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend vocabulary.	There is a strong evidence base that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high-quality classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading: Oral language interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	2,3
Employ an additional teacher to provide targeted intervention in Year 6, to support the children, including the disadvantaged children, in Reading and Maths.	EEF: One to one tuition and small group tuition are both effective interventions. Targeted Intervention delivered by a trained teacher improves the child's outcome. Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2,4
Enhancement of our maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE and EEF guidance. The whole school to use and embed White Rose as a basis for their Maths teaching and assessments.	The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: Mathematics guidance: key stages 1_and 2	4

We will fund teacher release time to embed key elements of guidance in school and to access Maths Hub resources and CPD (including Teaching for Mastery training).	The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3	
Deliver the DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme (Supersonic Phonic Friends) to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils: Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2
Enhancement of our reading and reading comprehension teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE and EEF guidance. Investigate and purchase evidence-based literacy interventions. Train staff to deliver evidence-based literacy interventions.	EEF: Reading comprehension interventions have a high impact for very low cost based on extensive evidence Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind Literacy EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) KS1 Literacy EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) KS2 Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Literacy Shed Plus - READING VIPERS	2
Enhancement of our reading intervention programme for disadvantaged children who have a reading ability below their age expectation. Review the structured reading programmes in use. Identify, purchase and train staff to deliver effective structured reading programmes.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind. Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Individualised instruction EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2
Creation of a vocabulary rich environment where disadvantaged children are exposed to and encouraged to use new words in every area of learning. Engage parents in the development of vocabulary. Display banks of vocabulary across the environment.	Rich vocabulary has a powerful impact on learning - Huntington Research School (EEF partner) Evidence shows that vocabulary is one of the significant factors that proved relevant to children achieving grade A*-C in Maths, English language and English literature (Spencer, Clegg, Stackhouse & Rush 2017) - Closing the Vocabulary Gap by Alex Quigley	2,3,4
Employ a Pupil Premium Lead to champion the disadvantaged children and ensure that their needs are met through the EEF four step approach.	A designated Pupil Premium Lead ensures that the EEF four step approach is implemented: strategies in place to identify the needs of the disadvantaged children; implement plans to support them; and monitor and evaluate their success. The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium Education Endowment Foundation	All
Whole staff training on the principles of Therapeutic Thinking. This is to raise awareness of factors affecting children's behaviour, with the aim that the children's behaviour and attitudes to learning, return to the high level they were before the pandemic.	Whole staff training and universal approaches can have positive overall effects. This will enable staff to consider how behaviour incidents are viewed and the language we use. Behaviour interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	1

Targeted Academic Support - Budgeted cost: **£36,889**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Divide Year 6 into three smaller classes in maths, rather than two, to facilitate targeted learning to enable the children to make progress in maths.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	4
Employ two Pupil Premium Teaching Assistants to be key workers for the disadvantaged children to support them academically and emotionally.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind. Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF Individualised instruction EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	All
Facilitate additional one-to-one and small group interventions in maths, reading and phonics.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2,3,4
Additional one-to-one reading sessions for disadvantaged children, whose reading ability is below the expected level. For example: daily reading, reading comprehension sessions, using a structured programme - Catch Up Literacy.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Catch Up Literacy EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Catch Up Literacy - second trial EEF	2,3
Additional targeted one-to-one maths sessions for disadvantaged children focusing on their gaps in knowledge.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2,3
Provide after-school maths tutoring for disadvantaged children in Years 2 to 6, including those who are high attainers.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	4
Interventions to improve listening, narrative and vocabulary skills for disadvantaged pupils who have relatively low spoken language skills. For example: conversation, turn taking and listening skills; Colourful Semantics – talking in full sentences;	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	1,2,3

following speech therapist guidance.		
Deliver the LEXIA reading programme to further develop the children's love of reading, whilst developing their comprehension skills.	Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+6 months). Alongside phonics it is a crucial component of early reading instruction. Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Lexia Reading Core5® EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) EEF blog: Lexia Reading Core5 - What does the research tell us? EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2
Deliver the online programme of Doodle Maths to enhance the children's maths ability at school and at home (financed by West Berkshire Council)	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	4

Wider Strategies - Budgeted cost: £9,650

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s)) addressed
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's guidance on Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK . This will involve employing a Family Liaison Officer to support families, be a link between home and school (building relationships) and to improve attendance.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence. Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	5,6
Work with families to help them support and promote the importance of their child's learning. For example: Develop parents' subject knowledge by delivering education sessions for parents and carers; Home and School link book, Reading Record, Stay and Play sessions, Parents' Evenings, ClassDojo, productions, PEP and EPEP meetings.	EEF: Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's learning, and levels of parental engagement are consistently associated with better academic outcomes. Evidence from our Teaching and Learning Toolkit suggests that effective parental engagement can lead to learning gains of +3 months over the course of a year. Parental engagement EEF Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,5,6
Enable disadvantaged children to fully access their school experience through providing financial support to their family. For example: educational visits, extra-curricular activities, uniform purchase.	Brighton University study: The known outcomes of children participating in extra-curricular activities (ECA) are well documented. There is also research that links ECA to academic benefits and evidence to suggest that ECA may be especially beneficial to socially disadvantaged pupils Glynnepercypdthesis.pdf (brighton.ac.uk) EEF: Uniform policies complement the development and support of a whole school culture and approach, which in turn may assist pupil discipline and motivation. Pupils from lower socioeconomic households are less likely to be able to afford the cost of school uniforms. School uniform EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,6
Deliver ELSA support to disadvantaged children identified as needing support with their social and emotional needs.	There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g. improved academic performance, attitudes,	1,5

	behaviour and relationships with peers): Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Deliver Lego Therapy to disadvantaged children identified as needing support with social skills. For example: interaction with others, sharing, taking turns.	Lego Therapy is a therapy to support children with social communication difficulties. Social and Emotional Learning is proven to add 4 months in relation to EEF guidance. Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,5
Deliver sensory circuits sessions to disadvantaged children identified as needing support to regulate their sensory needs.	A sensory circuit is a session of physical activities used to alert, organise and calm the child. The sensory circuit facilitates sensory processing to help children regulate and organise their senses in order to achieve the 'just right' or optimum level of alertness required for effective learning. Physical activity EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,5
Hold termly one-to-one discussions with each disadvantaged child and complete an annual pupil survey giving the children a pupil voice.	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the right of children to express an opinion and to be included in decisions that involve and affect them. Various studies have confirmed the benefits of pupil voice: increased pupil engagement, improved relationship between pupils and teachers, better communication between pupils and the school, and providing the right conditions for the school community to become a learning community (<i>Mitra, 2001 and Rudduck et al, 2003</i>).	1,5,6
Review, assess, monitor and support the children's mental health: Termly Pupil Profile meetings between the headteacher and class teacher; SENCo and Parent Liaison Officer. Review mental health support; and implement support identified.	EEF: Effective social and emotional learning (SEL) can increase positive pupil behaviour, mental health and well-being, and academic performance. Prioritise social and emotional learning to avoid "missed..." EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	All
Contingency fund for acute issues that may arise.	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.	All

Total Budgeted Cost:

- Teaching Costs: £13,659
- Targeted Academic Support: £36,889
- Wider Strategies: £9,650

Total Budget: £60,198

	2024-25		2025-26		2026-27	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Teaching Costs	£12,340	£12,341	£13,659		£13,659	
Targeted Academic Support	£32,760	£32,699	£36,889		£35,532	
Wider Strategies	£9,390	£7,609	£9,650		£9,650	
Total	£54,490	£52,649	£60,198		£58,841	

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged children

We analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged children during each 2024/2025 academic. We used Key Stage 1 and 2 performance data, phonics screening check results, multiplication table checks and our own internal assessments.

Every year group at Birch Copse has been affected in some way by the Covid-19 pandemic. Whether it was an interruption to their primary school education (Years 5 and 6), their pre-school/nursery education (Years 3, 4 and 5) or a restriction to their social interactions due to toddler groups, activity clubs and post-natal groups not being able to take place. In addition to this, the parents of these children have not necessarily had the support in their child's early years due to not being able to see extended family and not being able to attend post-natal/toddler groups.

By analysing the school's performance data, it enables us to have a better understanding of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on our children's education journey. *[Refer to Tables A and B (attainment) at the end of this strategy statement].*

Unfortunately progress data from KS1 to KS2 for 2024-2025 is not available as KS1 data is not available for this cohort so progress data has not been presented in this part.

However, we have found that since the pandemic Birch Copse has seen a detrimental effect on some of our disadvantaged children regarding their social and emotional development, especially the children starting in Reception where their baseline assessments have been lower than pre-pandemic years and the children are less prepared to be in an educational environment.

In addition, since the pandemic there has been a decrease in school attendance for our disadvantaged children (even though we are still above the National average).

The following is a review of the progress made during the academic year **2024-2025** towards the six **Intended Outcomes** which were identified to address the key **Challenges** to achievement outlined in the previous three-year **Pupil Premium Strategy Statement**.

For the purpose of this review we have not included two children who qualified for the Pupil Premium Funding late in the Summer Term in any figures presented below.

[Note: Where the term *PP Children* is used, it refers to our children who are in receipt of PP Funding.]

Intended Outcome 1

- **To further develop our support in order to improve the wellbeing and experiences for our disadvantaged children.**

It is very important that children feel that they have a voice, are listened to and are supported to enable them to be ready to learn. As a school, we believe this is very important and as a result we give every disadvantaged child a chance to have a voice:

- Individual discussions were held termly with each child identifying their strengths, areas they would like to improve and to give the children an opportunity to raise any concerns they may have had.
- Each child enjoyed feeding back about their achievements across the year. Any worries or concerns that came up in discussion were shared with the appropriate adults. The children were then given additional support and they were subsequently shown to be happier at school.

Each year Pupil Premium funding is also used to develop the whole child:

- to give them the experiences they might not have been given if it was not for the funding by giving the children opportunities to learn a new talent or skill or to further develop skills.
- to provide therapeutic interventions and activities to support the children's mental health and well-being: Each of these targeted interventions were delivered by adults with specialist training to support the children's emotional and behavioural development, help them to implement strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour, and to address any worries and concerns.
- to run Sensory Circuits to support the development of children's sensory processing skills. These sessions can enhance attention, develop motor skills, reduce anxiety, improve coordination and improve behaviour, all

of which enables children to benefit more from the learning environment.

- to hold a Gardening Club which encouraged a mindful approach through spending time in nature. The children planted seeds and nurtured the plants and enjoyed tasting the fruits and vegetables they had grown.
- *For 2024/2025, the number of children who participated in these experiences are listed below.*

Pupil Premium funding also enabled children to attend swimming lessons as part of the school PE curriculum and attend educational visits and residential stays.

Through observations, the feedback from the support provided and discussions with children, teachers and families, it has shown that children's mental health has improved and that they felt safe and happy at school. However, challenges in relation to wellbeing and mental health still remain significantly higher than before the pandemic. The impact on disadvantaged children has been particularly acute, but we are continuing to address this through therapeutic approaches and other support for individuals and families.

The school is proud of its sporting heritage, competing locally and within the county. Over the past few years, children have had the opportunity to participate in football and cricket tournaments, athletics and cross-country championships, and rugby, netball and rounders matches.

Members of the after-school Glee Club (choir) take part in the annual Berkshire Maestros Junior Music Festival production at the Hexagon theatre, Reading. The children experienced performing on a stage in front of a full theatre audience. The Pupil Premium funding enabled our disadvantaged children to participate in this opportunity as they might not have been able to attend otherwise, due to financial circumstances.

OFSTED commented on the opportunities for children at Birch Copse, "*Pupils benefit from an exceptionally wide range of character-building opportunities. This offer is diverse, including 'Glee', drama, gymnastics, gardening, art and various sports clubs. Beyond this, as school and eco-councillors, subject ambassadors, 'Birch Copse Buddies' or mini-masters, pupils learn how to harness their talents and skills to contribute to school life.*"

2024-2025

- Children participated in a range of school clubs and activities: **17** in the autumn term, **11** in the spring term and **13** in the summer term.
- **4** children received ELSA support
- **4** children attended a Lego Therapy group
- **2** children received Speech and Language support
- **2** children attended a Social Skills group.
- **1** child received support with taking turns through a bucket time intervention
- **14** PP children have been chosen to represent the school in at least one sport with great success.
- The Birch Copse Glee Club (choir) took part in the British Legion's Pennies for the Poppy fund-raising initiative at the Remembrance Memorial at Tilehurst Triangle. **16** children went to the memorial to lay their pennies and perform two songs on the theme of friendship and togetherness, along with other members of the Tilehurst community and community groups. **1** PP child was selected to attend.
- A range of children-led clubs held at lunch times continued this year. The Year 5 and 6 children took over the organisation and running of clubs for infants and juniors, such as Construction, Colouring, Singing, Reading and Puzzle Clubs. **16** PP children attended at least one of the clubs, with **6** children attending more than one of the clubs. **3** PP children organised and ran a club.
- **3** Year 6 children were Birch Copse Buddies during the autumn and spring terms. They followed a rota to be on duty during one breaktime and one lunchtime a week.
- **3** Year 5 children successfully applied to become Birch Copse Buddies. Following a six-session training period where the children learned social skills, listening skills, empathy, problem solving, how to be mediators, and strategies to deal with conflict, they started the role during the summer term, and will continue when the children are in Year 6.
- **1** Year 6 child put themselves forward for a role on the School Council. This involved writing an election speech and conducting an election campaign. The child was elected as one of the Vice Chairs, and during their year on the School Council they helped raise money for the RSPCA and organise various school events including a Bake Sale, Cinema nights, a Talent Show and Takeover Day.
- **2** Year 6 children received awards in the Leavers Assembly in recognition of their attitude to learning during their time at Birch Copse and for demonstrating the School Values.
- At the end of Spring Term, all children receiving Pupil Premium funding were asked to complete a

questionnaire. Pleasingly **94%** of the children enjoy being at school. They were asked questions about what they enjoy about school; including which subjects, any extra-curricular activities and any clubs, as well as who helps the children with their learning and what resources the children use to help their learning. The results of the questionnaire were shared with parents and a copy is available on request.

- At the end of the questionnaire was a Children's Voice section where the children in Years 1 to 6 were asked the following questions:
 - *Do you feel you are able to tell an adult at school if you are worried about something?* **Yes (75%)**
 - *Do you feel your ideas are listened to in class?* **Yes (91%)**
 - *Do you like sharing your achievements with an adult in school?* **Yes (97%)**
 - *Do you feel you are challenged at school?* **Yes (84%)**
- The reception children were asked
 - *Do you feel you are able to tell an adult at school if you are worried about something?*
 - *Do you like sharing your achievements with an adult in school?*

All of the children said yes to both questions.

Intended Outcome 2

- **To further improve our disadvantaged children's fluency in reading, the ability to infer meaning in a text and to develop the understanding of a wider vocabulary.**
- **To develop the children's enjoyment of reading.**

The attainment gap between our disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children has remained in line with each other since the start of the pandemic. This is not reflective of national figures and demonstrates the positive impact of our approach during the pandemic and since on disadvantaged children.

Tables A and B at the end of this statement show the attainment of disadvantaged children in Reading at the end of KS1 and KS2 respectfully. These tables also show attainment for all children to allow a comparison.

One-to-one interventions delivered:

- Phonics in Reception
- Name recognition in Reception
- Phonics in Years 1 and 2
- Catch up Literacy to address gaps in children's learning
- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Small group interventions delivered:
 - Reading comprehension
 - LEXIA

Children are able to choose a reading book from a variety of appropriate texts and are encouraged to discuss their enjoyment of it with their peers and with adults.

Children are regularly heard read by an adult in school and are also heard regularly at home. If adults are unable to read regularly at home, additional reads are timetabled at school.

Each class has a session booked in the school library to read, loan and exchange books. Children also have access to the library after school with their parents and carers. Each classroom also has an in-class library which children are encouraged to explore and read from.

Teachers report that children in receipt of PP funding access and engage with a range of texts both individually and in class discussions.

OFSTED commented, "A love of reading pervades the school. All pupils access a wide range of texts which builds their vocabulary and inspires them to read."

2024- 2025

- **75%** of children in **Years 1-6** (24 out of 32) achieved or exceeded the expected level of progress in reading.
- **60%** of children (3 out of 5) achieved ARE in reading in the end of term assessments at the end of **KS1**.
- **66.67%** of children (6 out of 9) achieved ARE in reading in the **KS2** Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) with **22.2%** (2 children) exceeding ARE.
- Progress from KS1 to KS2 information has not been reported as data at KS1 is not available for this cohort of children due to the school closure at the time of the pandemic.
- **66.67%** of children (2 out of 3) passed the **Year 1** phonics screening test.
- In **Reception**, **60%** of children (3 out of 5) achieved ARE in reading. However, at the start of the year, **2** of the children, after completing the baseline assessments, were considered not to be on track to meet the ARE at the end of the Reception year.
- The Lexia intervention programme was used by **23** PP children, **17** SEN children and **6** children who are in the lowest 20% of readers at the school.
- Lower ability readers are invited to come into school before school starts on two mornings a week to read with older Birch Copse Pupils and Little Heath pupils (Reading Buddies). **2** PP children attend these sessions.

Intended Outcome 3

- **To further develop our disadvantaged children's understanding of the terminology used in spelling, punctuation and grammar and being able to transfer the knowledge into their own writing.**

The attainment gap between our disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children has remained in line with each other since the start of the pandemic. This is not reflective of national figures and demonstrates the positive impact of our approach during the pandemic and since on disadvantaged children.

Tables A and B at the end of this statement show the attainment of disadvantaged children in Writing at the end of KS1 and KS2 respectfully. These tables also show attainment for all children to allow a comparison.

- One-to-one interventions delivered:
 - Sentence writing in Reception
 - Letter formation in Reception
 - Handwriting
 - Precision Teaching for spelling

In-class support was provided during English lessons to support and challenge children in receipt of PP funding with their spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as supporting children to employ a wide range of vocabulary in their writing.

Children in receipt of PP funding demonstrate a range of spelling, punctuation, grammar and writing skills in their own writing and contribute to class discussions and collaborative exercises.

2024-2025

- **71.88%** of children in **Years 1- 6** (23 out of 32) achieved or exceeded the expected level of progress in writing.
- **40%** of children (2 out of 5) achieved ARE in writing through teacher assessments at the end of **KS1**.
- **66.67%** of children (6 out of 9) achieved ARE in writing in the **KS2** Standard Assessment Tests (SATs).
- **44.44%** of children (4 out of 9) achieved ARE in the **KS2** English grammar, punctuation and spelling Standard Assessment Test (SATs).
- Progress from KS1 to KS2 information has not been reported as data at KS1 is not available for this cohort of children due to the school closure at the time of the pandemic.
- In **Reception**, **80%** of children (4 out of 5) achieved ARE in writing. However, at the start of the year, **4** of the children, after completing the baseline assessments, were considered not to be on track to meet the ARE at the end of the Reception year.

Intended Outcome 4

- **To further develop and challenge our disadvantaged children's learning in maths, enabling them to understand and apply mathematical concepts to real life situations.**

The attainment gap between our disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children has remained in line with each other since the start of the pandemic. This is not reflective of national figures and demonstrates the positive impact of our approach during the pandemic and since on disadvantaged children.

Tables A and B at the end of this statement show the attainment of disadvantaged children in Maths at the end of KS1 and KS2 respectfully. These tables also show attainment for all children to allow a comparison.

Children were identified for additional support based on data and feedback from teachers. Maths interventions were then targeted according to the children's individual needs. These were delivered for individuals and small groups in the autumn, spring and summer terms. The impact of all maths interventions was monitored to ensure they were effective and were adapted as required.

- One-to-one maths interventions delivered:
 - Number recognition and counting in Reception
 - Targeted Maths to address gaps in children's learning
 - Arithmetic skills
- Small group maths interventions delivered:
 - Targeted Maths to address gaps in children's learning
 - Challenge Maths to allow children to apply their maths skills to problems and develop their reasoning skills
 - Arithmetic skills
- Tutoring (after school):
 - During autumn term, maths tutoring was offered to targeted children in Years 2-6.
 - During spring term, maths tutoring was offered to children in Years 2-6.
 - During summer term, maths tutoring was offered to children in Years 2-6.
 - Non-Pupil Premium children were able to benefit from tutoring due to 'piggy backing' on the Pupil Premium funding, which is promoted by the Department of Education.

In-class support was provided during maths lessons to support and challenge PP children.

Teachers and TAs received the appropriate maths training and were able to explore and use a range of new equipment/resources.

Through observations and teacher discussions, teachers report that children in receipt of PP funding actively participated in class discussions and activities in maths lessons.

2024-2025

- **71.88%** of children in **Years 1-6** (23 out of 32) achieved or exceeded the expected level of progress in maths.
- **60%** of children (3 out of 5) achieved ARE in maths in the end of term assessments at the end of **KS1**.
- **66.67%** of children (6 out of 9) achieved ARE in maths in the **KS2** Standard Assessment Tests (SATs), with **11.11%** (1 child) exceeding ARE.
- Progress from KS1 to KS2 information has not been reported as data at KS1 is not available for this cohort of children due to the school closure at the time of the pandemic.
- In **Year 4**, **100%** (5 out of 5) of the children achieved a score of 20 or above (out of 25) in the Multiplication Check, with **80%** (4 children) achieving full marks, a score of 25.
- In **Reception**, **100%** of children (5 out of 5) achieved ARE in maths, with **40%** (2 children) exceeding ARE. However, at the start of the year, **1** of the children, after completing the baseline assessments, was considered not to be on track to meet the ARE at the end of the Reception year.
- **Tutoring:**
 - During **autumn term**, **17** PP children attended the sessions along with **50** non-PP children.
 - During **spring term**, **18** PP children attended the sessions along with **36** non-PP children.
 - During **summer term**, **17** PP children attended the sessions along with **50** non-PP children.

Intended Outcome 5

- **To improve attendance for our disadvantaged children.**

Where attendance is highlighted as a concern, the Pupil Premium Lead and Family Liaison Officer worked closely with families to provide support as required, to enable children to attend school.

The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the Family Liaison Officer have fortnightly Safeguarding meetings, which become weekly if the need arises. As part of these meetings, a weekly review of the children's attendance is monitored and follow up actions are implemented as a result.

2024-2025

- The whole school attendance figure was **96.5%** which was higher for the 2024/25 school year than the previous year (up 0.4% on the 2023/24 figure).
- The attendance for children who receive PP funding reflected this positive trend with a higher attendance of **95.2%** (up 0.3% on the 2023/24 figure), which is above the most recent national school's average for all children (92.9%) and continues to be considerably above the most recent national schools' average for disadvantaged children (89%) [2023/24 national figures].
- **51.4%** of children in receipt of PP funding (19 out of 37) met the school's attendance target of 96.2%. Attendance levels are affected by illness, medical appointments and other authorised absences.
- **54.1%** of children in receipt of PP funding (20 out of 37) have attendance of over 95%.
- **8.1%** of PP children at our school were considered as persistent absentees (attendance less than 90%) which was noticeably lower than for the previous school year (down 5.4% on the 2023/24 figure). This is much lower than the latest available national average for persistent absentees for **all** children (20%) and considerably lower than the national percentage for disadvantaged children nationally which was 34.8% (2023-2024 figures). Regular communication between the parents/carers, headteacher, Family Liaison Officer and PP Lead took place in order to support these families and monitor the children's attendance.
- Children's attendance, in particular persistent absentees, was an area that was targeted throughout the whole school during the academic year 2024/2025 and the increase in attendance across the school reflects these efforts. **However, this continues to be an area that is being targeted next academic year.**
- There were various reasons for low attendance including sickness and diarrhoea bugs, seasonal cold and flu, and holidays (including some unauthorised).
- As a school and nationally, COVID-19 has been found to be one of the reasons for a decrease in national attendance figures. Parents are now more reluctant to send children to school or more willing to let them stay home. (*Listening to and Learning from parents in the attendance crisis 2023 – Dr Sally Burtonshaw & Ed Dorrell*) <https://www.publicfirst.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/ATTENDANCE-REPORT-V02.pdf>.

Intended Outcome 6

- **To continue to support the families of our disadvantaged children who require additional support with behaviour, homework, financing school activities and other financial difficulties.**

The PP Lead built successful relationships with parents and carers as a result of meeting with families who were new to PP and with other PP families as necessary.

Parents have been supported to develop their subject knowledge, so that they in turn can support their children. Support has been provided when needed through:

- education sessions such as phonics and reading for parents and carers of children in reception
- use of home and school link book

When required the PP Lead would attend and facilitate the following meetings:

- PEP and EPEP meetings
- CIN meetings
- Meetings with parents/carers and other professionals

Birch Copse school is situated close to the council boundary, so our families are residents in either West Berkshire Council and Reading Council. In the past the councils have provided support directly to families living in their area through monetary grants, food vouchers and fuel payments. However, in recent years both councils have changed their approach and the school is more involved in organising the support.

In addition to the support from the local councils, our PP families received support from local charities around Christmas.

- The *Reading Toys and Teens Appeal* collected donations of Christmas presents from the local area and contacted the school to request how many of our children would benefit from receiving a Christmas present. The PP team then organised the wrapping and delivery of these presents to the parents/carers, so they could give these presents to their child or children at Christmas. (All the children within the family were provided with gifts even if they do not attend our school) (Dec 2024).
- Also, Birch Copse staff generously provided gifts for our disadvantaged families.
- Both councils provided support through the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) which our families were signposted to use.

2024-2025

Support Provided:

- **159** items of school uniform were provided to **26** children over the course of the year.
- The Family Liaison Officer and the PP Lead provided extensive support to **7** of our PP families.
- **All** PP children received a Learner Reward certificate to praise their attitude and effort in their learning and received a Citizen Reward certificate for being kind, caring and a good role model to others in our school.
- During the year, the PP Lead supported a further **2** families considered vulnerable, but who did not qualify for PP funding. The support took the form of providing the families with uniform, presents at Christmas, and food parcels at Easter and during the Summer holidays.

A number of families received support during the year as follows:

October Half Term

- food parcels from local council – **3** families

Christmas

- presents – **8** families
- Christmas Tree donated by Cook and Clark Christmas Trees – **1** family
- £125 cost of living payment - **9** families
- 2 x £15 food voucher per child – **16** families
- Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)

Easter

- 1 x £15 food voucher per child – **16** families
- Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)

Summer Holidays

- 4 x £15 food voucher per child – **16** families
- food parcels from local council – **10** families
- Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)

Further information (Optional)

Additional activity

Our Pupil Premium Strategy will be supplemented by additional opportunities and actions that are not being funded by Pupil Premium or Recovery Premium. These will include:

- embedding more effective practice around giving our children feedback about their learning. [EEF evidence on feedback](#) demonstrates this has significant benefits for children, particularly disadvantaged children.
- Utilising a [DfE grant to train a senior mental health lead](#). The training will help to develop our understanding of our children's needs, give our children a voice in how we address wellbeing, and support more effective collaboration with parents.

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

In planning our new Pupil Premium Strategy, we gathered evidence from multiple sources of data including assessments, engagement in class, book scrutiny, conversations/questionnaires with parents/carers, children and teachers in order to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged children.

We looked at a number of reports, studies and research papers 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.

We used the [EEF's implementation guidance](#) to help us develop our strategy, particularly the 'explore' phase to help us diagnose specific child needs and work out which activities and approaches are likely to work in our school. We will continue to use it through the implementation of activities.

We regularly review this strategy throughout the year and will adjust our plan appropriately to secure better outcomes for our children.

Table A: Comparison of Attainment for Pupil Premium Children against All Children at Birch Copse in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 1

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	% Exp+	% Higher	% Exp+	% Higher	% Exp+	% Higher	% Exp+	% Higher
Reading								
All	83	33	82	34	80	36	84	46
PP Children	100 (4)	25(4)	67 (6)	33 (6)	100 (4)	50 (4)	60 (5)	0 (5)
Writing								
All	77	18	76	19	76	25	79	21
PP Children	100 (4)	25 (4)	67 (6)	17 (6)	100 (4)	0 (4)	40 (5)	0 (5)
Maths								
All	82	30	84	29	75	22	84	41
PP Children	75 (4)	50 (4)	83 (6)	33 (6)	100 (4)	50 (4)	60 (5)	0 (5)

Source: School Data Analysis 2021-2022 (page 21), School Data Analysis 2022-2023 (page 24), School Data Analysis 2023-2024 (Internal report) (pages 4 & 5) and School Data Analysis 2024-2025 (Internal report) (pages 4 & 5)

Table B: Comparison of Attainment for Pupil Premium Children against All Children at Birch Copse in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2

	2022		2023		2024		2025		2025 National	
	% Exp+	% Higher	% Exp+	% Higher	% Exp+	% Higher	% Exp+	% Higher	% Exp+	% Higher
Reading										
All	82	42	85	32	87	46	83	45	75	33
PP Children	89 (9)	22 (9)	71 (7)	29 (7)	50 (2)	0 (2)	67 (9)	22 (9)	81*	**
Writing										
All	92	27	92	27	93	31	87	27	72	13
PP Children	89 (9)	22 (9)	86 (7)	29 (7)	100 (2)	0 (2)	67 (9)	0 (9)	78*	**
Maths										
All	84	31	88	32	92	39	82	32	74	26
PP Children	89 (9)	22 (9)	86 (7)	29 (7)	100 (2)	0 (2)	67 (9)	0 (9)	80*	**

Source: School Data Analysis 2021-2022 (pages 9, 11 & 13), School Data Analysis 2022-2023 (pages 9, 11 & 13), School Data Analysis 2023-2024 (pages 4,5 & 6), School Data Analysis 2024-2025 (Internal report) (pages 4 & 5) and "Academic Year 2024/25 Key Stage 2 Attainment" (GOV.UK)

*The national comparator for disadvantaged is the national average for non-disadvantaged pupils.

**No 2025 National KS2 data for Greater Depth (Higher) for non-disadvantaged pupils was reported.