Pupil Premium Strategy Statement – Central Academy

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 students last academic year.

School overview

Before completing this template, read the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance on <u>using your pupil premium funding effectively</u> and DfE's <u>using pupil premium guidance</u>, which includes the 'menu of approaches'. It is for school leaders to decide what activity to spend their pupil premium (and recovery premium) on, within the framework set out by the menu.

All schools that receive pupil premium (and recovery premium) are required to use this template to complete and publish a pupil premium statement on their school website by 31 December every academic year.

If you are starting a new pupil premium strategy plan, use this blank template. If you are continuing a strategy plan from last academic year, you may prefer to edit your existing statement, if that version was published using the template.

Before publishing your completed statement, delete the instructions (text in italics) in this template, and this text box.

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1054
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	303 (29%)
2	2024 - 2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Dan Markham, Principal
Pupil premium lead	Michelle Rigg, Vice Principal
Governor / Trustee Lead	Nigel Robson

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£319,275
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year *Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.*	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years *(enter £0 if not applicable)*	£0
Total budget for this academic year *If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year*	£319,275

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of Intent

Our intention is that all students, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment from studying a broad and balanced curriculum. The core focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged students to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers. Addressing the challenges of maintaining good attendance will focus highly on our strategy this academic year.

Our aim is to ensure that all students are able to access the curriculum without placing ceilings on students learning due to challenges they may face such as vocabulary deficit and reading comprehension. We aim to remove barriers to learning for students in receipt of free school meals, narrow the attainment gap between PP and NPP learners, ensure all students have the literacy levels required to access a broad and balanced curriculum and can communicate their knowledge and understanding by improving their oracy skills.

We aim to ensure all students are able to look after their social and emotional wellbeing, to give them up to date safeguarding knowledge so they are able to make good decisions and build resilience. Disadvantaged students will be supported as a priority to reduce escalation to statutory services involvement and support mental health needs. Students will access a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through our Character Education and PSHCE programme.

Quality First Teaching is at the centre of the approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged students require the most support, this has been determined through assessment and not assumption. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantaged gap and at the same time will also benefit the non-disadvantaged students at Central Academy. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

The pupil premium strategy will include embedding the RADY approach, ensuring a whole school focus where all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged student's outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve. We include our vulnerable to underachievement, LAC and SEND students in the provision detailed in this strategy, irrespective of their eligibility for the Pupil Premium Grant.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance of disadvantaged students is lower than the attendance of non-disadvantaged students; they spend less time in the classroom.
2	Groups of disadvantaged students make less progress than non-disadvantaged students; middle ability disadvantaged students and those identified as SEND/EAL particularly require focused support.
3	Disadvantaged students are more likely to have lower levels of literacy on entry that limits their ability to access the curriculum.
4	Socio-economic disadvantage limits resources, wider life experiences, cultural capital and resources to provide academic support eg tuition or access to technology to complete home learning, further exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.
5	Parental engagement at Academy events such as parents' evening is lower than that of non-disadvantaged students.

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
Attendance To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all students, particularly our disadvantaged students.	Attendance across our Secondary Academies remains the highest priority. The improvements seen in the previous year must continue and lead to pupil attendance being well above national average levels. o The overall absence rate for all students reduced and the attendance gap between disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers be in line with NA.

4

	- Increased attendance for the disadvantaged population in all year groups. - The percentage of all students who are persistently absent being below 25% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 6% lower than their peers.
Achievement To improve attainment for all students and reduce the disadvantaged gap across a broad range of subjects.	The outcomes all students achieve remains pivotal. However, we know that students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those identified as SEND do not yet achieve in line with their peers. We therefore want to see a real focus and emphasis on the performance of these students who will be the first in line for the best of our support. - Attainments 8 score to be above national estimates. - Disadvantaged students achieve an APS of 40. - Destination data shows more disadvantaged students attending Central Academy Sixth Form. - No NEETS within disadvantaged cohort.
Literacy To improve reading comprehension among disadvantaged students to ensure accessibility to a broad and challenging curriculum, particularly for disadvantaged students..	A rich diet of reading, writing and spoken language will be evident in all our secondary classrooms. Structured catch up literacy and phonics programmes will provide the necessary support to our weakest readers, but the wider focus will be on reading through the taught curriculum and support for schools in making literacy and oracy a part of everyday effective practice - An increase in reading comprehension test scores for disadvantaged students compared to previous tests. - A decrease in the gap in reading comprehension test scores between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged students. - Evidence of classroom strategies to improve oracy captured during learning walks and book looks.

Character	A systematic approach to character will develop a sense of belonging which will underpin attendance and behaviour improvements. A focus on rewards and a culture and ethos that continues to reflect the 'best in everyone' will be central to achieving this priority.
To support students spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to create highly engaged students who are resilient, respectful and ambitious.	- High uptake of co-curriculum opportunities for disadvantaged students. - Student and Parent feedback indicates high regard for enrichment opportunities such as student leadership and community events. - Proportional attendance of disadvantaged students on trips and visits. - Attitude to learning scores for disadvantaged students increase.
Parental Engagement	A carefully planned strategy to engage parents across the Academy will support with attendance, behaviour and outcomes of all students, in particular disadvantaged students.
To break down barriers of engagement with disadvantaged families ensuring that parents and carers support good attendance, improvements in behaviour and outcomes which allow students to get their first choice place at the end of Y11 and Y13.	- The % attendance of disadvantaged students to parents evening be at least as good as non-disadvantaged peers. - Priority calls to PP families for all communications - NEET data/University uptake - Positive Parent Voice - Impact of Access to Education lead role to re-engage hard to reach or chronically absent children.

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: £159,637

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional staffing in core subjects Some class sizes are smaller to support student attainment and progress for all students	Smaller class sizes allow teachers to have more quality interactions. It has been shown in research that there is "strong evidence showing the impact that high quality interventions can have on the outcomes of struggling pupils". (EEF) The EEF has found that reduced calss sizes have an average impact on progress of 2+ months. Reducing class size | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2, 3, 4
Bespoke CPD programme for staff to ensure quality first teaching for all. Improving recruitment and retention.	Professional development is key to ensuring Quality First Teaching. The EEF PP guide recommends that 'teaching should be top priority, including professional development" (EEF) Teacher quality, recruitment and retention | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,3,4
Introduction of curriculum masterclasses weekly to build on teacher knowledge and pedagogical expertise. Develop middle-leadership within curriculum areas, to rigorously monitor and improve the quality of both the curriculum & teaching	It is important that schools consider how children learn, how they develop knowledge and skills, and how they can be supported to lay firm foundations for later learning. Teaching approaches that ensure long-term retention of knowledge, fluency in key skills, and confident use of metacognitive strategies are crucial.	1,2,3,4

Instructional coaching programme with staff at all levels, supporting staff development, particularly for ECT staff	At a high level, instructional coaching can be defined as 'an observation and feedback cycle in an ongoing instructional … situation" (Joyce & Showers, 1981) Goal setting: coaches and/or coachees identify specific, focused areas of improvement for coachees. - Feedback: coaches provide feedback following observations of coachee practice. - Instruction OR modelling: coaches point coachees toward specific improvements in practice. - Rehearsal OR context specific repetition: instructional coaching always involves deliberate practice of new techniques, outside or inside the classroom. Teacher-professional-development.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)	1, 2,3,4
External professional development opportunities for staff at all levels via UL or NPQ pathways	Managing workload and offering effective professional development are key to retaining great teachers, which, in turn, is crucial to maintaining a high standard of teaching and learning (EEF)	2
Rank order assessment as a driver for attitude to learning and academic performance in lessons	AP Outcomes analyse and present the data so that students and parents can understand performance and target how to improve.	1,2,3,4
Meta Cognition and self regulation strategies to be delivered through T&L strategies and additional sessions after school	The EEF states that, based on extensive evidence (246 studies), using a metacognition approach to learning has a potential impact of 7+ months over the course of a year. Metacognition and self-regulation	EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 2, 4
Investment in leadership responsibility for improving outcomes of disadvantaged students	VP for Pupil Premium/ AP Outcomes/ PP champions Senior Leaders with responsibility for the quality of education of disadvantaged students means that there is accountability being driven down through the middle leadership group to ensure progress of disadvantaged students across the Academy.	1,2,3,4, 5
Assessment: Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments (MidYIS/ NGRT)	Use of testing materials allow insights into students individual strengths and weaknesses, this enables each student to receive the most appropriate support or intervention.	2, 3

| | MidYIS data can be useful: • To indicate reasons for student learning difficulties and may go some way to explain lack of progress, flag up causes for underachievement and even behaviour problems. • For all teachers and support staff. It can help to support professional judgement and give a better understanding of the progress students make at school and their potential later performance. • To refer to for pupil reviews, writing reports, meeting parents, monitoring progress and interim assessments Using-MidYIS-IPRs-Booklet.pdf (trak.org.uk) | |

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

Budgeted cost: £79,818

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Peer academic tuition	Peer tutoring approaches have been shown to have a positive impact on learning, with an average positive effect equivalent to approximately five additional months' progress within one academic year. Studies have identified benefits for both tutors and tutees, and for a wide range of age groups. Though all types of students appear to benefit from peer tutoring, there is some evidence that students who are low-attaining and those with special educational needs make the biggest gains. Peer tutoring	EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,3
Targeted intervention to support language, literacy and numeracy development, including bespoke EAL support	Reading comprehension tests demonstrate improved comprehension skills among disadvantaged students and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers. Teachers should also have recognised this improvement through engagement in lessons and book scrutiny. o Reading programmes address the inequality in exposure to high quality reading materials and the impact of the 30 million word gap' and cultural literacy. It also improves consistency in tutor time provision and the transition into lesson Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2,3

Targeted intervention to meet specific needs of students with SEND evaluated via the Action – Plan – Do – Review process	Students with SEND are more than twice as likely to be eligible for free school meals. EEF research shows that by ensuring the deployment of teaching assistants is effective, and before implementing interventions gain a good understanding of what they are struggling with and why, and then respond with evidence-based teaching and interventions EEF Blog: Supporting pupils with SEND - 3 key messages for…	EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2, 3, 5
Adopting a targeted literacy strategy via a 'wave' model including: Lexonic Leap – small group (1:4) reading and phonics support as a reading intervention for disadvantaged pupils who need a bespoke approach using early reading strategies, to support them in developing phonological awareness in order to developing decoding strategies, improving reading fluency. Targeted at the weakest readers Lexia – online, intuitive programme that addresses specific reading needs. Cellfield	Improving students reading and comprehension can have a positive impact on the students ability to access a broad and balanced curriculum. This can be most effective when interventions are delivered over a shorted time. Independent Impact Evaluation Studies - Lexonik Trial of Lexia involved 697 students across 57 schools. The independent evaluation found that children offered Lexia made the equivalent of one additional months' progress in reading, on average, compared to other children. These results have a high security rating: four out of five on the EEF padlock scale. Children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) who were offered Lexia made, on average, the equivalent of two additional months' progress in reading compared to other children eligible for FSM.[1] Lexia Reading Core5®	EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2,3
Dedicated team across Ks3-Ks5 to support students SEMH - Pastoral team with responsibility on improving attendance, identifying external barriers to learning for disadvantaged students - On site Barnardos team for MH support - Access to Education Lead: with sole focus on improving wellbeing of students, particularly disadvantaged students - Senior Mental Health Lead level with responsibility for whole school strategy to address SEMH	Research has consistently shown that mental health is a crucial predictor of academic performance. A study published in the Journal of Psychiatric Research found that students with positive mental health are more likely to achieve higher grades and enjoy the learning process.1 The Impact of Mental Health in Education	Education Brands UK	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
- STEER pilot rolled out to all students to ensure early intervention by tutors		
Maths Excellence Fund – targeting disadvantaged mathmaticians and the Maths circles which targets Yr 10 & 11 through maths tutoring.	Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive additional benefits from small group tuition. Small group tuition approaches can support pupils to make effective progress by providing intensive, targeted academic support to those identified as having low prior attainment or at risk of falling behind. Small group tuition | EEF	2

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

Budgeted cost: £79,819

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Uniform expenditure to allow disadvantaged students to access correct uniform from the Boot Room.	At Central Academy we are serving a demographic with financial issues so it is important to support those with borrowing uniform, sometimes for up to a week or two at a time. The boot room also enables those without money to access lessons in school without falling foul of policy.	1, 4, 5
Attendance - Recruitment of 2 attendance officers - VP and AP focus - 100% club - A Star Attendance programme. - Transport support	At KS4, students not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% 9 among those achieving grade 42. The overall absence rate of students not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%). Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)	1,2,3,4,5
Mentoring	Mentoring in education involves pairing young people with an older peer or adult volunteer, who acts as a positive role model. In general, mentoring aims to build	1,2,3,4,5

- Y11/ Staff - Sixth form	confidence and relationships, to develop resilience and character, or raise aspirations, rather than to develop specific academic skills or knowledge Mentoring | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Extended school day for Y11-Raised attainment and progress at KS4 through compulsory attendance at period 4 for all Y11 pupils – sessions delivered as additional lessons.	EEF research suggests that disadvantaged students might benefit from additional school time and targeted interventions https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/extending-school-time	1,2,3,4
Breakfast clubs and FSM Including breakfast for all students before formal exams	Evidence shows that completing assessments having eaten a full breakfast will enable students to concentrate for longer and perform better. Breakfast Interventions - Rapid Evidence Assessment | Education Endowment Foundation (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)	1,2,3,4,5
Parental Engagement - Invitation to parent event PP students first - Follow up calls - PTA - Parent voice opportunities - Events bespoke to SEMH - Parenting support offer	The average impact of the Parental engagement approaches is about an additional four months' progress over the course of a year. There are also higher impacts for students with low prior attainment. Disadvantaged students are less likely to benefit from having a space to conduct home learning. Evidence also suggests that disadvantaged students make less academic progress, and sometimes attainment levels even regress during the summer holidays, due to the level of formal and informal learning activities they do or do not participate in. By designing and delivering effective approaches to support parental engagement, schools and teachers may be able to mitigate some of these causes of educational disadvantage, supporting parents to assist their children's learning or their self-regulation, as well as specific skills, such as reading. Parental engagement | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2,3,4,5
Co-Curricular Develop co-curricular and enrichment activities through and academy character programme. Developing the leadership of co-curricular through the appointment of AAP Character Subsidizing the cost of extracurricular trips for disadvantaged students	Clear benefits attached to being able to experience these opportunities, from social interaction to cultural experiences. The EEF states that enriching education has intrinsic benefits. At Central Academy we endeavour to expose all students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to a well rounded and culturally rich experience. Research indicates that 71 per cent of schools reported enrichment activities helped them engage disadvantaged families; • 69 per cent found it had at least some influence in raising attainment; • 82 per cent reported greater pupil enjoyment of school; • 45 per cent noted improved pupil attendance; • 54 per cent said it reduced behaviour or discipline. CSJ-A_Level_Playing_Field.pdf (centreforsocialjustice.org.uk)	1,2,3,4,5

12

Total budgeted cost: £319,275

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This year our GCSE attainment saw an improvement in 4+ and 7+ basic measures achieving 60% 4+ and 11% 7+. Similarly, our Attainment 8 has improved compared to 2024 by 1.0 (42.4).
Over the past three years we have seen a significant improvement with huge progress being made. Since 2019 (last published data pre-covid) we have made the following progress: A8 increased by 5.67, 4+ increased by 17%, 5+ increased by 12% and 7+ has increased by 10%.
This year, we placed increased focus on our PP and HAP cohorts. We have seen significant successes in both of these areas with the PP reducing from –16.63 to -6.03, and our HAP attainment increasing from 42.77 to 64.58. 85% of our students achieved 5 grades 9-5, including English and Maths, compared with 61% in 2024.

PP students with attendance above 95% performed significantly better, this reinforces that attendance is our biggest barrier when trying to improve attainment for disadvantaged students.

Sixth form recruitment – there are twice as many disadvantaged students (20) recruited to Y12 this academic year.

On average, students achieved an average grade C and value added +0.14 compared to a D+ for disadvantaged students and an +0.04 value added score.
The number of students achieving A* - A increased from 8% to 13%; this was also 13% within our PP cohort (10).

The end of year assessment for Yr 7-9 showed a similar picture with the older the year group, the wider the gap. However, there are some positive signs with data in core subjects performing broadly in-lie with other UL schools, particularly on the grade 4-5 threshold.

Attendance and PA remain below NAs - attendance 24/25 - 89.2%, NA 91.4% therefore 2.2% less than NA, PA 30.6%, which was 7.4% greater than the NA of 23.2%. PP attendance was 82.8%, 3.6% lower than NA of 86.4%.

The suspension rate at Central decreased from 39% in 21-22, to 27% in 22-23. As well as this, SEND and PP suspension rates decreased by 10% and 7% respectively. Suspension rates remain above national average. However, in 23-24 we saw another decrease in suspension rates from 27% to 22.4%. Within this drop we have also seen a reduction of SEN suspensions by 8% and a reduction of PP suspensions by 4%. In 24-25 this drop continued, however even though was at a slower rate we managed to drop below national for the first time. We achieved a drop in repeat suspensions and a drop in suspension rate by 0.2%. We also saw a 4.8% drop in PP suspensions. However, there was an 18% rise in SEN suspensions. We saw a near even split in sex as 50.1% of suspensions came from female pupils and the remainder from males.

Finally, 96% of parents reported their child was happy in school, 98% of parents said their child felt safe in the academy, 100% of parents whose children has SEND believed they were supported well, 94% would recommend this school to a friend. There is still much to do in engaging our hard to reach families within the community and the appointment of our Access to Education Lead will be focusing largely on a strategic plan to address this.

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
Lexia, Lexonic	Lexia
NGRT	GL Assessment
Metacognition	
Sparx Maths, English and Science	Sparx
4Matrix	4Matrix

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year**
There were five service children last year.

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils, that is not dependent on pupil premium or recovery premium funding.