

Pupil premium strategy statement 2023-24

The Mulberry Bush School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	21 *
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	80% *
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2023-24
Date this statement was published	December 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2024
Statement authorised by	Lee Wright
Pupil premium lead	Jessica Hooper
Governor / Trustee lead	Zoe Lattimer
Note: * Our cohort changes regularly so this figure will also fluctuate. Most children at the school are either in the care of the local authority or adopted from care.	

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£7,130 (EFSA) £4,200 (LA estimate)
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£8,504
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£19,834 (forecast)
<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>	

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Context

The Mulberry Bush School is a residential school, offering 38-week or 52-week placements for children who have experienced severe trauma in their early years. All children are disadvantaged through this early experience and the impact on their development. It is common for children to have had extremely disrupted and negative prior experiences of education, and to present with very challenging behaviour.

There is a constantly changing child group, as children join and leave the school throughout the year, with placements at the school lasting an average of 3 years. As of December 2023, there are 20 pupils, who are disadvantaged in the following ways:

EHCP - 19

Social worker - 18

Pupil premium - 16

Currently looked after - 15

Previously looked after – 1

What are your ultimate objectives for your disadvantaged pupils?

The school aims to help all children to see themselves as learners, and to leave the school after a 3-year placement with literacy, maths and communication skills sufficient to access their next educational placement. There is a strong focus on reading, writing, maths and PSHE throughout each child's placement at the school. Therapeutic work is embedded in every aspect of the provision, both within Education and the residential houses.

We aim to help children to engage with the world around them with curiosity, by providing a boundaried, engaging, play- and sensory-based curriculum on arrival at the school. This develops with increasing expectations of the children engaging in adult-directed activities as they move through the school and develop greater confidence across the curriculum. Ultimately, we aim for children to begin to demonstrate independence in their learning through their interest in the world around them and their willingness and desire to engage in learning.

Strategy

Our strategy aims to ensure that children are given every possible chance to engage positively with learning during their placement, by matching provision to a detailed understanding of each child's social, emotional, mental health and learning needs. We

will do this through a combination of staff training, targeted work with children, and the provision of a wide range of experiences and opportunities.

We work very hard to recruit and retain staff and have a strong package of support including regular individual and group supervision and reflective groups, and a funded foundation degree for all staff who work directly with the children. This package of support is embedded, so the focus of our pupil premium strategy is on targeted, direct work with children, particularly in addressing their specific academic, social and emotional needs.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Limited capacity to self-regulate</p> <p>All children at The Mulberry Bush School have a primary need of social, emotional and mental health difficulties. They struggle to recognise and regulate their emotional state.</p>
2	<p>Limited capacity to work in a group</p> <p>All children at The Mulberry Bush have experienced prior difficulties managing a group, whether this is in a family or an educational setting. For some children, their potential for educational progress is significantly limited by their difficulties working in a classroom context.</p>
3	<p>Lack of accurate identification of needs</p> <p>As many children who come to the school have been difficult or impossible to assess due to their barriers in accessing education in a classroom, their needs are not always fully understood.</p>
4	<p>Capacity to engage in learning given negative and inconsistent prior experiences of education</p> <p>Children arrive at the school with very negative prior experiences of education. They often associate the classroom environment with fear, shame and failure. An essential part of our task is teaching children to accept and tolerate the process of learning.</p>
5	<p>Early maths and English skills</p> <p>Due to inconsistent prior experiences of school, and children's special educational needs, they often arrive at the school missing core early skills in English and Maths.</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
Children's sensory needs will be understood and met on a daily basis.	<p>All Education staff have received training on sensory diets.</p> <p>The Shifford Team have a clear understanding of the necessary provision for each child to that they can target their support.</p> <p>The school will hold a range of high-quality sensory toys that can be allocated depending on children's individual needs.</p>
All children will be taught early play skills.	<p>Evenlode and Cherwell classes will develop a play programme, in conjunction with the Speech & Language Therapist, to target early play skills.</p> <p>Children who need additional support to develop the social skills required to be part of a group will have access to a range of interventions, including Lego Therapy.</p>
The school and the children's networks will have a clear and developing understanding of each child's needs, based on detailed assessments.	<p>Children who have not been recently assessed by an Educational Psychologist will have access to detailed assessments that will inform the provision they receive at the school.</p> <p>Children who are on the waiting list for an ADOS assessment, who will be assessed during their placement at the school, will receive private ADOS assessments.</p> <p>All children will have an integrated plan, bringing together placement objectives, EHCP outcomes, PEP targets, class targets.</p> <p>Teachers and leaders will have a secure understanding of children's learning profiles and individual rates of progress.</p>
Children will settle quickly into the classroom environment and engage in learning.	<p>All children entering the school will benefit from an assessment class with high adult:child ratio.</p>
Teaching staff have a high level of training in order to be able to provide an individualised bespoke therapeutic education.	<p>All teaching staff will have extensive training in Sounds-Write phonics.</p> <p>All children who are making insufficient progress in class will have access to tailored, individual interventions for reading, writing and maths.</p>

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: **£4014**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Sounds-Write phonics training for all new staff	<p>Phonics has a positive impact overall with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</p> <p>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</p>	5
Earwig training for all staff	<p>A new assessment programme has been carefully selected to assess pupils accurately within schemes of work that have been introduced over the last year. Training for staff will enable more accurate and effective use of the new system. We are following guidance from EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT in order to ensure that this training is effective and sustained.</p>	3, 4, 5
Play Quest: development of a new evidence-based play intervention	<p>Children arrive at the school with gaps in their capacity to play and to engage in a group. A teacher, the school's Speech Therapist and the school's Drama Therapist are collaborating to develop a play intervention, based on the Embodiment-, Projection-, Role-odel by Sue Jennings focus of building the foundation skills- turn taking, listening, communication, building gross and fine motor skills and working collaboratively.</p>	1, 2, 4, 5

	<p>teaching the early play skills of sensory and physical play, as a pre-cursor to role-play which is taught in our middle class.</p> <p>https://www.suejennings.com/epr.html</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: **£10,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
TA providing 1:1 academic interventions	<p>Research which focuses on teaching assistants who provide one to one or small group targeted interventions shows a positive benefit of between four and six additional months on average. Positive effects have been found in studies where teaching assistants deliver high-quality structured interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching. There is also evidence that working with teaching assistants can lead to improvements in pupils' attitudes.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions</p>	3, 4, 5
Educational Psychologist targeted individual assessments	<p>In order to ensure the effective identification of pupil needs, it is in some cases essential that we involve an Educational Psychologist. The children who attend the school have often engaged very little in learning prior to coming to the school, and have been difficult to assess. Once they are more settled and beginning to engage in learning, a detailed assessment can be</p>	3, 4, 5

	essential in accurately identifying and understanding their needs, in order to ensure the appropriate provision is in place currently and for any future placement.	
Private ADOS assessments for children who would otherwise move on to new settings without assessment	Experience tells us that children's needs are better met when they are fully understood. In relation to Autism, some provisions only accept children who have a confirmed diagnosis. The school's reading group recently consider this paper, which outlines who benefits from diagnostic labels for development disorders: Werkhoven, Anderson, Robeyns: Who benefits from diagnostic labels for developmental disorders?	3

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

Budgeted cost: **£5,820**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Sensory toys	There is clear evidence of the connections between poor sensory integration and trauma. All children at the school undergo a sensory assessment on arrival, and appropriate resources are recommended to support their progress. https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Sensory-processing-coordination-and-attachment-Article-min.pdf	1
Targeted and universal support from Shifford	The average impact of successful social & emotional learning interventions is an additional four months' progress over the	1, 2, 4

<p>behaviour regulation support team.</p>	<p>course of a year. Alongside academic outcomes, SEL interventions have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p> <p>Both targeted interventions and universal approaches have positive overall effects.</p> <p>There is evidence across a range of different interventions with highest impacts for approaches that focus on self-management or role-play and rehearsal.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions</p>	
<p>Outdoor learning, including Outward Bound and Camping Week</p>	<p>Outdoor adventure learning studies report wider benefits in terms of self-confidence and self-efficacy. Although research into the impact is limited, it is our experience that children who attend the school benefit from having positive time spent together, with trusted adults, engaging in activities that provide them with a high level of physical (and often emotional) challenge.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>

Total budgeted cost: £19,834

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

All children at the school are disadvantaged, and the Pupil Premium plan is therefore designed to benefit all pupils. Due to the needs of the children, we do not use national assessments. Within the small cohort of 20 children, there is a wide range of ages (Year 3 to Year 8), academic ability, social and emotional development; all of the children have experienced trauma in their early years; many of the children have other difficulties, commonly including ADHD, Autism, sensory processing difficulties, social communication difficulties. Due to the complexity of needs, good progress looks different for each child, so comparisons with national figures are difficult, and cohort comparisons are largely meaningless. Therefore, the progress of each pupil at the school is monitored individually, and we have been working over the last year to develop a more tailored assessment programme, closely linked to the changes in our curriculum, that will better enable us to identify gaps and to make appropriate judgements about the quality of progress.

Progress this year has not be adequately reflected in the school's assessment grids, because we introduced new schemes of work that have significantly increased teachers' confidence and the quality of the provision in the classroom (as described by Ofsted) but do not align well with our grids. We will be introducing a new assessment system (Earwig) from September 2023, that should address this. However, the following successes are evident:

- The majority of children made the same or more progress in English this year than over the course of their placement, demonstrating an increase in the rate of progress by most children. Analysis of children's 'cold' and 'hot' tasks in writing demonstrates better quality writing and much increased stamina and willingness to write. Phonics had a marked impact when initially introduced but the number of trained staff has reduced due to staff turnover. New staff will be trained in the Autumn term.
- Progress is evident in children's Maths books.
- Regular structured talk opportunities, including show and tell, circle time, Talk for Writing and Let's Play have enabled increased rates of progress in spoken language across the school.
- In the foundation subjects, there has been a very positive impact on scores in Music in particular, with opportunities to engage in music present again this academic year.

Reading progress

Children are assessed termly using the Salford Reading Tests. The majority of children have made accelerated progress in reading, due to improvements in phonics teaching, being read with regularly, and access to high-quality books in class and in the library.

Attendance

- The vast majority of children have 96+% attendance (6 have 100% attendance).

- Of the 6 children who have 95% or less attendance, 2 have medical needs that have led to school absences. Four others have frequently struggle to return after weekends home. In each case we are working with the family to provide support to bring the child back to school promptly, including providing transport ourselves at the earliest opportunity.

Incidents

Each month, there is a clear pattern of recorded significant incidents being highest in the classes with the newest children, reducing steadily as children progress through the school. This is a clear reflection of the progress that children make in terms of their capacity to manage their own emotions safely as they move through the school.

Ofsted

Following our ungraded Ofsted inspection in March 2023, inspectors made the following comments:

- Staff have high expectations of behaviour and engagement in learning but understand when pupils find it hard to contain their anxieties. They have good strategies in place when pupils need additional time. Often this will include one-to-one support in or out of the classroom
- Pupils feel that staff care for them. They feel safe at the school, including from bullying. Two pupils explained to the lead inspector that the reason for this is partly to do with the work that has been done in school around racist and homophobic bullying and abuse, which has given them a good insight into equality and the lives of others.
- The school provides a unique curriculum offer linked to pupils' personal needs. It prioritises their social and emotional development and rebuilding self-belief and self-esteem.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the curriculum and how it supports pupils to learn. Staff understand this. They know what leaders' priorities are and appreciate the support leaders give them, in and out of the classroom. Teachers use their own knowledge and experience to design learning that interests and engages pupils. They are equally knowledgeable about pupils' complex needs and the additional barriers to learning that many arrive with. The result of this is a bespoke curriculum which is fit for purpose and meets the needs of pupils well.

Our previous Pupil Premium Plan, covering 2022-23, was intended to be a 3-year plan. Although many of the outcomes continue into the current academic year, we have refined and developed these based on changes in the staff team and child cohort, and new priorities that have emerged as a result.

There has been notable development in towards the intended outcomes, as follows:

1. **The school and the child's network will have a clear and developing understanding of each child's needs, based on detailed assessments.** The SENCO has worked closely with the school's Speech and Language Therapist and Educational Psychologist to ensure that teachers have a good understanding of each child's strengths and needs. She has also worked closely with external

networks, through the PEP and annual review processes, to ensure that children's needs are understood and clearly defined.

2. **All children have an integrated plan, bringing together placement objectives, EHCP outcomes, PEP targets, class and house targets, etc.** The SENCO has worked with the Group Living Management Team to continue the development of an online platform where all information about each child is shared. This is ongoing work.
3. **Children settle quickly into the classroom environment and engage in learning.** Children continue to settle into class quickly, and have benefited from a higher adult ratio in the first class they join.
4. **There is an integrated bespoke curriculum and assessment programme that meets the needs of the school.** The core subjects are now clearly defined, and the school has introduced Earwig assessment which has allowed the assessment of children's ongoing learning to be closely linked to the schemes of work.
5. **Targeted intervention programmes are established and available to support children.** Interventions have been provided for reading, writing, emotional & social development. These have had a marked impact on those children who have received this direct work.