Pupil premium strategy statement – Highbank Primary School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2021 to 2022 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	Highbank Primary School
Number of pupils in school	Nursery: 24 F2-Y6: 222 **Total= 246**
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	44%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3 year plans are recommended)**	November 2025 – July 2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Sophie Wan/Lee Noble
Pupil premium lead	Sophie Wan
Governor / Trustee lead	Kevin Pallister

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£174,145
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 If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£174,145

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Highbank Primary School, our aim is for every pupil - regardless of background, starting point, or need - to achieve highly and flourish personally, socially and academically. Our strategy is rooted in research-informed practice and is designed to remove the specific barriers faced by our disadvantaged pupils. We prioritise high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and wider pastoral interventions shown by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to have the strongest impact on long-term outcomes.

With 44% of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium, many whole-school initiatives function as universal provision but are crucial for some. Therefore, funding has been proportionally allocated to ensure equity while sustaining high-quality provision for all. Rigorous monitoring, data analysis and pupil voice will enable us to evaluate the impact of each action and adapt our approach to maximise progress and wellbeing.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance, including a high proportion of persistent absentees.
2	High levels of social, emotional and mental health needs *National research consistently shows higher rates of SEMH need among disadvantaged pupils (DfE, 2023; EPI, 2021), which mirrors our in-school data indicating more frequent dysregulation episodes for PP pupils.*
3	Attainment for those with multiple needs e.g. disadvantaged and vulnerable or disadvantaged and SEND.
4	Low educational backgrounds of families *Clifton is identified in the Levelling Up White Paper (2022) as an area of entrenched educational disadvantage with low adult qualification levels. National evidence shows children in such areas start school with significantly weaker language and early literacy (EPI, 2020), and parental education is a strong predictor of early attainment (OECD, 2018). This aligns with our baseline data, where many pupils enter with lower communication and early reading skills.*
5	Low social trust within the local community *The Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and Social Mobility Commission (2021) highlight low social capital and reduced trust in institutions in disadvantaged areas, including parts of Nottingham. National surveys show low trust is linked with reduced parental engagement and higher persistent absence (Cabinet Office Community Life Survey, 2021). This is reflected locally, where engagement with school processes can be limited for some families.*

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
Disadvantaged pupils achieve equally as well as non-disadvantaged pupils.	• The attainment gap at the end of KS2 between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils has closed.
Attendance rates for pupil premium pupils has improved.	• Attendance of disadvantaged children to be in line with non-disadvantaged pupils. • Persistent absentee rate will lower for children who are disadvantaged
Our highest profile disadvantaged pupils manage their own emotions and resolve conflict with others.	• Pupils are equipped with a range of strategies to support them in managing their emotions. • Provision at Highbank is carefully designed so that it supports pupils to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. • Effective approaches are in place so that pupils have a positive experience both inside the classroom and on the playground. • All staff at Highbank are equipped with the tools to effective manage dysregulation and peer conflict, taking a restorative approach to rectify the harm.
Pupils previously identified as demonstrating the most challenging behaviour generally behave well, follow the agreed school rules and show positive attitudes to their learning.	• ClassCharts logs show an increase in positive behaviours and a decrease in incidents of negative behaviour – behaviour is clearly improving over time. • Learning walks show lessons are rarely interrupted and there is no lost learning time as a result.

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: £146,281

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
The Good Morning Club Subscription (44% of)	EEF guidance states that behaviour interventions, including approaches to developing a positive school ethos and more specialised programmes	2 and 4

	which are targeted at students with specific behavioural issues can have a positive impact for low cost based on evidence. What's more, SEL interventions, focusing on the ways in which students work with and alongside their peers, teachers, family or community are a very low-cost method to have impact upon pupils.	
TLRs for Teaching and Learning: Achieving Excellence and Behaviour (44% of)	High-quality teaching is the single most effective strategy for improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils (EEF, 2021). Investment in leadership ensures sustained improvement in curriculum quality, behaviour culture and consistency. DfE guidance highlights that "successful schools deploy the strongest teachers to support disadvantaged pupils." These TLRs strengthen whole-school pedagogy, improving teaching for all while being essential for closing attainment gaps.	1, 3 and 5
Additional adult support for pupils who are both SEND and PP including recruitment of an apprentice TA and recruitment of an additional midday supervisor.	Targeted adult support, when implemented as part of a structured intervention plan, can be effective for pupils with the most significant needs (EEF guidance on Teaching Assistants). For pupils with both PP and SEND, high adult-pupil ratios enable access to learning, reduce anxiety and ensure adaptations are made in real time. Without this support, these pupils would be unable to fully participate in classroom learning or wider school life.	3
Supply cover to allow teaching staff to attend CPD (ECT training, PLCs, networks)	Professional development has a high impact on pupil learning (Robinson et al., 2008; EEF 2021). Cover enables staff to participate in essential training, coaching and networks that directly enhance teaching quality, curriculum understanding and behaviour management. Improved staff expertise contributes disproportionately to gains for disadvantaged pupils.	2 and 5

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

Budgeted cost: £12,221

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Power Maths Approach	Power Maths takes a mastery learning approach which aims to ensure that all pupils have mastered key concepts before moving on to the next topic, in contrast with traditional teaching methods in which pupils may be left	3 and 5

	behind, with gaps of misunderstanding widening. Mastery learning works through designing units of work so that each task has a clear outcome which pupils must master prior to moving on to the next task. The EEF state that the impact of mastery learning approaches is an additional five months progress, on average, over the course of a year. The EEF also state that mastery learning appears to be particularly effective when pupils are given opportunities to work in groups or teams and take responsibility for supporting each others progress. Such peer collaboration is a key feature of the Power Maths approach. Mastery approaches are particularly beneficial for disadvantaged pupils as they reduce the likelihood of gaps rapidly widening over time.	
Times Table Rockstars	When stimuli are learned by repetition, they are remembered better and retained for a longer time. Studies have shown that the brain forms new pathways when a task is repeated often, thereby optimizing the performance of the skill (CPDUK, 2022). What's more, research by Weinstein and Sumeracki shows that it is much more effective if students engage in shorter study sessions at intervals. This allows students to strengthen their retrieval, building a degree of fluency over time (WALKTHRU 2) Regular retrieval practice strengthens long-term memory (Weinstein & Sumeracki, 2019), and TTRS provides high-engagement, low-stakes rehearsal that builds fluency essential for KS2 mathematics.	3 and 5
SmartGrade Assessments	High-quality diagnostic assessment is an essential element of effective teaching (EEF Assessment Guidance). SmartGrade provides precise analysis enabling teachers to adapt instruction quickly and close emerging gaps for disadvantaged learners.	3 and 5
Nelson Handwriting	Nelson handwriting supports pupils to gain fluency in transcription which in turn frees up working memory to focus on the other skills of writing such as composition and grammatical elements. Developing competency in transcription is a vital first step for the teaching of writing (EEF, Improving Literacy in KS2). Automaticity in transcription reduces cognitive load, enabling pupils - particularly those with weaker working memory - to focus	3 and 5

	on higher-level writing processes (EEF Improving Writing in KS2).	

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

Budgeted cost: £15,913

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Enrichment subsidies	When trips, visits and experiences explicitly addressed curriculum content, they impacted significantly on progression and attainment. (Dr Jane Dudman, Carrie Hedges & Dr Chris Loynes, 2018) Improved outcomes have been identified in English, mathematics and science. Wider benefits such as more positive attitudes to learning and increased wellbeing have also consistently been reported. (EEF, 2021) Arts, cultural and experiential learning have measurable benefits for disadvantaged pupils, improving engagement, vocabulary, wellbeing and academic outcomes (EEF, 2021).	3, 4, and 5
Use of Attendance Officer to support in diminishing the difference between attendances of disadvantaged children compared with their peers. (2700)	The EEF explores a tiered approach to spending and identifies those 'Wider Strategies' which includes attendance. Our main mission is to ensure that all children come to school every day to enable them to access all learning and support provided. Improving attendance is a prerequisite for improved attainment. National data shows disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately represented among persistent absentees; targeted attendance work is therefore essential in closing the gap.	2
Music Provision through Nottingham Music Hub (3620)	Research in music education demonstrates links between sustained musical learning and improved confidence, language development, memory and executive functioning (Hallam, 2015). For disadvantaged children, music participation also increases belonging, motivation and engagement with school life. Nottingham Music Hub provides high-quality, specialist provision that could not be replicated internally.	4

Appointment of a Behaviour Support Mentor	EEF identifies behaviour intervention as a moderate-to-high impact approach with low cost. A Behaviour Support Mentor provides targeted support for disadvantaged pupils experiencing SEMH challenges, enabling them to regulate emotions, access learning and reduce lost learning time. Restorative approaches have strong evidence for improving relationships and reducing repeat incidents.	
ClassCharts subscription	ClassCharts provides accurate, real-time behaviour, seating and pastoral data which enables early identification of patterns (e.g., PP pupils disproportionately affected). Effective use of behaviour data is linked with improved consistency, quicker interventions and better communication with families. This supports positive behaviour culture and enhances safeguarding.	

Total budgeted cost: £174,145

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 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Aim	Outcome including data, where available, and brief commentary
Disadvantaged pupils achieve equally as well as non-disadvantaged pupils.	This year, although disadvantaged pupils did not yet match non-disadvantaged pupils in all areas, their outcomes were strong and the gap between the two groups in our school is smaller than the national picture**.** For example, in the combined measure of reading, writing and maths, 67% of our disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard compared with 80% of non-disadvantaged pupils, a gap of 13 percentage points. Nationally, the gap is much wider, with around 47% of disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard compared to 69% of other pupils, a difference of over 20 percentage points. This shows that while there is still work to do to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve equally well, our support for them is helping to reduce the gap more effectively than is typical across the country. Closing this gap further remains a key priority for the school.
Disadvantaged pupils make above average progress.	Outcomes at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 show that many disadvantaged pupils made strong progress over time. In Year 6, 74% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, 80% in writing and 73% in maths, with a notable proportion reaching greater depth in maths (20%). While combined outcomes (67% EXS+) indicate that some pupils did not yet secure the expected standard across all subjects, these results reflect positive progress for many pupils, particularly in individual subjects. In Year 2, outcomes further demonstrate accelerated progress, with 60% of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard across reading, writing and maths, and a significant proportion achieving greater depth, especially in reading (33%) and maths (27%). These outcomes suggest that targeted support, timely intervention and quality first teaching have enabled many disadvantaged pupils to close gaps from their starting points and, in some cases, exceed expectations. While continued work is needed to ensure this progress is sustained and reflected

	consistently in combined outcomes, supporting disadvantaged pupils to make accelerated progress remains a key priority for the school.
Attendance rates for all pupils has improved.	Overall attendance has improved to 93%, compared with 92.7% the previous year. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils increased from 92% to 92.4%, while non-disadvantaged pupils' attendance rose from 93% to 93.6%, showing a positive upward trend for all groups. While a small gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils remains, it has narrowed slightly and continues to be a key focus for the school. To support this work, we employ a dedicated attendance officer, funded in part through Pupil Premium, whose role is vital in ensuring robust procedures are followed, concerns are identified early and appropriate support is put in place. Our approach is consistent and relentless: we do not authorise holidays during term time, we work closely with families to understand and address the root causes of absence, and staff have been trained in Team Around the Family to strengthen multi-agency support where needed. We are working with a range of external agencies to support families and remove barriers to regular attendance. While improvements have been made, we recognise that this work is not complete and will continue into next year, with attendance remaining a high priority for the school.
Pupils are emotionally intelligent and supported with their social, emotional and mental health in school so that they can thrive on their academic journey.	While this is not an area that can be measured as easily as attainment, significant steps have been taken to strengthen provision. This year we introduced a new behaviour policy and behaviour tracking system, which increases consistency, holds pupils to account and allows leaders to analyse patterns and trends strategically. Alongside this, a dedicated behaviour mentor has been appointed and uses this data to identify pupils who require additional support and to deliver targeted SEMH interventions. We have also strengthened our work with families, offering parent workshops focused on emotional regulation, SEND and mental health, including a workshop specifically for fathers. In school, pupils benefit from calm spaces, regulation resources and daily journaling after lunch to support reflection, emotional regulation and a positive return to learning. Although numerical impact measures are still developing, by July 2026 we expect a richer set of behaviour and intervention data to demonstrate reduced behaviour incidents

	over time and pupils increasingly able to regulate their emotions and engage positively with learning.