

Pupil premium strategy statement – Merrydale Junior 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 2024-25.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	360
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	33.6 % 121 children
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers 2024-2027	2024-27
Date this statement was published	1 st September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	1 st December 2025
Statement authorised by	Antony Corbett
Pupil premium lead	Antony Corbett
Governor / Trustee lead	Karen Ludden

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 179,080.00
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£ 0
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>	£ 179,080.00

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention at Merrydale Junior School is that all pupils, irrespective of their backgrounds or challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal including progress for those pupils who are already high attainers. We are dedicated to working with all our stakeholders, children, parents, advisory board and our wider community.

We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils such as those who have a social worker or are young carers. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

We invest the majority of our allocated Pupil Premium allowance high quality teaching and Well-being – we believe as a school, that this matters most. The quality of education that we provide our children, is the biggest driver when we consider the impact of pupil attainment and ensuring that they are ready to learn is key. We ensure that support and interventions are targeted and backed up by research.

Our school is supported by the Advisory Board, with a lead Advisory Board member who works alongside the Pupil Premium lead on school projects. As a school we strongly believe that all stakeholders have a part to play and we work closely with our community, Advisory Board and pupils to ensure that our offer supports all pupil premium pupils.

High Quality first teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas which disadvantaged pupils need the most support with. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in Merrydale Junior School. Implicit in the details outlined below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for disadvantaged peers. Our SLT monitor the impact interventions and ensure that all staff are accountable for the attainment and progress children in receipt of pupil premium through half termly pupil progress meeting, the use of data tracking and regular reporting to the Advisory Board. To ensure that we use the school's resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils for this current year, we have considered evidence on what will have the most impact for our children using educational research such as EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit.

We understand and recognise that barriers to achievement take a variety of forms and we look for individual ways to support each child to achieve their very best. We do this by offering our children a wide range of opportunities and ensuring that these are accessible for everyone. We use an evidence-based approach to inform our thinking and to ensure that the allocation is used effectively. To ensure they are effective we will:

Principles.

- We ensure that teaching and learning opportunities address the needs of the children
- We ensure appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, this includes ensuring that the needs of the socially disadvantaged pupils are adequately assessed and needs addressed at the attainment level required irrespective of chronological age.
- Ensure all disadvantaged children are challenged
- Monitor progress and intervene when needs are identified.
- Raise expectations of staff.
- Ensure our approach is supported by all stake holders.
- In making provision for socially disadvantaged pupils, we recognise that not all pupils who receive free school meals will be socially disadvantaged.
- We also recognise that not all pupils who are socially disadvantaged are registered or qualify for free school meals. We reserve the right to allocate the pupil premium funding to support any pupil or groups of pupils the school has legitimately identified as being socially disadvantaged.
- Pupil Premium funding will be allocated following a needs analysis which will identify priority classes, groups or individuals. Limited funding and resources means that not all children receiving free school meals will be in receipt of pupil premium interventions at one time.

Ultimate Objectives

- To narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally and within internal school data
- For all disadvantaged pupils in school to exceed nationally expected progress rates to reach age related expectation at the end of year 6, thus being ready for the next stage of education and achieve GCSEs in English and Maths.

The range of provision that the school leadership consider making for this group include and would not be limited to:

- Providing small group work with an experienced TA/teacher focussed in overcoming gaps in learning through targeted analysis of attainment gaps.
- 1:1 support
- Additional teaching and learning opportunities provided through trained LSA or external agencies
- Subsidise activities, educational visits and residentials
- Ensuring children have first-hand experiences in the classroom

- Pastoral support through out the day
- Family support officer to provide help to families in need

This is not an exhaustive list and will change and adapt to the needs and support our socially disadvantaged pupils require.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Low attainment of cohorts arriving at the Junior School. This is particularly evident in the attainment in writing
2	Increase in mental health issues for families, depravation figures for the area have risen as has a rise in social service input around issues associated with depravation such as Domestic Violence.
3	Low attainment upon entry to EYFS has impacted upon attainment Junior School has an impact upon current year 6, 5 and 4. The educational gaps created by disrupted schooling have led to children falling further behind age related expectations in all areas.
4	Social issues such as depravation, social housing, domestic violence, shared housing accommodation, complex family issues and social service involvement. The current economic climate has also had a negative impact upon families in the area.
5	Attendance and punctuality – leading to a loss in learning time.
6	Levels of English as Additional language in school, currently 87%. Disadvantaged pupils have under developed oral language skills and vocabulary development.
7	Our assessments, observations, discussions with pupils and whole school well being survey indicate an increase in social and emotional issues for disadvantaged pupils, due to friendship concerns, online issues and an increase in isolation. This has impacted our disadvantaged 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
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils	Assessments and observations will indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulating evidence, observations of

	lessons, engagement in lessons, pupil voice, book scrutiny, formative assessment.
Progress in Reading	Achieve above national average progress scores in KS2 Reading. This standard needs to be maintained and built upon year on year.
Progress in Writing	Achieve above national average progress in KS2 writing. This standard needs to be built upon and maintained.
Progress in mathematics	Achieve above national average progress scores in KS2 maths. This standard needs to be maintained and built upon year on year.
Attendance	Ensure attendance of disadvantaged pupils is above 95%
Achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2025-26 demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data from student voice • Student and parent surveys and teacher observation

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: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Quality First Teaching To provide high quality teaching for all. To narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers using mastery learning, metacognition and feedback	According to the NFER's research, published November 2015, greater success for disadvantaged pupils was associated with schools using fewer strategies EEF: Research into strategies shows the following high impacts for low costs. Feedback + 6 months Mastery Learning + 5 months Metacognition + 7 months Feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Mastery learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

	Metacognition and self-regulation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Whole Staff CPD in Writing	<p>A strong writing programme is now in place in order to provide the disadvantaged children with increased opportunities to write and develop vocabulary.</p> <p>The Write Stuff author, Jane Considine, has visited school on two occasions in order to provide quality CPD for all staff. This has been done in order to improve writing outcomes for all.</p> <p>The writing programme has been monitored through out the year by the SLT. Out comes for children have improved as was stated in the March Ofsted Inspection of the school.</p>	1,3,6
Progress in Writing Support & training from Lead Practitioner in English to ensure that planning for the teaching of writing is high quality and that feedback is used effectively.	EEF: Research into strategies shows the following high impacts for low costs. Feedback + 6 months There is much evidence to show that teacher CPD can have a strong impact on student outcomes (Cordingley et al 2015 and Darling-Hammond et al 2017), with studies suggesting gains equating to more than two years' progress in one year. Feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3
Continued support to the Phonics programme to support the catch up of KS1 children in KS2. Continued support for CPD around the DfE phonics system purchased	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact upon the accuracy of word reading (Though not necessarily comprehension) particularly for disadvantaged children. RWI days have been conducted and development points for the school have been actioned. Phonics EEF	1,3,6
Revision and updating of school feedback policy to ensure focus	Providing feedback is well evidenced and has a high impact on learning outcomes. Effective feedback tends to focus on the task, subject and self-regulation strategies. It provides specific information on how to improve.	1,3,6

feedback to disadvantaged pupil learning	Feedback EEF	
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments	<p>Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific areas of strength and development of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through intervention or teacher input.</p> <p>EEF Blog: Testing, testing, testing! How do we respond when... EEF</p>	1, 3, 6
Progress in Reading in KS2 Embed the use of whole class guided reading, daily one to one reading and the use of Accelerated Reader to assess	<p>EEF: Research into high reading comprehension strategies shows high impact for very low cost based on very extensive research. Reading comprehension strategies + 6 months Research states it is imperative that the right level of text is identified to support pupil progress, so the use of AR will enable this.</p> <p>Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1,2
Involvement in Microsoft Reading Progress project	<p>Disadvantaged children using Microsoft Reading Progress to improve fluency in order to be able to access the KS2 reading tests.</p> <p>Research proves that without fluency the children can not get meaning from the text in order to complete the comprehension Reading Paper in Y6.</p>	1, 3, 6
Progress in Mathematics Continue embed the mastery approach through the use of White Rose Maths to increase mathematical progress.	<p>EEF: Research into strategies shows the following high impacts for low costs.</p> <p>Feedback + 6 months</p> <p>Mastery Learning + 5 months</p> <p>Metacognition + 7 months</p> <p>Feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Mastery learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Metacognition and self-regulation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	4
Teacher development time, dedicated 2 hour additional to PPA for research and coaching	Effective Professional Development EEF	1, 3, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £66,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Century & TTRS The use of targeted interventions and challenges in mathematics, spelling and reading in small groups with teaching assistants	EEF: Research into strategies shows the following high impacts for low costs. Feedback + 6 months Mastery Learning + 5 months Teaching Assistant interventions + 4 months Small group tuition + 4 months Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Mastery learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2, 3, 4
Small group tuition afterschool/pre school teaching sessions.	Small group tuition EEF	1,3,6
Daily guided reading sessions for whole school. Class teaching sessions 30 minutes focus on reading domains	Reading comprehension strategies EEF	1,3,6
Daily phonic session delivered at the level needed by the learner.	Phonics EEF	1,3,6
Interventions across all year groups to support individual needs including teaching assistant support, individual or group support to provide gap support in all areas of the curriculum.	Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF	1,3,6
School Project on Oracy	There is a strong evidence base that suggest Oral interventions including dialogic activities, such as classroom	1,3,6

Speech and language service support – EPIC - SALT	discussion, are inexpensive to implement and have a high impact on reading Oral language interventions EEF	
Continued staff CPD - WALKTHRU, emphasis on Metacognition, developing understanding how children learn in the classroom.	According to the NFER's research, published November 2015, greater success for disadvantaged pupils was associated with schools using fewer strategies EEF: Research into strategies shows the following high impacts for low costs. Feedback + 6 months Mastery Learning + 5 months Metacognition + 7 months Metacognition and self-regulation guidance report EEF	1,3,6

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

Budgeted cost: £83,092

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
School open from 8.30 for all pupils to come into school, read and settle for the day	Extending school time EEF	1,2,3,4,5,6
ELSA sessions Support wellbeing of pupils and build knowledge, social skills, and resilience through interventions	EEF: Research into strategies shows the following moderate impacts for moderate costs. Social and emotional learning + 4 months Behaviour interventions + 4 months Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	5
Pastoral team (2 staff) provide support, counselling, mentoring, and behaviour management support to pupils in school. Pastoral team provide	Mentoring EEF	1,2,3,4,5,6

targeted group support for disadvantaged children in order to help them succeed. Bereavement groups, friendship groups, understanding emotions, and calming clinics through the City Psychology service. Both members of the team are ELSA's		
Attendance Increase attendance of PP pupils to 97% to increase access to learning opportunities and interventions	Research from DfE 2010, states that children with poor attendance are less likely to succeed academically and they are more likely not to be in education, employment, or training (NEET) when they leave school.	6
The Family Link worker supports disadvantaged families with a variety of issues. Housing issues, domestic violence advise, social care, bills, secondary school placements, holidays, charity firms that are available, food parcels through the Trussel Trust. Family link worker supports with school's safeguarding work and leads on attendance Family Link Worker works alongside EWO service	EEF: Research into strategies shows the following moderate impacts for moderate costs. Social and emotional learning + 4 months Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Parental engagement EEF	1,2,3,4,5,6

Total budgeted cost: £179,592

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

You should state whether you are on target to achieve the outcomes of your strategy (as outlined in the Intended Outcomes section above) and outline your analysis of what aspects of your strategy are/are not working well.

If last year marked the end of a previous pupil premium strategy plan, you should set out your assessment of how successfully the intended outcomes of that plan were met.

Report on Actions and Outcomes for 2024–25

The school has prioritised **whole-school CPD in writing** following data that indicated writing outcomes were behind other subjects. Vocabulary development was identified as a key driver for improvement, leading to the adoption of the *Write Stuff* writing programme. All teachers have now completed training, and pupil books demonstrate a marked improvement in writing quality since September. To further embed the programme, its author, Jane Considine, visited the school, delivered lessons alongside teachers, and provided additional staff training. This hands-on approach ensured that all staff observed best practice directly from the programme's creator.

To enhance teaching quality, **Teacher Development Time** has been maintained, giving teachers two hours per week dedicated to improving teaching and learning. Feedback from staff indicates that this initiative has positively impacted classroom practice, a finding supported by observation evidence across the school. The focus for the year has been on achieving excellence in the classroom for all pupil groups.

Recognising the ongoing challenge of phonics continuity, particularly as a junior school receiving pupils from feeder schools, the school has maintained **continued support for the phonics programme** to help KS1 children catch up in KS2. Targeted groups have progressed through the scheme's levels, with the ultimate goal of reintegrating pupils into mainstream classes—a goal successfully achieved for several children.

In addition, the school has sustained **CPD around the DfE phonics system** to ensure high-quality provision. External checks by the phonics scheme provider have confirmed that standards are being upheld, with positive feedback received. Daily phonics sessions continue to be delivered at the appropriate level for each learner, supporting curriculum access and accelerating progress.

To address attainment gaps, the school has implemented **small group interventions led by experienced teachers and TAs**, informed by pupil progress meetings and data analysis. Pupil Premium children remain a key focus. Evidence from books and progress data shows that these interventions have boosted confidence and improved outcomes over the year.

The school has also strengthened **pastoral support**, delivering targeted sessions across all year groups to build confidence and self-esteem. This approach aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, ensuring pupils' basic needs are met before learning can flourish. Rising levels of anxiety, domestic

violence, and overcrowded housing have increased demand for such support. Additionally, pupils require help in forming friendships and learning how to play independently or collaboratively.

To further support emotional wellbeing, a **Behaviour Support/ELSA worker** has been deployed, addressing social and emotional learning needs, particularly among vulnerable pupils, many of whom are eligible for Pupil Premium. Complementing this, the **Family Support Worker role** has strengthened relationships with parents and carers, promoting attendance and learning. The school has provided practical assistance such as food parcels and signposting families to external organisations, responding to the growing pressures of the cost-of-living crisis.

Merrydale 2025 SATS results

Subject - Reading	EXS+	GDS	National
Subject Reading	73%	33%	72%
Subject – Writing	69%	2.3%	67%
Subject - Maths	71%	38%	72%
Subject – Combined	64%		

Pupil results were the best results we have had, writing results were at the national average, as was combined. The work completed upon a new writing system this year is going to impact all children's ability to write and produce writing that will be at expected or better levels. The Pupil Premium children are also a key pupil group that are being taught these writing skills, the Write stuff programme will develop vocabulary for all children groups, EAL and Pupil Premium.

The School continue to monitor the writing of Pupil Premium writers. The Pupil Premium group are considered during the pupil progress meetings and are focused as part of book scrutiny.

The Pastoral team continue to provide nurture and emotional support to significant numbers of pupils throughout the year. Parents continue to be well supported through the school family link worker. Support is offered through food parcels from the Trussell trust, there is help available with translation of council letters and accessing grants.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
Times table Rockstar	
Century Tech	

Oak National Academy	
The Write Stuff	
Star Reader	
Star Maths	
MyOn	
Microsoft Reading Progress	