

Pupil premium strategy statement



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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Didsbury High School
Number of pupils in school	1223
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	39%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-26
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	K Houghton, Head of School
Pupil premium lead	A Clayton, Deputy Head of School
Governor / Trustee lead	Jane Game, Chair of Governor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£471,340
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£471,340

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Didsbury High School, we are very much aware of an ever-growing body of evidence documenting 'best practice' surrounding the use of Pupil Premium. There is a growing body of evidence both within our own community and the wider education world on the use of the Pupil Premium. Therefore, for 2025-26, we have reviewed and revised the ways in which we are planning, budgeting, reviewing and then measuring the impact of our allocation.

We continue to access the growing body of evidence provided by the EEF and documents from the DfE and OFSTED:

- https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/using-pupil-premium?utm_source=/guidance-for-teachers/using-pupil-premium&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_searchh&search_term
- 'The Pupil Premium, how schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement.' OFSTED (2013).
- 'The Pupil Premium, how schools are using the Pupil Premium to raise achievement for disadvantaged pupils.' OFSTED (2012).
- 'Evaluation of Pupil Premium Research Report', Department for Education, (July 2013).
- 'A guide to Effective Pupil Premium Reviews by the Teaching School Council.' (2018)
- 'The EEF guide to the pupil premium'. (2019)
- 'Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges - The Essex Way' Marc Rowland (2021)
- 'Boys Don't Try' Matt Pinkett and Mark Roberts (2019)
- 'Closing the Reading Gap' Alex Quigley (2020)

This evidence base has allowed us to formulate a set of principles to guide our use of the Pupil Premium:

- We will ensure that Pupil Premium funding is spent on the target group.
- We are aware that within our target group there is a diverse range of needs – both existing and emerging.
- We will maintain high expectations of the target group.
- We will thoroughly analyse which pupils are under-achieving and endeavour to work out why.
- We will use evidence to allocate funding to big-impact strategies.
- We will be relentless in our pursuit of high-quality teaching, not interventions to compensate for poor teaching.
- We will use achievement data to check interventions are effective and make adjustments where necessary.
- We will have a senior leader with oversight of how PP funding is being spent.
- We will ensure that teachers know which pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium.
- We will endeavour to demonstrate impact.

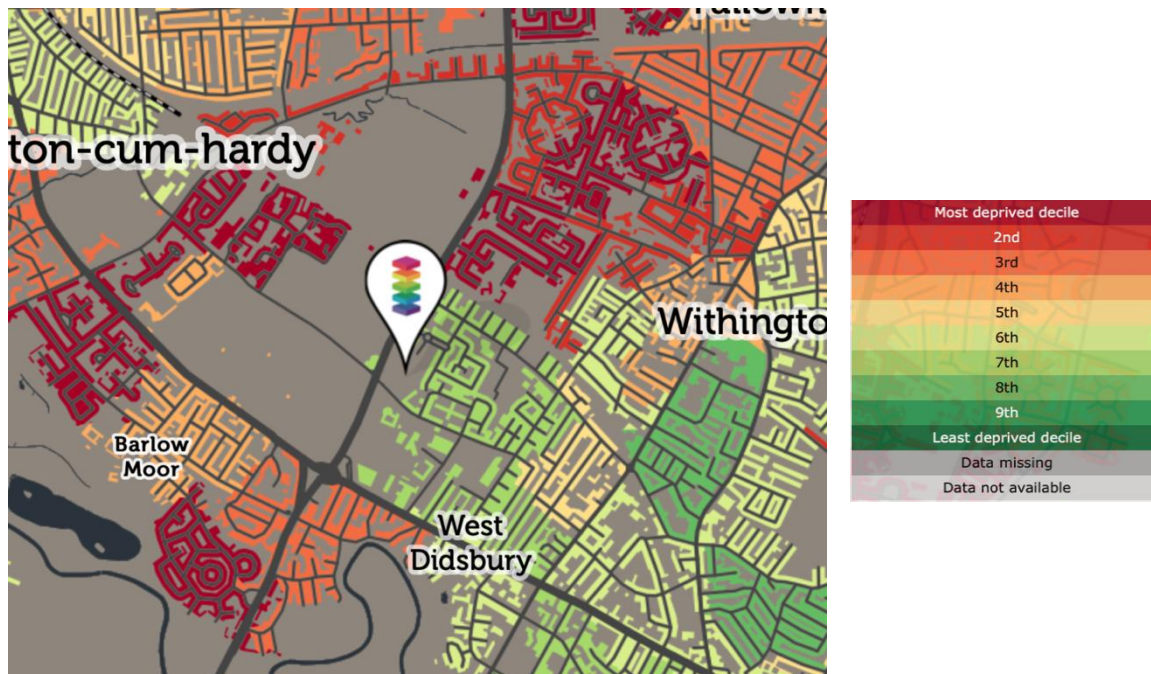
- We will have a named governor who will oversee and challenge our use of the Pupil Premium.

In a relentless drive to deliver and highlight impact we have extended and enhanced our checking procedures. The budget and review process operates through a thorough checking and analysis process that involves a Senior Leader and a named governor with responsibility for Pupil Premium. We have identified local needs and put these against the known '*best practice*' outlined in those documents and sources mentioned above.

We subscribe to DfE guidance that states:

'Evidence suggests that pupil premium spending is most effective when schools use a tiered approach, targeting spending across the following three areas below but focusing on teaching quality - investing in learning and development for teachers.'

Didsbury High School serves a diverse and polarised area of southern Manchester. Our students come from within a radius of roughly 1 mile from the school. As such, they come from very polarised backgrounds regarding deprivation. A large proportion of our Pupil Premium students hold addresses in areas which have the highest levels of deprivation across the country. Contrary to this many of our students come from some of the most affluent areas of the country, with the least deprivation. Amongst our Pupil Premium cohort we also have a broad range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Some of our students are part of families who have only very recently settled in the UK, whereas others are part of families who have spent generations living in social housing in the Manchester area.



The polarised nature of our cohort means that we cannot assume anything and are not always dealing with obvious or common barriers. Therefore, a significant proportion of our work centres around monitoring the progress of our cohort and our ability to act quickly and address emerging needs. We recognise that our Pupil Premium cohort has a diverse range of aspirations, prior attainment and levels of progress.

Our staff are therefore a key area of our intervention strategy and are often the first layer of support. Identified staff are tasked with identifying barriers and reviewing progress through our data check points and supplementing with anecdotal observations. We rely heavily on our Heads of Year, Heads of House and Tutors to identify emerging needs, understanding family situations and deliver appropriate interventions.

At the same time, since as the school has grown, we have been able to gather evidence and recognise trends that point us towards five broad barriers in the area:

(A) Family history of reduced engagement with school life such as attendance at parent consultation evenings, literacy and numeracy evenings and less frequent contact with school.

(B) Minimal family history of tertiary education and with this a lack of aspiration towards attending leading universities.

(C) Loss or lack of family income resulting in non-engagement with educational visits and reduced ability to purchase school equipment.

(D) Attendance data does show a gap between Pupil Premium and Non-Pupil Premium students. Attendance to date in the academic year of 2024-25 to date is 95.5% for non-Pupil Premium students and 91.3% for Pupil Premium students. The majority of our persistent absentees come from our Pupil Premium cohort.

(E) Gaps in curriculum knowledge (at times) caused by a lack of engagement in online learning during national lockdowns and general attendance.

(F) A large proportion of our Pupil Premium cohort arrived at DHS with significantly lower literacy and numeracy levels (this is mainly based on internal screening) compared to their Non-Pupil Premium peers.

At the heart of everything we do is quality first teaching and learning. We do not want our interventions to be required to make up for anything less than quality teaching and learning. Therefore, a significant amount of our budget is aimed at improving the quality of our teaching and learning. We also invest heavily in our recruitment and retention as well as supporting early career teachers. By continuing our relentless drive to maintain and improve the quality of teaching and learning we expect to further improve the outcomes of all the students at DHS. We aim to identify skills gaps and address them as early as possible. Therefore, during the academic year we will increase, even more, our provision and interventions (when needed) at Key Stage 3.

Challenges

This details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged pupils (see page 4 for examples and data that support).

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Family history of reduced engagement with school life such as attendance at parent evenings
2	Minimal family history of tertiary education and with this a lack of aspiration towards attending leading universities
3	Loss or lack of family income resulting in non-engagement with educational visits and reduced ability to purchase school equipment.
4	Attendance of Pupil Premium students
5	Gaps in curriculum knowledge
6	Literacy and Numeracy levels, on entry, are on average lower for Pupil Premium students compared to their non-disadvantaged peers

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
No significant differences in projected progress 8 measures.	Disadvantaged students will make the same or better progress than all other students.
No significant differences in projected attainment 8 measures.	Disadvantaged students will attain the same or better grades as all other students.
No significant difference in percentage of students entered for the EBacc.	There will be no significant difference between the numbers of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged students who are entered for the EBacc.
Ensure there is no difference in the engagement of PP and non-PP students in school and house activities at Key Stage 3.	All disadvantaged students will engage with school and house activities.
Ensure there is no difference in the engagement of PP and non-PP students in school and house positions of responsibility.	All disadvantaged students will have access to school and house positions of responsibility.
Ensure that no child is prevented from accessing opportunities due to their financial background.	No disadvantaged student will be prevented from participating in opportunities to increase cultural capital due to their financial background.

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

Budgeted cost: £195k

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Vision for disadvantaged students shared with all stakeholders</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘it is vital that all staff understand: the issues being addressed; how school is addressing them; evidence to support the approach; their role within it; what success looks like’	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>Data packs will be distributed to all departments after each data entry – VACs</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘Assessment, not assumption, should inform our strategy to address disadvantage’ ‘we need to be experts in our pupils, not experts in labels’	4, 5, 6
<i>Data meeting will focus on disadvantaged students and identify actions</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage - ‘Adopt a culture of early intervention’	4, 5, 6
<i>DAPs to highlight specific intervention for disadvantaged students</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘Assessment, not assumption, should inform our strategy to address disadvantage’ ‘we need to be experts in our pupils, not experts in labels’	1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Focus on quality first teaching through professional learning</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘Effective teaching is the best level for improving school and pupil outcomes’ ‘training opportunities and high quality CPD are often powerful lures for teachers looking not only to hone their skills, but to make a real difference to the life chances of all pupils’	5, 6
<i>ARC sessions to focus on research and pedagogy</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘research can inform our decision making when planning our strategies for educational disadvantage’	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>FPL sessions– disadvantaged local context and how to advantage the disadvantaged.</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘Teachers who work in inclusive schools have to be well-trained in both special needs diagnosis and research-led pedagogy’	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>LAC and Young Carer training for all staff</i>	Identification Practice of Young Carers in England - ‘they recommended that young carer awareness and	1, 2, 3, 4,

	identification was built into induction for new staff and there was a named young carer lead who would act as key contact'	
<i>Feedback to disadvantaged students – learning discussions to take place regularly in lessons</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 8 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – 'Meaningful assessment is part of great teaching, including helping to identify gaps in learning'	5, 6
<i>Whole school focus on reading</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit +6 months Closing the reading gap – 'most things teachers do are important but teaching reading is essential' 'we must remember that for one in four pupils 'below expected' reading skill in year 7, such development of subject expertise will be inevitably stunted'	5, 6
<i>Metacognition strategies to be evident in teaching – retrieval practice, explicit instruction, modelling, desirable difficulties, classroom dialogue</i>	EEF metacognition and self-regulated learning + 7 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – 'It is important for teachers to explicitly teach metacognitive skills within their domain'	5, 6
<i>Recruitment focuses on how to meet the needs of the disadvantaged cohort. Interview questions target views on how best to support.</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – 'Teachers who work in inclusive schools have to be well-trained in both special needs diagnosis and research-led pedagogy'	1,2,3,4,5,6

Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £195K

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Year 7 literacy screening and subsequent specialist, targeted intervention as well as wider whole cohort intervention</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 6 months Closing the reading gap	5, 6
<i>Fresh start: intensive phonics intervention programme</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 4 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘adopt evidence based small group reading interventions to address specific issues with word recognition and or language comprehension’	5, 6
<i>Guided reading programme: KS2 sig below 100 – withdrawal for intensive support</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 6 months Closing the reading gap – ‘reading, offers a great deal of pleasure, while simultaneously offering us a vital tool to learn’	5, 6
<i>LSA – targeted in class support</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 1 month	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>Specialist English LSA to support with the English recovery curriculum</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 6 months Closing the reading gap	5, 6
<i>Targeted pupils in KS3 that are extracted from languages and given curriculum time by the whole school literacy specialists</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 6 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – Every moment in school needs to be a language development and comprehension moment. The presumption of language can leave pupils isolated in the classroom. Language is key to success in accessing the curriculum’	5, 6
<i>Small group intervention programme with numeracy specialist for students identified as requiring additional support</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 4 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘There is extensive high-quality evidence demonstrating potential 1-1 and small group tuition as an effective	5, 6

	way of supporting pupils who are falling behind in their learning'	
<i>'Children Looked After' will receive 1-1 or small group additional tuition for maths or English where gaps are identified</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 4 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – 'There is extensive high-quality evidence demonstrating potential 1-1 and small group tuition as an effective way of supporting pupils who are falling behind in their learning'	5, 6
<i>PP&R club to be used to help students through the work they normally do at home</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit +5 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – 'Teachers should be involved in the commissioning of the intervention, and retain responsibility for pupil learning, even when a pupil is involved in additional structured intervention. When planning any intervention, it is important that the most vulnerable learners retain access to the most effective teaching'	1,2, 5, 6
<i>Support departments with the purchase of online resources</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 4 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – In particular, developments in ICT resources have allowed more pupils than ever to overcome difficulties and make greater progress than ever to overcome difficulties.' 'These cutting-edge resources can benefit all pupils at different points in their education'	1, 5
<i>Disadvantaged students will have access to music tuition</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit +2 months	1,3
<i>Apertura</i>	Apertura is a three-year academic enhancement programme designed to encourage academic enquiry and conversation. It aims to develop the critical thinking skills and curiosity needed to get to the top universities.	2
<i>Thinking Works</i>	The Thinking Works programme will run at the end of Year 9, after language exams in May. These sessions may take place during language lessons for the limited group invited to the programme. Some students may be identified in addition to those who took part in Thinking Matters in Year 8.	2

<i>Thinking Matters</i>	Thinking Matters will take place in the summer term of Year 8. Each Trust school will nominate a member of staff to lead and deliver on the programme at their school. A group of up to 20 students would be suitable, but more than one group may be possible depending on staff availability at the school.	2
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Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £81k

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Disadvantaged a focus for the Leadership Team</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘The most effective schools create capacity and provide the expertise and support for teachers and other staff to better meet the needs of their disadvantaged students’	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>Policies for attendance will make specific reference to disadvantaged students</i>	British psychological report 2017 Behaviour Change: School attendance, exclusion and persistent absence – ‘the 4 categories identified by the British Psychological Society are addressed: Mental Health; Physical Health; Attitudinal/systemic; School behaviour related’	4
<i>Attendance tracker will identify key groups of students and highlight where intervention is needed – PP, LAC, SEND, FSM</i>	British psychological report 2017 Behaviour Change: School attendance, exclusion and persistent absence – ‘the 4 categories identified by the British Psychological Society are addressed: Mental Health; Physical Health; Attitudinal/systemic; School behaviour related’	4
<i>HoH will track behaviour for learning and highlight disadvantaged students for support</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – we shift the culture away from one of perceived barriers and obstacles to a genuine ‘can do’ mentality where anything is possible’	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>Appointment of SEMH specialists to work with vulnerable students</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘Ensure that the social, emotional and mental health of pupils is prioritised’	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>1:1 SEMH sessions</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘Ensure that the social, emotional and mental health of pupils is prioritised’	1,2,3,4,5,6

<i>Study visits to enhance aspiration and cultural capital</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit +2 months	1, 2, 3
<i>Electives programme</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit +2 months	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>Disadvantaged students will be supported in ensuring they have opportunities to increase cultural capital</i>	Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘ensure that disadvantaged pupils experience the same formal and informal curriculum opportunities as their peers where possible’	3
<i>Disadvantaged students will have access to high quality IAG programme ‘Life after Laurus’</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Addressing Educational Disadvantage – ‘As beacons of humanity, schools have a duty to educate and protect the more vulnerable, and so strive to promote equality and social mobility’	1,2,3,4,5,6
<i>Purchase of laptops to loan who do not have own devices to work on at home</i>	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit + 4 months Addressing Educational Disadvantage – In particular, developments in ICT resources have allowed more pupils than ever to overcome difficulties and make greater progress than ever to overcome difficulties.’ ‘These cutting-edge resources can benefit all pupils at different points in their education’	3
<i>Purchase of a variety of pieces of equipment that help students access the school day and curriculum (e.g. uniform, school bags, alarm clock, stationary)</i>	If students do not feel prepared for school they are less likely to access school.	3, 4

Total budgeted cost: £471k

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

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

We continue to review our strategy in line with the process detailed below and will update this document accordingly later in the 2025/ 2026 academic year.

We fully appreciate that no single intervention provides a complete solution to the complex educational issues in any school and it is therefore important that we operate a multi-faceted approach. We feel that this offers the best opportunity for pupils to succeed. However, we do believe that one key to the narrowing of any difference in attainment is the careful and thorough monitoring and tracking of individual pupils. At Didsbury High School this is done on a daily basis by our teaching staff. Daily tracking enables teaching staff to report progress and attainment through our process of KASH reports which in turn allows middle and senior leaders to make informed choices.

We have a relentless drive to continually improve and enhance the quality of our teaching and learning.

At a strategic level our Pupil Premium spending and impact are monitored and challenged by a named governor. We have adopted a set procedure for carrying out these checks. The reports of these checks and amendments are reported to the governing body. Progress checks form the basis of many of our conversations surrounding the impact of our Pupil Premium spending. As a minimum, however, we operate on the following assumptions, when monitoring and tracking the impact of our Pupil Premium spending:

	Short term	Medium Term	Long Term
Staff and/or positions involved:	HOH meet on a weekly basis with DHT to review and plan interventions. HOH, HOY and SEND Team to track and review interventions. Reports made to HoS and rest of Leadership at weekly Leadership meetings. Bromcom used to report attendance and behaviour issues. Staff track on a daily basis	Progress Checks are collected across the school in line with the assessment calendar. These are reviewed at all levels from class teacher through to HoS. DHT (PP) specifically looks at PP. All subjects receive reports and progress and attainment of PP students. Leadership Team report to HT.	DHT draw up plans from shared strategic vision with HoS. Leadership track and monitor national trends and developments to measure and inform interventions at DHS. SDP informs DDP which then, in turn, inform budget plans and proposed interventions. Full review of data carried out of data with and by the DHT who reports to

	and report to HOY through relevant link. HOY intervene with set procedures concerning attendance.	Directors of Core report to SLT on matters concerning staffing and progress. • PM and appraisal process. • 'Curriculum Conversations' • Progress Meetings.	departments. Whole school data tracked back to interventions.
Notes:	Some interventions (usually ad hoc) take place outside of this process. These are tracked by the AHTs and DHT who links with the relevant member of staff.	Pupil Premium reports and spending previews are presented to the Governors Monitoring Committee who then report to the full governing body.	Annual Report provided to the governors and published on the school website.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Oxford Outreach Seminar	Corpus Christie
Harmful Sexual Behaviours Lessons	Brook
Architecture Seminars and Workshops	The DEC
MFL immersive Theatre	Onatti Production
Knife Crime/ Gang workshops	CELLS
Languages and Science Competition	Spoonful of Languages
CEIAG workshops	Bridge GM
Higher Education Seminar	Murray Edwards College Cambridge
Higher Education Seminar	Lancaster University
Anti-Racism Workshops	Kids of Colour
Farm life experience	Tatton Park Farm
Representation in Engineering workshops	SheCanEngineer
Medicine Higher Education and careers workshop	Meducators
Employability programme	Price Waterhouse Cooper