

The Birches Specialist Support School - Pupil premium strategy statement 2024 - 25



This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2024 to 2025 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	The Birches
Number of pupils in school	170
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	87 pupils- 51%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024 to 2025 see **
Date this statement was published	October 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025
Statement authorised by	R.O'Hara Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Annie Williams
Governor / Trustee lead	Alistair Dawson

* This is the number of pupils recognised as being in receipt of Pupil Premium in our October 2024 census – this figure may go up or down during the year.

** This is the new format for our Strategy Plan as introduced by the DfE for 2021/22 where they recommend using a 3-year plan for reporting purposes.

For this year we are continuing to use of an annual plan as previous where we can report impact over the 2024 – 25 academic years. However, we will keep all of the wider educational impact measures the same over a 3-year time frame, however the curriculum focus will be adapted / added to on an annual basis- hence a slightly amended plan to reflect annual circumstances.

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 133,900
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£133, 900

**Please note, the £20,000 carried forward has been ring fenced for development of ICT resources identified on last years plan.*

Pupil Premium Indicative breakdown for 2024 / 25:

Pupil numbers calculated from Oct 24 census

Primary Pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (inc. Ever 6) – 87 pupils x £1480 = £128,760

LAC & Post LAC Pupils –2 post LAC (£2570 x 2 = £5140)

Total Pupil Premium Funding for 24/25 =£133,900

Note – INDICATIVE budget only at time of plan to be updated on January 25 census

Recovery Premium breakdown for 2024 /25:

We are no longer in receipt of recovery premium money and received the last payment on June 28th 2024.

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

All pupils at The Birches School have an Education Health Care plan indicating a broad spectrum of barriers to learning. As a school we are committed to both raising targeted academic achievement as well as supporting the wider needs of all our disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils come to the school with a wide and diverse range of additional needs. The broad spectrum of needs, as well as varying individual circumstance, means pupil outcomes are not so easily attributed to socio-economic disadvantage as a single causal factor.

The main groups of challenges that our children face are:

- *Severe and complex learning difficulties (100% of pupils)*
- *Significant health and care needs (7 % - 12 pupils, 5 PP, 7 non- PP)*
- *Socio and economic deprivation (58%)*

Our strategy is focused on providing additional high-quality health and welfare support to pupils and their families.

We believe through this approach that this will improve pupil outcomes across:

Attendance- *improving attendance overall, reducing the number of pupils in Persistent Absence and Severe absence over time. Ensure we consistently achieve 92% attendance as a school average and consistently are above local average – 85%*

Family engagement - *The school recognises strong links between school and home are fundamental to pupil success and development. We will continue to develop and enhance parental training opportunities, alongside access to shared learning for parents and carers to support overall parental engagement.*

Communication - *Improving pupils' opportunities to use their voice and overcome barriers to learning.*

Attainment and progress – *Improving ICT literacy, using money practically within the communicating and developing fine motor skills and reading.*

Multi-disciplinary support – *OT& communication. Improved sensory regulation and readiness to attend to learning.*

Following the summer term data report 2024, within writing, KS1 non- pupil premium pupils performed better than pupil premium pupils with a 20% difference between these two groups. We recognise that writing is a difficult skill for some of our children to grasp, due to learning readiness and early stages of physical development. For our early level learners, it is important

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writing development is approached meaningfully for example- developing fine motor skills and gross motor skills as pre-requisites for writing.

Within reading there are differences in progress within KS2. 82% non-pupil premium pupils achieve outstanding progress vs 70% pupil premium pupils. School data shows that 20% of the population are sight readers and therefore would benefit from additional resources and materials to further support these levels of learning, alongside the schools Phonics program, Little Wandle. Further resource development would also support pupils working at pre-phonics stages.

Through this tiered approach we have identified a mix of interventions at both individual and whole-school level. Whilst we wish to target pupils identified as disadvantaged, it is our strong belief that whole-school approaches equally serve to benefit all pupils within the school, and so wherever possible we will target spending on a wider cohort of pupils than just those who attract the funding.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The majority of pupils attending the school come from Central Manchester wards (Gorton, Longsight, Levenshulme). Hence we serve a demographic with high proportion of families on low income and associated socio-economic disadvantages.
2	All pupils have an Education Health care plan that details barriers to learning and the provision required to meet their additional needs. Diverse range of learning needs includes Autism / Severe learning difficulties / Profound and multiple learning needs Our review of pupil progress data, highlights that reading remains an area for development, and that further resources and training for reading and phonics, would accelerate pupil learning
3	Through assessment and observation, a large proportion of our pupils show difficulties with sensory regulation and processing needs which is reflected within their EHCP plan.
4	Through assessment and observation, a large proportion of our pupils show difficulties with communication as a fundamental barrier to learning. This will include communication and expression of their needs and wants, in both verbal and non-verbal form.
5	Observation and discussion with families indicates that the wellbeing and emotional development of many of our pupils has been impacted by the pandemic. Our September EYFS pupils, were those born during the first pandemic and therefore social communication difficulties have been further impacted by their early years. National studies show this impact is more significant for disadvantaged families. Through lockdown, a disproportionate number of our children spent time with little or no access to outside spaces, so the development of these opportunities across school is a key factor in our plan, both within the school premises and within the community.

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6	Through parental feedback during EHCP's and parents meeting, some families struggle to support their child in the community at the park and in outdoor spaces due to their levels of understanding of risks and dangers and therefore pupils require lots of opportunities to practice this within teaching and learning sessions to understand the world the round them and how to access it safely.
7	Writing and reading were areas which demonstrated some differences between the progress rates of pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils. We recognise writing in it's traditional sense is a long term process for our learners due to physical readiness within their fine and gross motor skills and also readiness for more formal learning.

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
<i>Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils in reading and phonics as a result of training, resource development and whole school theme days to inspire a love of reading</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pupils experience a high-quality experience of reading and phonics at an appropriate level for their understanding. All pupils develop an interest and love of reading at a level appropriate to them Families are encouraged to read with their child and become more familiar with this process. Pupil progress data shows the gap between Pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils has reduced.
<i>Pupils are better able to use a range of communication systems and strategies to develop both their receptive and expressive communication skills, and support their social interaction skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pupils make recognisable achievement within communication targets identified on their EHCP plan Data reflects positively the progress pupils make within speaking and listening. Evidenced through individual case studies & global impact statements from SaLT interventions reflect progress Evidence of progress against audit tool used by speech bubble.
<i>Disadvantaged pupils show increased confidence and understanding of the world around them, in particular through development of access to Outdoor learning and activities within the community.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to forest school Evidenced through observations, discussions and individual case studies inc. feedback from pupils and families Case studies demonstrate progress of pupils from disadvantaged groups and this is reflected within progress against EHCP outcomes Pupils have accessed the community and have developed key skills they need to know and remember with or without adult support

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<p><i>Disadvantaged pupils achieve greater access to a range of holistic therapies and interventions to positively effect their sensory regulation and positive wellbeing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils readiness to learn has improved due to sensory needs being met • Reduction in behavioural incidents whereby sensory needs may have been a trigger • Coordinated MDT involvement
<p><i>Improved attendance for young people and families to be celebrated, alongside improvement over time</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils attendance improves over time • Pupils sustain understanding of school routines and systems through improved attendance • Improved regulation due to improved attendance • Families supported in overcoming barriers which impact attendance
<p><i>All families across school (inc. those of disadvantaged pupils) have better access to school, both from discrete parental workshops and family learning events to support collaborative working to pupils development against all areas of their EHCP</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHCP meetings capture key themes for PSA to work upon to support families • Families are offered a range of opportunities which can be accessed in different ways to support understanding of pupil learning needs and strategies for support that can be transferred at home • Improved links between home and school • Parent feedback and engagement from causes is positive and supports planning and preparation of activities for next year. • Collaborative working will also support the holistic needs of pupils.

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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: **£ 46,253.49**

Activity
Development of Reading programs within school to accelerate progress for sight readers through See and Learn and Pops programs Monitoring and assessment of phonics and pre-phonics
Development of writing and fine motor skills Training and feedback rolled out to teachers / HLTAs and TA's to develop the quality of writing at all levels
Literacy team to deliver specific Reading events throughout the year to promote love of reading and reinforce phonics. Development of reading areas
Recruitment of a TA4 to deliver Forest School activities across all groups in school.
Attendance reward system

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

Budgeted cost: **£76,642.51**

Activity
Speech and language impact Speech bubble x 2 therapists – 1 day a week Higher Level Teaching Assistant in Communication Support Advisor role – 1 day per week (KS)
Purchase of an additional half day per week of Occupational Therapist (OT) time, and additional hours (1 day per week) of Higher Level Teaching Assistant to support with sensory processing needs (KS)
Appointment of a school Parent Support Advisor (PSA) to deliver a comprehensive programme working with parents and carers to develop a better understanding of SEN through targeted parental workshops. Plus additional time to facilitate improved transition work for new parents
Additional cover supplied to facilitate parents supported to access learning events to develop shared learning experiences in school.

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

Budgeted cost: £11,004

Activity
Purchase of One Education Music Therapy & Music Therapy to promote increased opportunities for pupils to engage in both 1:1 and group Music sessions to support emotional development, social interaction, communication and wellbeing

Total budgeted cost: £133,900

Additional improvement focus YET TO BE ALLOCATED - NA

TOTAL £ 133,900