

Pupil premium strategy statement – Heartwood CE VC Primary and Nursery 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	231 (including 28 Nursery)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	89 pupils =39% 39% (YR-6)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025- 2026 (2025-2028)
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Rebecca Starman Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Marie Compton SENCO and Inclusion Lead
Governor / Trustee lead	Lee Stevens Pupil Premium Governor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 110,820
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£ 0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£ 110,820

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Heartwood our intention is that all pupils, regardless of their background or the challenges they face, make strong progress and achieve highly across all subject areas. The focus of our Pupil Premium strategy is to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are supported to reach this goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers.

In developing our approach, we also consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils such as those with a social worker or young carers. The actions outlined in this statement are therefore designed to support these pupils' needs, whether or not they are formally classed as disadvantaged.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a particular emphasis on the areas where disadvantaged pupils require the greatest support. Evidence consistently shows that this has the most significant impact on closing the attainment gap, while simultaneously benefiting non-disadvantaged pupils. Implicit within our intended outcomes is the expectation that the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils will be sustained and improved alongside the progress made by their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach is rooted in robust diagnostic assessment and responds to both common challenges and individual needs, rather than relying on assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The strategies we have chosen are designed to complement one another and enable pupils to thrive.

To ensure that they are effective, we will:

- ensure that disadvantaged pupils are consistently challenged.
- intervene early, at the point a need is identified.
- adopt a whole-school approach where all staff take responsibility for the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and hold high expectations for what they can achieve.
- regularly monitor progress and attainment as well as levels of well-being.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Academic attainment in Maths Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds have lower attainment than their peers, when looking at end of KS1 and KS2 data.
2	Mental health and wellbeing Thrive assessments, classroom observations and working with parents shows us that SEMH is a barrier for many pupils. A significant proportion of our children have also experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).
3	Attendance We know that children need to be in school in order to learn and reach their full potential. Poor attendance and lateness, particularly persistent absences has an impact on attainment as children have gaps in their learning. We know that PP children are more likely than non-PP to have poor attendance. At Heartwood we have worked hard to close the gap and our attendance data in the academic year 2024-25 averaged 93.3% for disadvantaged pupils compared to 94.4% for non-disadvantaged pupils. This shows an improvement and we need to continue with these effective strategies.
4	Developing early literacy skills Our assessment data shows that children start school significantly below their peers in terms of language and vocabulary. This has an impact on attainment in Writing. Our Reception baseline data showed only 10% of our current Reception cohort passed the GOV testing for CLL.
5	Broadening experiences We know that the children who attend Heartwood may have limited experiences outside of Swaffham. 35% of our pupils are PP and economic deprivation can have an impact on cultural capital.
6	High levels of deprivation Swaffham has a high deprivation for low levels of education and skills development. Within Breckland we are in the top 15% of deprivation.

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
Improved maths outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school.	KS1 and KS2 outcomes show a decreasing differential of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard compared to non-disadvantaged. MTC at national average or the gap will have been significantly closed for disadvantaged pupils.

<p>The development of expressive and receptive speech and language skills will have a positive impact on writing attainment.</p>	<p>To see a decrease in the gap between disadvantage and non-disadvantaged for communication and language in EYFS.</p> <p>In 27/28 KS1 data we will see a decrease in the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged at the end of year assessments.</p>
<p>To continue to have a whole school approach to support children’s social and emotional and mental health.</p> <p>To achieve and sustain improved well-being for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Continue to develop and strengthen our whole school Thrive approach.</p> <p>To increase participation in enrichment and mental wellbeing activities. This may include Thrive, The Nest or after-school clubs.</p> <p>High levels of engagement from families and children working with the Family Support Worker.</p> <p>To extend the nest provision to include playtimes and support children with SEMH needs.</p>
<p>To broaden experiences for children with PP.</p>	<p>50% of clubs will be allocated to disadvantaged pupils to ensure high numbers of attendance.</p> <p>School will subsidise trips to ensure that all children are able to access these.</p>
<p>To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantage pupils.</p>	<p>Sustained high attendance from 2025/26</p> <p>Demonstrated by:</p> <p>The overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 5% and the attendance gap being reduced.</p>
<p>To raise attainment of children achieving age related expectations by the end of KS2.</p>	<p>For KS1 and KS2 combined outcomes to be in line with national by 2027/2028.</p>

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 3,876

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Summative and Formative Assessment Tools</p> <p>Purchase of standardised diagnostic and formative assessment tools to help teaching staff identify and teach gaps in skills and knowledge.</p> <p>PiXL assessments and therapies for Y1-6.</p>	<p>Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and gaps of each pupil to help ensure that they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instructions.</p> <p>EEF Blog: Measuring up - helping teachers to assess better EEF</p>	<p>1, 4</p>
<p>Ongoing CPD for teaching and support staff</p> <p>To purchase online training which aims to improve strategies to support high quality teaching. This will be in response to areas of identified need.</p> <p>Teaching Support Staff to have fortnightly CPD training focused on Maths and SEND.</p> <p>Maths is a key area for whole school development. CPD will focus on developing strong mathematical foundations, number sense and fluency from YN-6.</p> <p>Our SIPD prioritises external training for staff through VNET, Wensum English Hub, Angles Maths Hub and other external providers.</p>	<p>Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children’s outcomes. Indeed, research shows that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap. Effective Professional Development EEF</p> <p>EEF evidence states that ensuring that a high-quality teacher is in front of every class and that every teacher is supported to keep improving is especially important for disadvantaged pupils. Investing in CPD to support high quality teaching should be a priority for pupil premium spending. EEF-Effective-Professional-Development-Guidance-Report.pdf</p> <p>The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: Mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2 (covers years 1 to 6)</p> <p>Sutton Trust EEF: Pupil premium funding should be used to ‘improve teacher training and professional development so that all school leaders and classroom teachers</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>

<p>To embed the new maths long term plan using Third Space Teaching Platform.</p> <p>Subject leaders to have release time to develop, support and train staff to deliver high quality teaching and learning.</p> <p>Leaders to attend VNET subject leaders networks and share knowledge with other staff.</p> <p>To continue to deliver a whole school Thrive approach.</p>	<p>understand how to use data and research effectively.'</p> <p>To keep subject leaders abreast with research and evidence to inform their practice and ensure we are delivering a stimulating curriculum. Learn from good practice and mentoring EEF</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 60,118

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Wellcomm, Attention Autism and Intensive Interaction interventions (1-1 and small group).</p> <p>SALT and Vocabulary 1-1 sessions.</p> <p>PIXL interventions-specific targeted small group interventions for Reading, Writing and Maths.</p>	<p>On average, oral language interventions have a high impact on pupil outcomes (+6 months additional progress).</p> <p>Oral language interventions can be an effective approach for disadvantaged pupils. In the research evidence, the higher the proportion of disadvantaged pupils taking part, the more effective the intervention seemed to be. Oral language interventions EEF</p> <p>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</p> <p>Phonics has a positive impact on average (+5 months) with extensive evidence and is an important component</p>	<p>1, 4</p>

<p>Training staff to deliver RWI Phonics fast track tutoring alongside our whole class phonics teaching.</p> <p>Read Write Inc phonics, is a DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics programme.</p>	<p>in the development of early reading skills particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive similar or slightly greater benefit from phonics interventions and approaches compared to other pupils.</p> <p>Phonics EEF</p>	
<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Thrive Therapy 1-1 or small group sessions</p> <p>Whole school Thrive Approach</p> <p>EYFS small group teaching and interventions</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers.</p> <p>SEL interventions in education are shown to improve SEL skills and are therefore likely to support disadvantaged pupils to understand and engage in healthy relationships with peers and emotional self-regulation, both of which may subsequently increase academic attainment.</p> <p>Social and emotional learning EEF</p> <p>Improving the quality of early education matters: it's positive for every child, and especially important for socio-economically disadvantaged children.</p> <p>In fact, research evidence tells us that high-quality early education is one of the best ways to ensure that children can thrive and succeed in school and beyond, regardless of their background.</p> <p>High-quality interactions EEF</p>	<p>2, 4</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £ 46,826

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<p>Full time Family Support Worker</p> <p>Family Support Worker helps to provide early help and support to families. This includes a high percentage of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>‘Time to Talk’ pastoral intervention delivered by trained practitioner.</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that the stability of a child’s home life affects how children perform in school.</p> <p>Social and emotional learning EEF</p>	<p>2, 3, 6</p>
<p>Whole School Wellbeing Approaches</p> <p>THRIVE subscription to aid the assessment and inform SEMH intervention profiles across the school.</p> <p>To have an EYFS trainer Thrive Practitioner and a Thrive Practitioner to deliver the programme to Bears and Moles Nurture rooms.</p> <p>Toast, Talk and Tales to support a soft start to the day. Children are provided with toast/bagel, discuss how they are feeling and share a story at the start of each day.</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers.</p> <p>There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g. improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers)</p> <p>Social and emotional learning EEF</p>	<p>2, 6</p>
<p>Attendance officer</p> <p>Attendance of disadvantaged children increased through continuing to embed</p>	<p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.</p>	<p>3</p>

<p>principles of good practice set out in the DfE's improving School Attendance advice. The Attendance Officer works closely with our Family Support Worker.</p>	<p>Research has found that poor attendance at school is linked to poor academic attainment across all stages as well as anti-social characteristics, delinquent activity and negative behavioural outcomes. Evidence suggests that small improvements in attendance can lead to meaningful impacts for these outcomes.</p> <p>Attendance interventions rapid evidence assessment EEF</p>	
<p>Broadening experiences</p> <p>To subsidise extracurricular clubs and provide access to free clubs for all children. 50 percent of these spaces will be allocated to disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Forest School used for all year groups across the school. It provides opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to participate in activities that they otherwise might not be able to access.</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that all children benefit from a well-rounded, culturally rich, education.</p> <p>Life skills and enrichment EEF</p> <p>Outdoor Adventure Learning (OAL) provides opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to participate in activities that they otherwise might not be able to access. Through participation in these challenging physical and emotional activities, outdoor adventure learning interventions can support pupils to develop non-cognitive skills such as resilience, self-confidence and motivation.</p> <p>Outdoor adventure learning EEF</p>	<p>5, 6</p>

Total budgeted cost: £ 110,820

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments.

Improved maths outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school.

The YR data shows that disadvantaged children performed above national and non-disadvantaged for Numerical Patterns. However, there is a 7% gap between the end of year ARE for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils achieving Number. This is also below national.

End of KS2 data shows that the gap in Maths is closing and we are close to national results.

EYFS Data	Disadvantaged		Non-disadvantaged	
	Working at expected	Working below expected	Working at expected	Working below expected
Number	8 =72%	3 =27%	15 =79%	4 =21%
Numerical Patterns	11 =100%	0 =0%	17 = 89%	2 =11%
Word Reading	11 =100%	0 =0%	17 =89%	2 =11%
Comprehension	10 =91%	1 9%	16 =84%	3 =16%
Writing	6 =55%	5 =45%	16 =84%	3 =16%

2024/25	<u>School disadvantaged compared to national</u>			<u>School compared to national non-disadvantaged</u>		
	<u>School</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>National distribution banding</u>	<u>National (no dis)</u>	<u>Gap</u>	<u>Gap trend</u>

Combined	44%	47%	Close to average	69%	-25	Narrowing
Reading	89%	63%	Above	81%	8	Positive gap
Writing	44%	59%	Below (non-sig)	78%	-34	Narrowing
Maths	56%	61%	Close to average	80%	-25	Narrowing

Improved writing outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

EYFS data shows that there is a significant gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantage pupils and this continues to be a focus for our school.

KS2 data shows that we are just below national and the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantage pupils is narrowing.

Continued improvement in reading attainment due to robust and effective systems to teach all children to read. 83% of children in YR will achieve the reading ELG.

EYFS data shows that disadvantaged children performed above national and non-disadvantaged pupils as 100% of pupils met the reading ELG.

End of KS2 data shows that 89% of disadvantaged children met the expected level. This is a +8 gap compared to national.

Y1 phonics screen will show a sustained result in line or above national.

The Y1 phonics data demonstrated that children were performing above expected with 93% of all pupils passing the phonics screening check. 90% of disadvantaged children achieved the expected standard compared with 67% nationally. The data demonstrates that the low attainment on entry is quickly and effectively acted on, through robust assessments, high quality small group teaching and targeted interventions.

We will see improved oral and language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.

80% of disadvantaged pupils will gain the ELG for speaking and listening at the end of YR.

	Disadvantaged		Non-disadvantaged	
Communication and Language	Working at expected	Working below expected	Working at expected	Working below expected
Speaking	9 =82%	2 =8%	15 =79%	4 =21%
Listening, Attention and Understanding	9 =82%	2 =8%	16 =84%	3 =16%

EYFS data shows that 82% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the Speaking and Listening, Attention and Understanding ELG. This shows positive progress from starting points.

To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.

- We continue to use whole class Thrive Profiling to support the emotional wellbeing and needs of each class.
- Thrive 1-1 Therapy has been used effectively as an intervention to support pupils wellbeing and social and emotional development.
- Pupils assess our nurture classes within school to support their engagement and learning.
- Pupils attend a wide range of planned trips, visits and experiences from the school's long-term plan. Trips are subsidised to ensure that all pupils can access these.

Improved attendance for disadvantaged pupils.

Attendance continues to be a whole school focus and evidence suggests that the practices we are implementing are having a positive impact on our disadvantaged pupils.

- Attendance for disadvantaged pupils has increased from 90.8% to 93.3% which is a relative improvement.
- Persistent absences for disadvantaged pupils have decreased from 28.4% to 17.2%, which is reduction of 11.2%. This percentage is below national which sits a 24.4% and his continues on a positive trend.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Thrive therapy and Whole school Thrive	Thrive
Time to Talk	The Benjamin Project
Talk Boost	I Can
Read Write Inc	Ruth Miskin
Wanderlust Child Nature Study	Wanderlust
Destination Reader	Hackney Education
TTRS	Maths Circle

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 funding.