

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Charter School North Dulwich

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1395 (944 in years 7-11)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	26%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025/2026 to 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Mark Pain - Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Anna Fletcher – Deputy Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Lloyd Stephenson, PP link governor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£290,184
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£290,184

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, whatever their background or circumstances, make excellent progress and achieve highly across the curriculum. Through our Pupil Premium strategy, we will prioritise the success of disadvantaged pupils, including those who are already high attainers so that every learner can fulfil their potential.

We adopt a “disadvantaged first” mindset in all areas of school life, from classroom practice and curriculum design to pastoral care and enrichment opportunities. Our aim is to remove barriers to learning and ensure that every pupil, regardless of their background, experiences high-quality teaching, strong relationships, and a sense of belonging.

Teaching and Learning are at the heart of our strategy. We recognise that the greatest lever for improving outcomes for disadvantaged students is excellent classroom practice, which will also benefit non-PP students. Teachers are supported and challenged to plan deliberately for disadvantaged learners, using evidence-informed approaches that enable all students to make strong progress.

Our pastoral systems nurture and empower our students. We know that wellbeing, attendance, and engagement are foundational to success, so our pastoral support is proactive, relational, and inclusive. Strong, positive relationships are key to our work - connecting staff and students, strengthening friendships among peers, and building trust between the school, families, and the wider community.

We seek to include everyone so that all feel a sense of belonging. Through our curriculum, enrichment, and leadership opportunities, we ensure that every student feels seen, valued, and able to contribute. We will recognise and respond to the unique challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, including those with a social worker and those who are young carers, ensuring they receive the support they need to thrive. Above all, we are aspirational for all. We believe in the potential of every young person and are committed to breaking down disadvantage so that our PP students can achieve academic excellence and flourish beyond school.

Our Pupil Premium strategy is grounded in the principle of early intervention, enabling us to take a preventative approach rather than addressing problems after they arise. It is responsive to both common challenges and individual needs and is rooted in robust diagnostic assessment rather than assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The strategies we have adopted are designed to complement one another, creating a coherent framework that enables all pupils to excel. We will ensure that we collect sufficient data so that we can conduct impact assessments of our activities.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Despite our PP attendance being above the national average for PP students (92.1% vs 88.2%), and progress being made on attendance data overall, there was still an almost 3 percentage point gap between attendance of our PP vs our non-PP students (92.1% vs 95%) in the 2024/2025 academic year. Persistent absenteeism was also higher for PP students compared with non-PP students (27% vs 13.7%) as is the number of PP who are significantly late to school. National research data and analysis of our GCSE results show that student attainment is strongly linked to attendance. This data underlines the need for targeted interventions to support PP student attendance both to school and to lessons.</p>
2	<p>Reading</p> <p>Assessments and observations indicate that reading levels of KS3 disadvantaged pupils is generally lower than the reading comprehension of their peers which will impact their progress across all subjects.</p> <p>On entry to Y7, the proportion of our PP students whose reading is below age-related expectations is always much higher – for our 2025/2026 intake the proportion of PP students who are below age-related expectations is 23% vs 12% for all other students.</p>
3	<p>GCSE English and Maths outcomes</p> <p>The GCSE results in the 2024/2025 academic year for our PP students showed improvement at closing the gap compared to previous results, but the gap still exists. 60% of all students achieved a strong pass (5+) in both English and Maths, but breaking this down between PP and non-PP students, only 23% of PP students achieved this vs 84% of non-PP students.</p>
4	<p>School engagement / belonging</p> <p>Nationally benchmarked questionnaire responses show that our PP students have lower levels of engagement with school than our non-PP students (although they still score higher than the national average). TEP data shows that female students eligible for FSM had a headline engagement figure of –0.7 below the school average, and male students eligible for FSM had a headline engagement figure of –1.1 below the school average. This shows that whilst our PP students are more positively engaged than their peers nationally, there remains a significant in-school gap in students' sense of belonging and engagement with learning.</p>
5	<p>Homework / equipment</p> <p>Analysis of behaviour data shows that PP students have received 33% of all sanctions for no homework – this is 7 percentage points higher than the proportion of PP students in the school (26%) showing that homework non-completion is more prevalent amongst PP students. PP students have also received 46% of the sanctions for repeated failure to complete homework. Subsequent detention data shows that 52% of the sanctions given to students for failing to attend a homework <i>detention</i> are given to PP students suggesting</p>

	that they are perhaps being further penalised for having not completed their homework
6	<p>PP/SEND/Safeguarding overlap</p> <p>Over 38% of our PP students also have a special educational need. In addition, in school tracking indicates that disadvantaged students have a higher level of social and emotional concerns as indicated by safeguarding records highlighting that many of our students are facing multiple layers of disadvantage.</p>

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 attendance	Ambition for PP attendance to be in line with national attendance figures. Our aspirational target is 96% attendance for all students, including DA students. For persistent absence, our target is 21% for PP students (to match national 'all students')
Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across KS3	<p>Reading comprehension tests will indicate improved comprehension skills for disadvantaged students and a reduced gap between the scores of disadvantaged students and their peers.</p> <p>Student engagement will improve and be indicated in reduced gaps in engagement for learning for classwork and formal assessment outcomes.</p>
Improved attainment and progress among disadvantaged students across the curriculum, particularly in GCSE Maths and English.	<p>By the end of the current plan in 2027/2028 we have the ambition that 100% of students will achieve at least a level 4 in both their English and Maths GCSEs (with exceptions for a small number of students with complex special educational needs).</p> <p>All students will have the choice to pursue a post 16 course that best suits their ambitions and aptitudes.</p>
Improved school belonging amongst our PP students.	<p>Improvements in engagement and belonging scores in the TEP survey so that there is minimal difference between PP and non-PP student average responses.</p> <p>Other qualitative data from student voice, parent surveys and teacher observations will also be examined. We will also hope to see improved outcomes in a range of assessment criteria, a reduction in behaviour concerns amongst PP students and improved attendance figures.</p>

Improved homework completion amongst PP students	<p>Behaviour data will show the same proportion of homework sanctions being given to our PP students compared to non-PP students – and a reduction overall in homework-related sanctions.</p> <p>The quality of this homework completion will also be evidenced by improved outcomes in a range of assessment criteria, particularly in formal assessments.</p>
Improved outcomes for PP students with SEN and additional vulnerabilities	<p>Disadvantaged pupils with SEND and/or social, emotional, and safeguarding needs make strong academic progress, demonstrate improved wellbeing, and have equitable access to support and enrichment opportunities.</p> <p>Targeted interventions, an adapted curriculum where appropriate and coordinated support ensure that barriers to learning are reduced and staff are equipped with knowledge about vulnerable students that allows them to respond effectively to the multiple layers of disadvantage faced by these students.</p>

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £174,110

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Quality First Teaching and school culture through targeted CPD in consistently implementing our Charter School T&L basics; in implementing subject focused pedagogy and in an effective programme of observation.	Ensuring an effective teacher is in front of every class, and that every teacher is supported to keep improving, is the key ingredient of a successful school and should rightly be a top priority for pupil premium spending. (EEF Pupil Premium Guide). Sutton Trust research shows that “The effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from DA: 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.	1, 3, 6
Extending school learning time by	This is a deliberate non-targeted approach to increase student engagement and reduce	1, 3, 6

providing additional teaching time for EBacc subjects in Y11 (maths, science).	identified gaps in learning due to Covid. The EEF guide on school time indicates to ensure effective attendance and engagement students should not be singled out. Overall adds +3 months to learning experience. Extending school time EEF	
Developing homework and self-regulation plans to enable students to take responsibility for their own learning. Clear planned homework that is synchronous to the curriculum and forms and builds on students' knowledge and learning	Homework has a positive impact on average (+ 5 months) for students in secondary schools. Some pupils may not have a quiet space for home learning – therefore to support students the school will provide a study hall and a homework club Homework that is linked to classroom work tends to be more effective. It is important to make the purpose of homework clear to pupils to enable them to see the importance and value of the work. Homework EEF	3, 5
Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF guidance Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	1, 2, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £59,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Support for homework – for PP students and separate support for those PP students with SEN	EEF research recommends: 'Disadvantaged students should have additional encouragement and support to enable them to engage in self-directed study, does sufficient homework and read more books, and engage in any other activities that provide extra academic dividends and are linked to aspirations and self-belief. Schools should provide such opportunities where they are unlikely to be available at home.' Homework EEF	3, 5, 6
Reading breakfast club supporting reciprocal	Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on students'	2, 3

reading for disadvantaged students and those whose reading is below age-related expectations to support the comprehensions of texts and address vocabulary gaps	ability to understand a text, and this is particularly effective on short-term high impact reading schemes. EEF report on reading comprehension strategies Using the Charles Dicken's fluency focus reading program to develop reading fluency increasing the contact and exposure of weak readers to a deliberate phonics-based scheme to support reading fluency	
Excellence programme – an 'in-house' programme developed for KS3 and KS4 PP students who are middle or higher prior attaining	Includes elements of peer tutoring, university and careers IAG, extra-curricular trips, peer tutoring and mentoring Peer tutoring EEF	1, 2, 3, 4,
KS4 SEND booster sessions in English and Maths for KS4 students	KS4 SEND booster sessions led by TAs to replace one foundation subject for pupils with target below 3 (in addition to, rather than withdrawal from core subjects) Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF	3, 6
Peer tutoring in Maths	KS5 students will support PP KS3 students with their work with a particular focus on maths Peer tutoring EEF	1, 3, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £57,074

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Maintaining of student counselling service to support students with regulating their emotions and supporting with emotional difficulties.	Evidence to support counselling is based on improvements in students' depressive symptoms and psychological distress (Pearce et al., 2017; Saelid & Nordahl, 2017) Counselling and mental first aid intervention can have positive impact on social and emotional skills as evidenced in the EIF report on Adolescent mental health	1, 4
Embedding principles of good practice around raising attendance through using the DfE's	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that	1, 3, 6

improving school attendance report. Specifically using services of a specialist educational welfare officer (EWO) to support the attendance of persistent absentees.	have significantly reduced persistent absence levels. Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK Embed pastoral structure to help with earlier intervention with attendance issues to ensure that pupil premium students are coming into school more regularly and are not persistently late.	
Extra-curricular programme that provides a variety of options for students to choose from – expectation that all KS3 students will attend at least one club	Evidence shows that involvement in extra-curricular activities can help with feelings of school belonging and attendance - New research reveals positive link between enrichment and tackling the school attendance crisis Centre for Young Lives Press Release	1, 4
Priority access to careers IAG and widening participation officer	PP students are more likely to be uncertain about the qualifications they need to access their chosen career and get the skills they need SYM873648 Careers-Education-Infographic - We will ensure that all PP students are able to receive careers IAG early on in their secondary career	3, 4, 6
Preparation for adulthood provision course for students with SEND, many of whom are also PP	Being developed by HLTA to support SEN students with low target grades to equip them with important life-skills Special Education Needs in Mainstream Schools guidance report Education Endowment Foundation	6

Total budgeted cost: £ 290,184

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Academic Outcomes

Key Stage 4 outcomes for Pupil Premium (PP) students showed significant improvement in 2024/25. The percentage of PP students achieving 9–5 in English and Maths increased from 23% in 2023/24 to 49% in 2024/25. The mean average grade rose from 4.1 to 4.5, and Attainment 8 scores improved to 45. However, gaps remain in subjects such as DT, Spanish, Economics, Business, History, and French.

Attendance

Attendance for PP students improved from 90.2% in 2023/24 to 91.6% in 2024/25. Persistent absenteeism decreased from 28.1% to 26.5%. Despite these gains, a significant gap remains compared to non-PP students (95.6% attendance and 9.6% persistent absenteeism). The school has implemented strategies such as EWO involvement and targeted interventions to address these issues but needs to go further to ensure that this critical area is addressed to reduce the overall gap

Behaviour

Behavioural outcomes for PP students have improved, with the percentage of PP students suspended dropping from 14% to 8.9%. Overall suspensions also decreased from 100 to 72. However, PP students remain overrepresented in behaviour incidents, particularly for lateness and persistent disruption.

Overall Summary

The 2024/25 academic year saw notable improvements in academic outcomes, attendance, and behaviour for Pupil Premium students at The Charter School North Dulwich. These gains reflect the effective implementation of the Pupil Premium Strategy, which emphasizes quality first teaching, targeted academic support, and wider strategies for wellbeing and engagement, however, there remains an in-school gap and whilst there is evidence that the gap is less compared to the national dataset, work needs to be done to ensure the PP students keep up rather than persistently needing to catch up.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Boys Programme Girls Programme	Football Beyond Borders - Schools - Why Choose Us?
Therapeutic Intervention for Peace (TIP)	Power the Fight Power The Fight - Empowering Communities to End Youth Violence
The Scholars Programme	The Brilliant Club - Programme Overview - Schools - The Brilliant Club

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.