

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Valley Gardens Middle School
Number of pupils in school	766
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	60 / 766 (8%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2021/2022 2022/2023 2023/2024
Date this statement was published	November 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2024
Statement authorised by	David Godfrey Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	L Kerr
Governor / Trustee lead	D Nisbet

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£94,832
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£13,327
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£108,159

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

We aim for all our pupils to achieve highly and make outstanding progress as they move through the school, regardless of background. We want them to be fully involved in the wider life of the school, taking advantage of the extensive and varied extra-curricular programme we have. We aim to abolish all learning gaps that are linked to disadvantage. Irrespective of circumstance, we believe all children are entitled to high quality teaching in a nurturing environment; an environment which is intellectually stimulating and challenging, where curious learners can develop into successful and responsible global citizens.

The focus of the Pupil Premium strategy is to support our disadvantaged pupils to succeed academically and to close attainment gaps that exist between pupil groups. We ensure additionality to our provision for our disadvantaged pupils and engage with them as individual learners. Because of the relatively small numbers in each year group, we are able to scrutinise the needs of individual children and plan accordingly. This is in addition to the quality first wave teaching and strong pastoral support that is our bedrock for all students.

We are adopting the tiered approach recommended by the EEF which places the greatest focus on promoting high quality teaching, supported by academic interventions and wider non-teaching strategies to support the three year plan. This is complemented by our whole school high quality CPD. We have engaged on a three year Metacognition training plan, as recommended by the EEF. This is now in the third year and has linked with our focus on Disciplinary Literacy, which has previously explored vocabulary and reading strategies. The two now combine with a focus on using metacognitive approaches to improve writing.

High quality first wave teaching is the right of all pupils. Strategies such as differentiated planning, adaptive teaching, questioning, assessment, feedback, deep marking and use of targets are revisited in staff training and are a focus of Department training and monitoring by Middle Leaders across school. We also have a focus on retention and retrieval practices within lessons. This approach benefits both advantaged and disadvantaged pupils, but with a focus on inclusion of disadvantaged pupils in active aspects of the lessons, such as questioning and live marking and an expectation of priority deep marking after lessons; these approaches will help support attainment. High expectations of disadvantaged children with high challenge are built into each lesson and reflected in targets. We aim to raise aspirations of pupils and regularly review targets for our disadvantaged pupils to celebrate success and ensure challenge.

To support quality first wave teaching, smaller catch-up and booster groups will run for our disadvantaged cohort. To ensure the quality, focus and cohesion of these smaller group catch-up sessions, we have employed a member of staff into the post of academic tutor. This allows us to create bespoke resources to inform timely

intervention which is relevant to the VGMS curriculum. This is in line with the provision offered by the National Tutoring Programme, but embellished in the use of staff who know the children, school and curriculum. To enable us to track progress in these groups, small-step targets are created for each child. This allows us to be specific in the identification of need, to break down learning barriers and ensure the effectiveness of the sessions. To further complement this, we also have an experienced HLTA who delivers intervention to wider groups of pupils and both staff work closely in aspects of planning, delivery and monitoring.

In addition, we use pupil voice to help inform provision, which includes various enrichment opportunities. These include arts clubs, writing groups, author visits or streaming, sports groups and sporting visits, drama, reading groups, debate clubs, drama opportunities and out of school visits. We are developing the concept of 'Master Classes' aimed at KS3 pupils which allow us to further develop aspects of the curriculum; last year we explored ceramics as an extension of the Art curriculum and extended Creative Writing. Extra-curricular registers allow us to record and monitor attendance and encourage a wider uptake, running alongside encouragement of pastoral staff, including Heads of Year and Tutors when whole year group activities take place. We aim to ensure our disadvantaged students are able to experience a wide and diverse cultural capital.

The School has a strong mental health and wellbeing provision with an in-house mental-health practitioner, the school nurse who is a qualified Thrive practitioner, staff trained as mental health first aiders and an outstanding PSHE curriculum. This is available to all pupils as and when needed, but is specific to a minority of our disadvantaged cohort. Given the concerns of our partnership First Schools in 2021-22 and 2022-23 PP documentation, this is an area we continue to monitor and focus on in transition activities and as pupils transfer schools.

We do not make simple assumptions on the effect or impact of disadvantage on a child, but work holistically to support the children and use multi-disciplinary approaches to do so, depending on barriers and individual needs. We base all actions on evidence and research, we talk to pupils and teachers and use a rigorous assessment procedure, undertaken on a half termly basis to inform and evaluate interventions, as well as professional dialogue that takes place before support sessions are planned.

**The policy has been informed by research, including EEF documents: EEF guide to Pupil Premium, Using Your Pupil Premium Effectively, Working together to support Children's Learning, Improving Literacy Guidance Reports, Putting Evidence To Work, The Parental Guidance Report, Teaching and Learning Toolkit, Learning about Culture and Families of Schools database, the EEF/North Tyneside Partnership training days and in addition, Unity Research School 'Planning to address long term disadvantage', Marc Rowland publications, including 'The Pupil Premium' and 'Planning to Address Educational Disadvantage, Narrowing the Attainment Gap by Daniel Sobel, Alex Quigley 'The Confident Teacher' blog, 'The Reading Gap' and 'The Vocabulary Gap', 'Reading Communities' by Professor Teresa Cremin, research from The Open University Reading for Pleasure website, John Hattie 'Visible Learning', FFT Reciprocal Reading training, The Attendance Awareness Campaign, National Centre for Educational Statistics, The Highland Literacy website, Crimson Education blog, Third Space learning website, Ross Morison McGill's TeacherToolkit blog, James Nottingham 'The Learning Pit', The Challenging Learning website, The Sutton Trust *Subject to Background* report, *Here For Schools* website and CulturalCapital Toolkit, alongside Gov.com publications.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1.	Historically our disadvantaged children as a group have not made as much progress in their Reading or Mathematics, at the higher level, as other Non-PP children in school. This has started to change and we need to sustain this progress with our differing cohorts to ensure all PP progress measures are positive.
2.	There is an attainment gap between disadvantaged/Non-PP children in achieving GD in Reading and Writing and Mathematics.
3.	Variability of need with the disadvantaged cohort. The cohort is small (8%) but diverse in need. 30% of Disadvantaged Pupils are also on the SEN register this year, with 11% of Disadvantaged Pupils having an EHCP. 33% of our Disadvantaged cohort are PP+ and have diverse needs and backgrounds demanding an individualised response. The plan has to be responsive and adaptable enough to change for the needs of the individuals and complement SEN provision.
4.	Many of our disadvantaged children are not habitual readers and do not regularly engage in reading outside of school. We know this through pupil voice discussions, library lesson discussions, parents evening discussions and staff feedback. This is increasingly an issue as they move through school and reflects the national drop in reading for pleasure in Year 8.
5.	The attendance of our disadvantaged children as a group has historically been lower than that of the whole school. Reasons behind this are complex and reviewed on an individual basis, often linked with other complex needs. This has started to shift, but needs monitoring on an individual basis.
6.	Engagement with extra-curricular provision is varied, with SEN disadvantaged children being less likely to take up activities on offers. This is in part due to extensive interventions offered before and after school for SEN pupils.

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
Improve student outcomes in Maths SATS - to have positive progress outcomes for all pupils. Monitor GD attainment in Reading and Writing SATS.	Disadvantaged pupils without SEND to consistently achieve positive progress measures in SATS.

Progress from KS1 and 2 is sustained through KS3.	Disadvantaged pupils with SEND to consistently sustain or improve on KS1 outcomes.
Increase GD attainment of disadvantaged pupils in KS3 in English and Maths.	Increased number of disadvantaged pupils achieve GD, either matching or exceeding KS2 attainment. With a focus on 'secure' students, explore strategies to boost progress and result in increased GD attainment. Whole school CPD on metacognition and writing impacts on both teaching and learning and student understanding of their own learning.
Further improve provision through continued employment of an academic tutor to embed a small group catch-up programme, which identifies gaps and focuses on pertinent and timely catch-up to improve overall attainment. Strategies used within this to be developed based on experience from 2023.	Pupil Premium academic tutor, to work with staff and children. Develop tracking and monitoring structure to allow for regular appraisal of attainment and extra-curricular engagement and identify needs. Use of data and teacher voice to identify gaps and plan and teach small group sessions to catch-up knowledge and boost skills development and confidence. Monitor impact of small group booster work in the classroom as well as through data. Encourage pupils to engage with extra-curricular sessions to widen experience.
Pupils who are disadvantaged and SEND access pertinent interventions to support their learning needs.	Liaise with SENCO to make sure all SEN/PP are supported in their learning. Where SEN provision is made, ensure progress is tracked. Provide additional and complementary provision if needed, in liaison with SENCO.
Ensure active participation of disadvantaged pupils in the first wave quality of teaching of the classroom.	CPD to support staff in PP inclusion methods in planning, questioning, feedback and deep marking to promote progress to create a 'disadvantaged first' awareness for staff in the classroom.

	Embed metacognition into teaching and learning across the school through whole school CPD. Book looks, learning walks and observations to monitor the engagement of disadvantaged pupils in lessons and in improving work. Pupil voice reflection on active involvement in class.
Further support first wave quality teaching through quality CPD, focus on Disciplinary Literacy and the three year metacognition focused training run in conjunction with North Tyneside LEA (Lisa Cook).	Pupil Premium Quality First Wave Teaching CPD to be repeated. 3 year metacognition CPD programme now in the third year and to have a specific focus on writing. All staff have a focus which will be fine tuned for Department use. Full staff engagement on metacognition programme through PM targets. Written work to have evidence of some/all of the following: • key vocab • scaffolds where needed • editing • pupil reflection • red pen improvements responding to marking. Focus on Disciplinary Literacy to support all students, including disadvantaged students within subject specific areas. Focus on subject specific tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, reading requirements in subject areas and text type convention focus. Improved attainment of pupils.
Increase engagement in reading for pleasure with disadvantaged cohort.	Regular library lessons are embedded within the curriculum with clear protocol including listening to children read. Parental engagement with listening to children read regularly. Reading and reading habits of disadvantaged pupils are regularly monitored in library lessons by their English teacher.

	Disadvantaged book issues are monitored so personalised recommended reads can be created. Book and reading groups outside of English provide a forum for disadvantaged reading. Accelerated Reader with selected disadvantaged pupils continues to encourage reading for pleasure and boost comprehension skills.
Monitor PP attendance to ensure it stays in line with the whole school attendance figures.	Regularly review disadvantaged attendance. Identify issues on a pupil by pupil basis and initiate home contact if needed to support attendance.
Ensure all disadvantaged children continue to engage with extra-curricular and enrichment activities available through school.	Audit extra-curricular provision. Continue to track extra-curricular attendance and work with key staff to engage PP pupils in activities. Collect pupil voice to establish interests and ensure all are catered for in extra-curricular provision in school. Create new events for pupils to enrich and diversify experience. Look specifically at KS3 to help prepare for transition to High School.
Explore ways to develop and diversify cultural capital experiences.	Audit of cultural capital experiences offered and uptake. Pupil voice used to consider pupil preference and ideas. Development of opportunities to extend current experience to include school trips, visits, clubs, extra-curricular groups.

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: £90,893

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continue smaller class sizes in KS2 with TA support where applicable. <i>To be continued in academic year 2023-24.</i>	There is evidence that smaller class sizes have an impact on pupil progress. EEF suggest that it gives an additional 2 months impact over the year, with a proviso that this may be greater with younger children. This has been implemented in KS2 to alleviate the impact of Covid lockdown on our younger pupils. Our analysis suggests that in Year 6 particularly, there was a large PP/NonPP gap, which we hope to address. EEF – Teacher Toolkit Ross Morrison McGill - TeacherToolkit	1, 2, 3
Introduce smaller class sizes in KS3 maths and English classes with TA support where applicable. <i>New for 2023-24 following success in KS2.</i>	Smaller class sizes have helped us return to near pre-covid outcomes in reading and writing. Pupil and teacher voice is positive highlighted positives of this and so it rolls into KS3 for 2023-24. There is evidence that smaller class sizes have an impact on pupil progress. EEF suggests that it gives an additional 2 months impact over the year, with a proviso that this may be greater with younger children. This has been introduced in KS3 following the success in KS2. We hope to further increase performance and close aps in performance. EEF – Teacher Toolkit Ross Morrison McGill - TeacherToolkit	1, 2, 3
CPD on quality first wave teaching for all, with specific focus on inclusion of disadvantaged children. <i>To be continued in academic year 2023-24 in</i>	All research points to the importance of quality first wave teaching. CPD will promote this specifically with disadvantaged children, looking at planning, questioning, focused class discussion, live marking and deep feedback, sitting alongside pedagogy on metacognition.	1, 2, 3

conjunction with Metacognition programme.	EEF - High Quality Teaching Thirdspacelearning.com – Quality first wave teaching	
Whole school CPD on metacognition and writing (part of 3 year project). Ongoing 3 year project running into third year.	This is a whole school 3 year programme for CPD. This involves getting students to think about their own learning and is worth an additional 7 months progress, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. The metacognition CPD will focus on improving writing across Departments and will compliment the work on Disciplinary Literacy over the last two years, as recommended by the EEF. EEF – Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning EEF - Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools. The Challenging Learning website and James Nottingham publications also support the value of Metacognition in moving children's surface understanding to deep learning.	1, 2, 3
Provision of SATs revision resources for PP maths and English pupils in Year 6. Ongoing	EEF Toolkit recognises the value of homework as giving high impact (+5 months). The provision of revision materials give our PP students additional support when completing these tasks. This has been an effective strategy in previous years and will be continued.	1, 2
Provision of data analysis support in Middle Leaders and through RAGS for all middle leaders, with focus on identified small group analysis and action planning. Target achieved 2023 - programme continued to explore the use of comparative data PP/NonPP and ways to action and focus on boosting progress.	This enables us to ensure a common and detailed understanding of pupil attainment and strategies to improve. The EEF comments on the importance of diagnostic assessment and analysis in improving pupil attainment.	1, 2, 3

English staff trained in use of the library system and regular library sessions scheduled every two weeks. These sessions include: • Listening to children read • Checking reading logs Achieved and ongoing from 2022-23	The importance of reading fluency is recognised https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/why-focus-on-reading-fluency	4
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 36,950

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Appointment of internal academic tutor to provide subject specific intervention support (Supported from school budget) Target achieved. 2022-23 and continued.	Appointment of our own academic tutor who is a member of our own staff and has worked closely with PP children. Small group tuition will be directed where need emerges and focused on closing any academic gaps in English and maths specifically and supporting PP children to success. EEF Toolkit (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021) suggests that small group tuition has +4 months benefit and 1:1 tuition can have a benefit of +5 months. The National Tutoring Programme also promote the impact of small group tutoring.	1, 2, 3, 4
Increasing opportunities for career advice in KS2 as well as KS3. Target ongoing to further develop support.	Effect sizes reported by Hattie (2016) show that Careers interventions have an effect size of +0.38 and are likely to have positive effect on student achievement.	1, 2, 5

Use of diagnostic testing when needed to identify any specific gaps in learning. GL Assessment (Yr 5). Ongoing from last year, with focus on use on GL after trials from last year.	EEF research supports the use of diagnostic assessment when a wider issue has been identified. We use these assessments in conjunction with whole school assessments and professional judgments of teachers. This is used to inform interventions and published to staff for use in the classroom. Repeating of an assessment series may be used to assess progress. Reading and spelling information from the GL reports is disseminated to staff for use in planning and supporting our children.	1, 2, 3
Use of Accelerated Reader and associated reading groups before, after and during school. Ongoing from 2022-23.	EEF recognise reading comprehension strategies to be high impact and have redeveloped work on The Reading Rope (2001) to produce The Reading House, which focuses on a more holistic approach to reading development.	1, 2, 4
Embedding use of Reciprocal Reading for small group comprehension work. Ongoing target now training completed.	We have been a partner in Reciprocal Reading research with the FFT and are now embedding the strategy as a basis for the small group work. Our evidence collection demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach, and evidence from the FFT and EEF support this. EEF - Structured comprehension strategies FFT - Reciprocal Reading	1, 2, 3, 4
Phonics based small group intervention for selected pupils. Target ongoing and extended into 2022-23 (see above).	EEF suggests that Phonics based interventions have a positive impact of +5 months.	1, 2, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 9,160

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Use of library to promote reading for pleasure, with specific regard to tracking of PP reading and promoting challenging and engaging texts on a personalised basis. Target ongoing.	The Open University (Reading for Pleasure) and professor Teresa Cremin (Reading Comminuities, NATE Primary Matters 2019) discuss the importance of reading for pleasure on wellbeing and academic achievement in later life. All evidence is research based. The Sutton Trust Subject to Background report identifies reading at home as having an impact on academic outcomes.	4
Use of BookBuzz (National Literacy Trust) to promote reading in the provision of books for group reading and promotion of reading through associated book clubs. Target ongoing. In 2023-24 we will explore ways of widening the impact of books through pertinent book clubs and reading in school.	The Book Trust focuses on promoting reading for pleasure to promote lifelong learning, creativity and wellbeing. The BookBuzz programme encourages reading for pleasure.	4
Exploration and promotion of extra-curricular activities for all PP pupils, with specific focus on those as yet not engaging with the provision. Tracking in place. For 2023-4 we will continue and aim to widen the scope of opportunities.	EEF Toolkit note the moderate impact (+3 months) of Arts participation. This is a focus on SDP. The Crimson Education blog note the positive benefits of extra-curricular activities on pupil performance and wellbeing. The EEF also note the positive benefits of physical activity and the benefit of other out of hours activities in Lifeskills and Enrichment.	6

Develop PP Masterclass extra-curricular sessions to run after school. Organised in conjunction with KS3 children to focus on developing aspects of the curriculum studied in school. Introduced 2023 and developed 2023-24.	EEF Toolkit note the moderate impact (+3 months) of Arts participation (including cookery,crafting, creating as well as music and drama). This is a focus on SDP. EEF Toolkit notes a small positive impact of physical activity on academic success. We should also note the impact of physical activity on mental health and wellbeing,as published by University of Edinburgh.	6
Work with whole school attendance tracking systems monitor PP attendance and support when needed. Target ongoing for 2022-23.	The impact of attendance is highlighted in the North Tyneside advice on attendance and the National Centre for Education Statistics. The Attendance Awareness Campaign reinforces the importance of regular attendance on pupil achievement.	5
Work with pupils and staff to provide additional opportunities to develop and diversify cultural capital experiences. Development target from success of enrichment tracking 2022-23.	EEF are currently researching the impact of a widening of cultural capital experiences on academic impact. Alex Quigley and Schools North East also identify the importance of wide background knowledge achieved through cultural capital in pupil achievement. The Sutton Trust Subject to Background report identifies enrichment activities has having an impact on academic outcomes.	6

Total budgeted cost: £ £137, 003 (part-funded by school)

