

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2022 to 2023 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	Willows Primary School and Nursery
Number of pupils in school	660
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	28.7% (177 children)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2026/2027 to 2029/2030
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	January 2027
Statement authorised by	Tom Robinson Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Tom Robinson Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	John Hunter Chair of Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£276,590
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	£276,590

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At the Willows Primary School and Nursery, we believe that teaching and learning opportunities must meet the needs of all the pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they may face, to ensure we provide the very highest standards of education for every child. The focus of our Pupil Premium Strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils and provide them with opportunities they may not always have in order to achieve that goal.

Our ultimate objectives are to:

- Ensure the quality of education for all children is improved.
- Close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Improve the attendance, wellbeing and preparedness for secondary school of disadvantaged pupils.

High-quality teaching and support for the whole child are at the core of our approach. By focusing on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support, we aim to close the attainment gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged, improving the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and providing sustainability and improved progress for non-disadvantaged pupils. We believe that this approach provides opportunities to disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children so that they are best prepared for the next stage in their education. Alongside high-quality teaching, targeted academic and pastoral support is also vital to focus on specific needs. High quality teaching, targeted academic and targeted pastoral support is provided in a variety of ways including:

- A speech and language therapist offering targeted support for children and an additional LSA who will continue this work throughout the week
- Year group leaders who support colleagues to deliver high-quality teaching and help sustain good practice
- Additional LSA support for KS2 in the afternoon, allowing interventions to help improve the outcomes of targeted children
- An artist in residence who can work with teachers to improve practice in art and design

Our strategy also considers the need for our recovery curriculum where education has been disrupted for all pupils. The recovery curriculum provides structure and ensures teaching and learning is delivered in the most effective way. It is also vital to help rebuild relationships and support pupils with their social, emotional and mental wellbeing.

The next focus area is for the wider approaches where support is also needed for non-academic issues that impact success in school such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional challenges. Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- Provide additional pastoral support staff to support the emotional needs of children and their families (Family Support Mentor, Behaviour Support Mentor and Sensory and Nurture Lead)
- Employ two school-based counsellors who can provide support for individuals and support teachers and LSAs to adapt their practice in light of these needs
- Ensure Counselling and Play Therapy sessions are available to pupils and their families to provide professional support and guidance
- Improve communication and interaction between the school and families so that this relationship is strengthened
- Utilise an SEMH specialist unit to provide outreach and support for children with more complex SEMH needs

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance Our attendance data over the last year indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been 6.9% lower than for our non-disadvantaged pupils. There is also more persistent absenteeism within this group (36.4 Disadvantaged compared to 10% non-disadvantaged). Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.
2	Attainment & Progress (KS1 and KS2) Our assessments and observations indicate that the education and well-being of many of our disadvantaged pupils have been impacted by partial school closures to a greater extent than for other pupils. This has resulted in significant knowledge gaps leading to pupils falling further behind age-related expectations, particularly in the core subjects.

	The percentage of Pupil Premium children in KS1 and KS2 who did not achieve age related expectations at the end of the academic year (2025-2026) are as follows: 44% - Reading (20% not Pupil Premium) 31% - Writing (19% not Pupil Premium)) 44% - Maths (20% not Pupil Premium))
3	Reading (KS1) Our assessments and observations indicate that reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 1 is below that of non-disadvantage pupils. 62% of KS1 Pupil Premium children did not meet age related expectations by the end of the academic year (2025-2026) in comparison to 27% of pupils who are not Pupil Premium. 50% of Year 1 pupils who are Pupil Premium did not pass their phonics screening check compared to 18% of pupils who are not Pupil Premium.
4	Speech, Language and Communication Assessments, observations, discussions with pupils and referrals from teachers indicate underdeveloped receptive and expressive language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils. These are evident throughout the school but are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils. Currently 13% of children require additional support with 49% of these children being disadvantaged.
5	Social, Emotional and Mental Health Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and their families have identified social, emotional and mental health issues for some of our pupils. Currently 23% of children require additional support with 77% of these children are disadvantaged pupils.
6	Staff Development Discussions with teachers in their early teaching career as well as new subject leaders identify that further training and support is needed. As a result of school closures due to the pandemic, teachers/subject leaders have not had the same opportunities and experiences as other teachers/subject leaders who are further along in their career.

	Also, staff development is needed so that the next generation of leaders are developed. A distributed leadership model is the desired structure and this is not yet attainable given the situation above.
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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
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils. To reduce persistent absence, particularly amongst our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance from 2026/27 demonstrated by the overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 4% and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers continues to reduce with both groups matching or exceeding the national averages
To improve attainment and progress in KS2 in the core subjects for disadvantaged pupils.	Reading, Writing and Maths outcomes in 2026/2027 show that more than 60% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.
To improve reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils in KS1.	Reading outcomes in 2026/2027 show that more than 75% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard. More than 70% of disadvantaged pupils achieve a pass in the phonics screening check.
To improve speech, language and communication needs among the disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved receptive and expressive language among disadvantaged pupils from their entry levels. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, engagements with their peers, book scrutiny and on-going formative assessments. This will also result in improved summative outcomes.
To improve social, emotional and mental health for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2026/2027 evidenced through qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. Behaviour and attitudes in school will continue to be excellent.

To improve staff developmental opportunities.	Sustained improvement of the quality of teaching and learning evidenced through assessments, observations, pupil voice and staff surveys. Sustained development of staff and leaders.
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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: £45,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Individual 1:1 teaching for targeted children.	One to one tuition approaches can enable 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. The approach allows the teacher or tutor to focus exclusively on the needs of the learner and provide teaching that is closely matched to each pupil's understanding. Teaching and Learning Interventions One to One Tuition Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2, 3, 4, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £40,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted interventions focusing on disadvantaged pupils will be delivered by LSAs in KS1 and KS2. The interventions	Research which focuses on teaching assistants who provide one to one or small group targeted interventions shows a stronger positive benefit of between four and six additional months on average. Often interventions are based on a clearly specified approach which teaching assistants have been trained to deliver:	2

will focus on Maths, Reading, Writing and Grammar. LSAs will be delivering the therapies from Pixl. They will all be provided with effective training prior to starting the interventions.	Teaching Assistant Interventions Teaching & Learning Toolkit Education Endowment Foundation EEF	
Additional reading interventions targeted at KS1 disadvantaged pupils will be delivered by LSAs. Accurate assessments and gap analysis will be used to ensure interventions are appropriately matched to pupils' needs and pupils' progress will be regularly reviewed to ensure the support enhances their learning.	Schools should initially focus on ensuring they offer high quality in-class support for the whole class. However, even when excellent classroom teaching is in place, it is likely that a small but significant number of children will require additional targeted literacy support. There is consistent evidence that one-to-one and small group tutoring involving structured interventions supports children struggling with aspects of literacy: Literacy KS1 Education Evidence Guidance Report Education Endowment Foundation EEF	3
Speech therapy to be delivered by a speech therapist. The speech therapist will support children with SLCN and will make 1:1 speech and language recommendations. They will also provide staff training and whole	There is evidence to suggest that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to be behind their more advantaged peers in developing early language and speech skills, which may affect their school experience and learning later in their school lives. Given that oral language interventions can be used to provide additional support to pupils who are behind their peers in oral language development, the targeted use of approaches may support some disadvantaged pupils to catch up with peers, particularly when this is provided one-to-one:	2, 3, 4

school approaches that can be used. Designated LSA to continue speech therapy care plans and support teachers and LSAs to develop speech and language, working with the therapist.	Oral Language Intervention Teaching & Learning Toolkit Education Endowment Foundation EEF	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £191,590

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's - Improving School Attendance advice. This will involve training and release time for staff to develop and implement new procedures. This will also involve the continuing appointment of the Attendance Officer to improve attendance particularly for our disadvantaged pupils by communicating and providing additional support for vulnerable families.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence. Improving School Attendance DfE	1, 2, 3, 5
Professionally trained counsellors and play	Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health	1, 2, 3, 5

therapists will work with pupils and their families to provide professional support and guidance.	and wellbeing of their pupils, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their pupils. All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils, which includes: preventing impairment of children's health or development, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial: Mental health and behaviour in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)	
Provide additional pastoral support staff to support the emotional needs of children and their families (Family Support Mentor, Behaviour Support Mentor and Sensory and Nurture Lead)	Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their pupils. All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils, which includes preventing impairment of children's health or development, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial: Mental health and behaviour in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)	1, 2, 3, 5
Improve communication and interaction between the school and families so that this relationship is strengthened	Disadvantaged pupils are less likely to benefit from having a space to conduct home learning. Evidence also suggests that disadvantaged pupils 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	1, 2, 3, 5

	disadvantage, supporting parents to assist their children's learning or their self-regulation, as well as specific skills, such as reading Parental Engagement Teaching & Learning Toolkit Education Endowment Foundation EEF	
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Total budgeted cost: £285,640

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

Attendance and punctuality have been tracked throughout the year and procedures have been followed for persistent absence. Overall attendance for Pupil Premium children during this academic year was 88.5%, this is a slight decrease on the previous year (89.8%). Several families were supported by the Family Support Mentor and Attendance Officer throughout the academic year including sign posting to agencies who can support with finance, accommodation etc. Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings were organised to provide additional support where needed. Persistent absence has decreased over the year, however it still high at 39% for disadvantaged pupils.

By July 2026, more Pupil Premium children across the school were working at age related expectations compared to the baseline assessments in September 2025 for reading, writing and maths.

By July 2026, more Pupil Premium children in Year 6 were working at age related expectations compared to the baseline assessments in September 2025 for reading, writing and maths and the school exceeded national figures for disadvantaged combined.

A counsellor from Renew worked with six children one day per week and another counsellor worked with 8 children across a day and a half. The pastoral team collectively supported 92 children throughout the week.

Based on observations and pupil voice, children have expressed how they have found the sessions beneficial and have been given strategies they can use to support their own well-being and self-regulate their emotions. Staff have also observed positive changes within the classroom and on the playground resulting in less incidents involving these individuals. Incidents of difficult and dangerous behaviour involving Pupil Premium children have reduced over the year. There has been a huge reduction in fixed term suspensions from the previous year.

Staff have received regular training throughout the year which has had a positive impact on pupil well-being, safety and academic progress.

Homework has been set weekly using Purple Mash, Times Tables Rockstars and Spelling Shed with many children accessing it. E-safety lessons for children and newsletters for parents sent throughout the academic year have raised the profile of online safety. The use of the new Willows App has encouraged a greater degree of communication and there is now a 96% sign up. We will continue to raise the

interaction with these online platforms to continue to support homework, learning and communication.

Children who had Speech Therapy showed increased ability to pronounce letter sounds and spoken words. During this academic year, all children had made significant progress and there were several children who were discharged due to their progress.

By July 2026, more Pupil Premium children across KS2 were working at age related expectations compared to the baseline assessments in September 2025 for reading.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

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