

Pupil premium strategy statement 2024-25

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	20 *
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	80% *
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-25
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025
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	EFSA £6,620 LAs £4,300
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£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>	£10,920

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 2024, there are 20 pupils, who are disadvantaged in the following ways:

EHCP - 19

Social worker - 20

Currently looked after - 14

Previously looked after – 3

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 bounded, 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
Teachers will develop their knowledge of the leadership of learning.	Teachers and leaders will engage in ongoing CPD, developing their leadership skills and their pedagogical knowledge so that they are better able to meet the needs of all pupils.
Children's individual learning needs will be met through appropriate resources.	Laptops will be provided for children who need this provision in order to overcome their individual barriers to the best learning outcomes.
Children's sensory needs will be understood and met on a daily basis.	Education staff, including the Shifford Team, will be ensuring that sensory provision closely meets the needs of individual children. The school will hold a range of high-quality sensory toys that can be allocated depending on children's individual needs.
The school and the children's networks will have a clear and developing understanding of each child's needs, based on detailed assessments.	Children who are on the waiting list for an ADOS assessment, who will not otherwise be assessed during their placement at the school, will receive private ADOS assessments. All children will have an integrated plan, bringing together placement objectives, EHCP outcomes, PEP targets, class targets. Teachers and leaders will have a secure understanding of children's learning profiles and individual rates of progress.
Children's self-esteem and sense of self will develop.	Additional opportunities will be provided to individual children through the purchasing of books for their homes, and a range of extra-curricular opportunities.

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: **£2,500**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed

CPD	As stated in <i>DfE Standard for teachers' professional development July 2016</i> , 'effective professional development should be seen as a key driver not only of staff development, but also of recruitment, retention, wellbeing, and school improvement'. We intend to use a range of approaches to CPD, focusing on pupil outcomes. This will include a programme of Maths Mastery, leadership courses, collaborative peer reviews with similar settings, and internal CPD focusing on pedagogy.	3, 4, 5
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: **£3,060**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Individual learning resources: ICT	Some children require specific equipment in order to access overcome their barriers to learning. We will provide individual laptops to those children that will require them in order to develop their writing skills in particular. EEF Digital Technology Guidance Report	3, 4, 5
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:	3

	<u>Werkhoven, Anderson, Robeyns: Who benefits from diagnostic labels for developmental disorders?</u>	
Books	The National Literacy Trust states that 'Book ownership and access to books at home can influence a variety of life outcomes, from educational attainment to income in adulthood.' As part of our Education Open Day, where we welcome families into the school, we hold a book fair and encourage all families to buy books for the home, and staff to buy books for classrooms, houses and their own families. We will use the Pupil Premium to fund one book for each child so that they can begin, or enhance, their home reading collection. This also promotes self-esteem through children experiencing the school valuing them.	4, 5

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

Budgeted cost: **£5,360**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Sensory equipment & interventions	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 and activities are recommended to support their progress. <u>https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Sensory-</u>	1

	processing-coordination-and-attachment-Article-min.pdf	
Targeted and universal support from Shifford behaviour regulation support team.	<p>The average impact of successful social & emotional learning interventions is an additional four months' progress over the 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>	1, 2, 4
Individual provisions	<p>A range of extra-curricular opportunities will be funded to support children's self-esteem, physical development, and sense of self.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/physical-activity</p>	1, 2, 4

Total budgeted cost: £10,920

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 2 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 carefully considered by the child's treatment team, including their class teacher, the head teacher, SENCO, key worker and treatment team leader.

Pupil progress

This information is taken from our **SEF July 2024**.

The introduction of Earwig assessment system in December 2023 is enabling us to develop a clearer understanding of what 'good' and better progress looks like for our cohort. Based on progress data for 2 terms, in July 2024 30% appeared to be good in most subjects. Children who have achieved 30% progress:

- Phonics – 100%
- Writing – 89%
- Maths – 89%
- PSHE – 95%

Reading and spoken language have much lower percentages, but much higher attainment

In **Reading**, 6 points progress over 2 terms appears to be 'good'. 68% of children have achieved this. Salford assessments show that 42% of children have made accelerated progress during the year, with a further 24% already being fluent readers with good comprehension. Other children's progress is evident in an improved attitude and willingness to read, or in very small steps of progress that are significant on an individual level. Where there are concerns about progress, interventions are put in place. Most children are working at a Year 2 level.

Phonics is having a marked impact for the majority of children. Progress appears to be very rapid (ranging from 180%-600% over 2 terms) but this is partly due to staff getting used to the new assessment system. Stand-alone phonics assessments show all children making progress in phonics, most across all areas (alphabet code, blending, segmenting, sound deletion).

In **Writing**, most children are working within Year 1-2 levels. Progress is evident in the 'cold' and 'hot' tasks and in books. Children's resilience and stamina has markedly improved, as has their willingness to write and the vocabulary and language structures evident in their work.

The majority of children demonstrate strength in **Spoken Language**, with opportunities built in across the curriculum and beyond to develop these skills. Based on our own assessment criteria, developed by the school's Speech and Language Therapist, the majority of children perform well in the Curiosity and Confidence levels (100% have achieved the majority of the Curiosity level, and 62% have achieved the majority of Confidence), and 67% are demonstrating skills in Independence.

The curriculum for **Maths** broadens as the children move through the school, initially focusing on number only. Progress therefore appears rapid as children move through the school and have greater opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of their knowledge. 100% of children have completed EYFS levels and are working within Year 1 or above. 90% are working within Year 2 or above, and 52% are demonstrating skills and knowledge at a Year 3 level or above. Progress is clearly evident in children's work books.

Attainment in the **PSHE** scheme of work is relatively low, with the majority (52%) of children demonstrating skills only at the Core level. 48% of children are working at the Development level or above, and 29% are demonstrating skills at the Enrichment level. However, progress is very strong. Children's ESAPP data, based on an analysis of the data gathered during the current academic year, shows that all children are making good progress and all children who have been in placement for 6 review periods or more are making exceptional progress.

Attendance

Attendance continues to be very strong, with all children achieving above 96% attendance.

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

The school received a graded inspection in September 2024. Ofsted commented:

- Pupils thrive at this transformative school.
- A sense of calm and purpose pervades the school.
- Personal development is intricately woven through all areas of the school.
- The school's curriculum is highly ambitious and broad. This holistic curriculum has a profoundly positive impact on pupils' well-being and learning. As such, pupils achieve exceptionally well.

- Expert staff rapidly build trusting and positive relationships with pupils. Pupils receive constant nurture and guidance from staff. This helps pupils to understand the impact of their behaviour and find ways to change it.
- Pupils feel valued and listened to. This school is truly a community.
- Staff are immensely proud to work here.