

Pupil premium strategy statement – Heatherwood School

This statement details our school's use of pupil 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	98
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	30.8% (29)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025-2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025
Statement authorised by	Sam MacDonald
Pupil premium lead	Sam Lee
Governor / Trustee lead	

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 37,580
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£37,580

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Heatherwood School our aim is to use Pupil Premium funding to ensure that our disadvantaged pupils receive the highest quality of education to achieve academic, emotional, physical and social success. We recognise that disadvantaged children can face a wide range of barriers which may impact on their learning. Our ultimate objectives are to:

1. Remove barriers to learning created by disability, poverty, family circumstance and background
2. Narrow the attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged counterparts
3. Develop confidence in their ability to read and communicate effectively in a wide range of contexts
4. Ensure pupils maximise their independence in order to prepare for adulthood and a life beyond the school
5. Enable pupils to look after their social and emotional wellbeing and to develop resilience.
6. Access a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world

Achieving Our Objectives:

In order to achieve our objectives and overcome identified barriers to learning we will:

1. Provide all teachers with high quality CPD to ensure that pupils access effective quality first teaching
2. Target funding to ensure that all pupils have access to both the local and wider community to develop their social understanding and communication
3. Provide opportunities for all pupils to participate in enrichment activities
4. Provide appropriate nurture and sensory support to enable pupils to access learning within and beyond the classroom.

This is not an exhaustive list and strategies will change and develop based on the needs of individuals.

Key Principals:

We will ensure that effective teaching, learning and assessment meets the needs of all pupils through the rigorous analysis of data. Class teachers will identify through the pupil progress meetings, specific intervention and support for individual pupils which will be reviewed at least termly.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Physical & Emotional Wellbeing</p> <p>A high percentage of pupils present with restricted movement and complex medical needs resulting in reduced personal comfort. This has a significant impact on their readiness for learning and ability to focus their attention on the learning offer being presented. This barrier can significantly impact on them achieving their longer-term goals.</p>
2	<p>Access to the local community</p> <p>Existing barriers prevent our pupils, and their families, from accessing local amenities and attractions: often the effort and funds required for our disadvantaged families to visit events and locations is beyond them. This results in a diminished 'real world' experience and opportunities to socially interact.</p>
3	<p>Understanding of Cultural Diversity and Engagement via Enrichment</p> <p>Through observations and conversations with pupils and their families, we find that disadvantaged pupils generally have fewer opportunities to develop cultural capital outside of school.</p>
4	<p>Complex Sensory Needs: Through observation of pupils we have found that a high proportion struggle to achieve the appropriate readiness for learning in order to access provision. This can result in communication behaviours and difficulties in accessing the curriculum.</p>
5	<p>Compromised communication and social interaction:</p> <p>Observations suggest many of our pupils face barriers in effective communication and interaction. This results in them being further socially excluded, less independent and damages their self-esteem and confidence.</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
<p>1. Physical & Emotional Wellbeing</p> <p>Pupils access regular high-quality swimming and hydrotherapy sessions under the guidance of a pool supervisor to improve their personal comfort and physical development</p>	<p>All pupils access regular swimming session enabling them to follow up on class-based targets, reduce their personal discomfort and muscle tone therefore allowing them to relax and have greater access to their personalised curriculum offer</p>

<p>2. Access to the local community: Pupils will visit the wider community and broaden their real-world experiences through enjoyment, observation and discussion.</p>	<p>Pupils will develop greater self-confidence and awareness of local settings, their location and opportunities for enjoyment. Pupils will improve their communication skills through opportunities to interact with a variety of people in a number of contexts and settings.</p>
<p>3. Cultural enrichment and diversity: Increase the opportunities for pupils to experience cultural activities that they would not typically be exposed to outside of school</p>	<p>Pupils will have a greater understanding of cultural richness within their own community through a holistic and diverse curricular offer. Pupils will develop their awareness of the many sensory opportunities available through sight, sound, taste and touch. Pupils will develop a greater awareness of their role in a multi-faith community.</p>
<p>4. Complex Sensory Needs: Pupils and staff know how to meet sensory needs to ensure that pupils are ready to learn and can regulate their emotions.</p>	<p>Detailed sensory profiles for all pupils that require one. Staff have secure knowledge on strategies to use to improve sensory overload. Reduction in severity level of reported behaviour incidents. 90% of Pupil Premium learners make expected and above levels of progress</p>
<p>5. Compromised communication and social interaction: Pupils demonstrate improved functional communication, expressive language, receptive understanding, improved independence and social inclusion.</p>	<p>Staff have a secure knowledge on strategies to use to improve expressive communication and develop receptive understanding. Pupils have a communication profile that details their preferred method of communication and how to support them. Augmentative and assistive communication technology and hardware is personalised to support pupils in their communication and language development.</p>

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £21,770

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Bus/Trips enhanced Offer.	<p>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/essential-life-skills</p> <p>In the EEF paper ‘The impact of non-cognitive skills on outcomes for young people’ an argument is made for ‘non-cognitive skills’ (a set of attitudes, behaviours, and strategies that are thought to underpin success in school and at work, such as motivation, perseverance, and self-control) being as important as cognitive skills/IQ associated with literacy and mathematics. Though more research is needed, the link between the development of these skills and their impact on self-esteem and engagement is growing.</p>	2
Cultural Enrichment Activities	<p>Chartered College https://my.chartered.college/impact_article/cultural-capital/</p> <p>The article describes how the concept of cultural capital has been debated over time; what is not disputed is the lack of broader knowledge disadvantages pupils in their learning. Completing a range of visits goes some way to redressing the lack of knowledge that the pupils would otherwise be lacking.</p> <p>Chartered College https://my.chartered.college/impact_article/empowering-sen-children-through-engaging-in-the-arts/ - ‘Empowering SEN children through engaging in the arts’ There is a strong argument for teaching ‘art for art’s sake’ to ensure that students learn about our rich cultural history as in doing so we empower them to relate more readily to their known world.</p> <p>The Education Endowment Foundation has researched the positive benefits of Art Participation – https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/arts-education - ‘Impact of arts education on the cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes of school-aged children’.</p> <p>Though the jury is out on the impact exposure to the arts has on academic attainment there is little if no argument against children’s right to a rich, diverse and culturally rich education. Greater arts exposure at Heatherwood provides this that the children would not otherwise experience.</p>	3

<p>Employ Communicati on Specialist to deliver dedicated sessions focussing on both receptive and expressive language skills including the use of Makaton</p>	<p>EEF research on the improvement of language. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1/</p> <p>EEF – Developing early language https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Law_et_al_Early_Language_Development_final.pdf</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions/</p> <p>Communication Matters https://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Personalised AAC development Quality CPD for associated staff members</p>	<p>Education Endowment Foundation https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/teacher-professional-development-characteristics?utm_source=/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/teacher-professional-development-characteristics&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_search&search_term=effective%20professional%20development <i>Review identifying the characteristics of more effective professional development</i> EEF recommendations that professional development builds staff knowledge, motivates staff, and embeds practice underpin this activity. In school evidence of application of professional reading to developments and improvements in curriculum planning, and teaching and learning. There is a strong evidence that teachers’ pedagogical and content knowledge within specific subjects has a significant impact on pupil outcomes.</p> <p>Evidenced Based Education https://evidencebased.education/great-teaching-toolkit-evidence-review/ Great Teaching Toolkit – Evidence Review Supports the pedagogy of effective teaching and builds on the next stages following the effective guidance/instruction/training offered to teachers.</p> <p>Janice Light: <i>Designing AAC Research and Intervention to Improve Outcomes for Individuals with Complex Communication Needs</i> https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3109/07434618.2015.1036458</p>	<p>5</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £15,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Employ sensory OT to create bespoke sensory profiles for pupils. Enhance the schools equipment provision available for PP pupils. To train school staff and parents in sensory needs and strategies.</p>	<p>Pupils' sensory needs will be met in order to support them accessing learning and progressing towards their targets across all subjects. Much research shows that sensory integration is necessary for successful learning. Sensory regulation in autistic children can be overwhelmed and result in anxiety and distress (Autism Speaks, Bogdashina). Approaches including play-based activities and paying attention to low-arousal environments support sensory integration and allow learning to take place. The EEF recognises the importance of removing barriers to learning, promoting pupil wellbeing and understanding pupils' individual needs.</p> <p>Research on the impact sensory needs can have on learning. Identifying Sensory Issues that Impact Learning in the Classroom (lifeskills4kids.com.au) Sensory Integration Sensory Integration Education</p>	4
<p>Provide small group and one-to-one intervention sessions for pupils who are below target and also in need of communication, self-esteem and functional independence support.</p>	<p>Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind. One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Non-Verbal Affective Care (NAC) https://www.nacwellbeing.org/guidance/music/?utm_content=buffer175b8&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer The NAC report demonstrates the impact musical involvement can have on reducing anxiety in those with complex needs enabling them to engage more fully in wider learning opportunities.</p>	5

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

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Hydrotherapy pool staffing and training.	<p>A study by Physiotherapy Journal concludes that “the balance of high to moderate quality evidence supported benefit from hydrotherapy in pain, function, self-efficacy and affect, joint mobility, strength, and balance, particularly among older adults, subjects with rheumatic conditions and chronic low back pain.”</p> <p>https://www.physiotherapyjournal.com/article/S0031-9406(05)60134-4/fulltext</p> <p>Further support is outlined in the report completed by the North American Journal of Medical Sciences. It suggests “hydrotherapy was widely used to improve immunity and for the management of pain, CHF, MI, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, asthma, PD, AS, RA, OAK, FMS, anorectal disorders, fatigue, anxiety, obesity, hypercholesterolemia, hyperthermia, labor, etc.”</p> <p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4049052/</p> <p>Sport has the capacity to boost confidence - the benefit of Sport on wider learning is outlined at;</p> <p>https://www.sportengland.org/research/benefits-of-sport/</p>	1

Total budgeted cost: £24 948

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Sensory OT	Sensory footsteps

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

<p>1. Physical & Emotional Wellbeing Pupils access regular high-quality swimming and hydrotherapy sessions under the guidance of a pool supervisor to improve their personal comfort and physical development</p>	<p>All pupils access regular swimming session enabling them to follow up on class-based targets, reduce their personal discomfort and muscle tone therefore allowing them to relax and have greater access to their personalised curriculum offer</p>
<p>2. Access to the local community: Pupils will visit the wider community and broaden their real-world experiences through enjoyment, observation and discussion.</p>	<p>Pupils will develop greater self-confidence and awareness of local settings, their location and opportunities for enjoyment. Pupils will improve their communication skills through opportunities to interact with a variety of people in a number of contexts and settings.</p>
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	support pupils in their communication and language development.
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Looked After Pupils

All pupils designated as LAC achieved expected progress or exceeded their target. All LAC pupils are currently within Post 16.

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	N/A
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	