The Free School Norwich 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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	178
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	17%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-2026
Date this statement was published	July 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Darren Webster
Pupil premium lead	Darren Webster
Governor / Trustee lead	Jaime Rix

Funding overview

Detail	Amount

Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£77,752
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*	£77,752

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At The Free School Norwich all members of staff and trustees accept responsibility for all pupils recognising that a number of pupils within the school population, some of whom are not eligible for pupil premium funding, may at any point during their school career require additional support and intervention.

We are committed to meeting our pupils' pastoral, social and academic needs in a nurturing environment. As with every child in our care, a child who is in receipt of the pupil premium is valued, respected and entitled to develop to their full potential. The ultimate objectives for our pupils who are in receipt of pupil premium are:

- **To Continue to Improve Attendance for Pupils in Receipt of Pupil Premium**

Our aim is to ensure that the attendance of pupils receiving pupil premium funding is at least in line with that of their peers. Regular attendance is essential for effective learning, yet current data shows that attendance among this group is lower than that of non-pupil premium pupils. Our strategy addresses this by:

- Supporting pupil and family well-being needs
- Providing engaging learning opportunities, including access to extra-curricular activities
- Utilizing our family support worker to develop tailored strategies that promote consistent attendance

- **Raising Outcomes for Pupils in Receipt of Pupil Premium**

We are committed to ensuring that pupils receiving pupil premium funding achieve outcomes across the curriculum that are at least in

line with their peers. Currently, 29% of these pupils have identified special educational needs, and some have been under the care of the Local Authority. We strive for excellent progress for all pupils by:

- Delivering high-quality teaching every day
- Providing additional targeted interventions through one-to-one and small-group sessions
- Leveraging the expertise of our existing staff to deliver these interventions effectively
- We also ensure the wellbeing needs of all pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding are met to ensure they are on track to make or exceed expected progress and attainment.

At The Free School Norwich we know children must be ready to learn by ensuring their personal, social, emotional and developmental needs are met. This has been particularly evident for children on entry to EYFS. As a Thrive School, emotional development is at the heart of our decision making when planning provision, arranging transition or working with parents and other agencies to support our pupils. We also recognise the importance of communication and interaction when identifying emotional gaps and quickly identify these needs on entry. This early intervention helps to remove these barriers sooner in the child's education. Lockdown has seen an increase in pupils' emotional and social needs that impact on learning with increases in both pupil and adult mental health and wellbeing needs.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 Attendance	The attendance for a significant minority (31%) of pupils in receipt of pupil premium is below that of peers and a greater proportion are classed as persistent absentees. While only 10% (4 children) of the total number of pupil premium

	children are considered to be persistent absentees, the remaining 21% of those children are considered to be at risk of persistent absence.
2 Outcomes	While there has been improvement, there is a small, key group of pupils in receipt of PP not making expected progress despite interventions.
3 Pastoral	Pupils' emotional well-being, social and behavioural needs affecting children being in a position to be able to make progress and their readiness to learn.
4 SEND	Some pupils who qualify for Pupil Premium funding have specific SEND needs and an increasing number of children need SALT or behavioural intervention.

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 oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment. KS1 Phonics results an increased number of children meet the expected standard For disadvantaged pupils to reach age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Phonics
Improve attainment for disadvantaged pupils writing and close gaps with peers.	Outcomes in writing at the end of KS2 are at least in line with national average and the gap will be narrowed. Teacher assessments, will show that children are making good progress and that gaps are narrowing.

Improved maths attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2.	KS2 maths outcomes in 2025/26 show that more than 50% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2025/26 demonstrated by: • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • Impact of 'Time for You' Sessions • SHEU Survey 2023/24 a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils

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: £9250

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Writing will become a key priority for 2025-2026. The implementation will include the deployment of teaching assistants to deliver small group teaching. Developing a consistent approach	See Improving Writing assessments in Key Stage 2: • A new cross-curricular writing curriculum is in place and mapped across all subjects. • Teachers are using *Talk for Writing* strategies consistently in both English and foundation subjects.	2,4

to the teaching of English across school based on individual class interests where appropriate and following the teaching sequence model with reading and writing phases.	• Pupil writing in non-English subjects shows improved structure, vocabulary, and coherence. • Assessment data shows measurable improvement in writing attainment across the curriculum. Pupil voice reflects increased engagement and enjoyment in writing tasks. See EEF Toolkit : High Quality Teaching https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-forschools/schoolimprovement-planning/1-high-qualityteaching The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. • Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high quality teaching is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them.	
Continue to review current provision alongside the guidance: 'Special Educational Needs in Mainstream,' for the teaching of maths for SEND pupils (Led by SLT)	See EEF research guidance report: Special Educational Needs in Mainstream School published in March 2020. • **High quality teaching** • **Provision mapping**: Current support includes in-class scaffolding, TA support, and short, skills-based interventions. Variation exists in **use of manipulatives**, **pre-teaching of vocabulary**, and **task design** at the point of teaching. • **Pupil & parent voice**: SEND pupils report maths tasks sometimes feeling "too long" or "too many steps," and parents request clearer communication about strategies used at home. • **Pupil progress:** Children are seen to make progress from their individual starting points at least in line with their peers.	2, 4

Specialist training for a key member of staff in order to allow them to lead THRIVE and wellbeing strategies throughout the school	• Thrive is a powerful and proactive approach which helps to prevent mental health problems from developing. • Thrive results in lower rates of referrals to external agencies and cost savings in terms of interventions and staff time. • As well as benefitting children and young people, Thrive enhances staff wellbeing and aids job satisfaction and retention. • Thrive improves attendance, attainment and behaviour and decreases exclusions and behavioural incidents.	1, 2, 3, 4
Train an additional member of staff to deliver THRIVE activities throughout the school	• More children will receive THRIVE sessions and develop the emotional and social skills to access the academic curriculum. • Children will report on becoming more resilient, will feel safe enough to mistakes and will develop skills to resolve social issues.	3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 59,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Precision Teaching to be deployed across the school	Improve spelling accuracy for targeted groups of learners in KS1 and KS2 https://www.ucl.ac.uk/educational-psychology/resources/CS1Murton15-18.pdf	4

Establish small group maths intervention for disadvantaged pupils falling behind age-related expectations	**Targeted teaching on specific gaps** • Assessment can identify precise misconceptions (e.g., place value, number bonds, fractions). • Teaching can focus tightly on these gaps, rather than covering the whole curriculum again. **Increased teacher–pupil interaction** • Fewer pupils means more checking for understanding, immediate feedback, and correction. • Pupils have more opportunities to ask questions and verbalise their thinking. **Improved confidence and engagement** • A safer environment for pupils who may be reluctant to speak up in whole-class settings. • Success in a small group can rebuild self-belief and reduce maths anxiety. **Better pace and differentiation** • Teaching can move at a pace appropriate to the group, not the whole class. • Content and examples can be closely matched to pupils' starting points. **Stronger foundations for future learning** • Focusing on core number, calculation and reasoning skills helps pupils access later curriculum content. • Reduces the risk of gaps compounding over time. **Evidence of impact (EEF and research)** • The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) finds that well-structured small-group tuition (especially when led by a	2, 3, 4

	teacher or trained paraprofessional) has a positive impact, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. • Short, frequent sessions (e.g., 3× per week) are associated with better outcomes. **Opportunity to promote mathematical talk** • Small groups make it easier to use dialogic teaching (explaining methods, justifying answers). • Helps pupils develop reasoning and language, which often lag for disadvantaged pupils. **Better behaviour and focus** • Fewer distractions and more adult attention help maintain focus. • Clear routines and expectations can be more easily reinforced. **Stronger relationships with adults** • Regular small-group time builds trust and understanding of each pupil's needs and motivations. • Adults can spot non-academic barriers (confidence, attendance, wellbeing) more easily. **Efficient use of resources for disadvantaged pupils** • Pupil Premium funding can be directed to a high-impact approach. • Intervention can be scheduled to protect core classroom learning (e.g., during non-core subjects or tutor time).	
Utilize an additional teacher in Upper Key Stage 2 for 'bespoke' individual/ small group intervention in maths	**Rapid closing of specific gaps in maths**	2, 3, 4

	• Bespoke teaching lets the additional teacher target precise misconceptions (e.g. fractions, place value, reasoning), rather than reteaching whole units. • Pupils get immediate feedback and more practice, so gaps close more quickly and securely. **Improved outcomes in UKS2 and at KS2 SATs** • Small-group/1:1 intervention in Year 5–6 boosts accuracy, fluency and confidence, directly supporting end-of-key-stage results. • Targeting borderline and vulnerable learners can move more pupils to expected and greater depth standards. **Increased confidence and maths resilience** • Pupils feel safer to "have a go" and ask questions in a small group. This reduces maths anxiety and builds a growth mindset. • Success in the intervention feeds back into greater participation and risk-taking in whole-class lessons. **Better access to the main classroom curriculum** • When foundational skills are strengthened in intervention, pupils can keep up with new learning rather than constantly catching up. • This reduces the need for in-lesson differentiation that can isolate or "label" pupils. **More efficient use of class teacher time** • With an additional teacher taking targeted groups, the class teacher can focus teaching more sharply for the rest of the class.	

	• This leads to better pacing and challenge for all ability groups. **Strong diagnostic assessment and tracking** • An intervention teacher can regularly assess small groups, identify patterns in errors, and feed this back to class teachers and leaders. • This strengthens whole-school understanding of maths barriers and informs curriculum tweaks. **Support for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils** • Disadvantaged, SEND or EAL pupils gain structured, consistent support that might not be available at home. • Over time, this helps narrow attainment gaps and improves pupils' longer-term life chances. **Positive impact on behaviour and engagement** • Pupils who normally struggle in maths experience success, improving self-esteem and reducing off-task or avoidant behaviour. • Better engagement in maths lessons contributes to a calmer, more focused classroom climate.	
Effective deployment of staff, Teaching Assistants to support key children and year groups. Targeted Interventions led by additional p/t teacher in Year 6. Teaching Assistants timetable reevaluated to deliver pastoral groups, positive play at playtimes, outdoor learning, settling child into school in the morning.	**Accelerated progress for key pupils (including Year 6)** • A part-time teacher delivering targeted interventions in Year 6 allows focused teaching on specific gaps in reading, writing and maths. • Smaller group/1:1 teaching leads to more rapid progress, better preparation for KS2 SATs and a smoother transition to secondary school. **More effective use of Teaching Assistant capacity**	2, 4

	• Re-timetabling TAs so they are deployed where need is greatest (key children, key year groups, intervention slots) ensures their time has maximum impact on learning, not just "extra pairs of hands". • Roles and responsibilities become clearer, improving consistency and accountability. **Stronger pastoral support and behaviour** • TA-led pastoral groups and positive play at playtimes support children with social, emotional and behavioural needs. • This reduces low-level disruption in class, supports better relationships between pupils, and makes the wider school environment calmer and safer. **Improved readiness to learn each day** • TAs helping to settle children into school in the morning (meet and greet, check-ins, routines) supports attendance, punctuality and emotional regulation. • Children start lessons calmer and more focused, increasing learning time and reducing early-morning behaviour incidents. **Enhanced inclusion for vulnerable pupils** • Targeted TA work (e.g. with SEND, disadvantaged or anxious pupils) enables these children to access the curriculum more fully and remain in class. • Tailored support can reduce exclusions, improve engagement and build pupils' confidence. **Richer curriculum and engagement through outdoor learning**	

	• TA-supported outdoor learning provides hands-on experiences that deepen understanding, especially for practical learners. • This can improve motivation, attendance and enjoyment of school, particularly for children who struggle in traditional classroom settings. **Better staff collaboration and consistency** • Planned deployment encourages teachers, TAs and the additional teacher to plan together, share assessment information and review impact. • This leads to more consistent expectations and approaches for key pupils across the school day. **Clearer evidence of impact for leaders and trustees** • Structured timetables, targeted groups and defined roles make it easier to monitor outcomes (progress data, behaviour logs, attendance, pupil voice). • Leaders can demonstrate that support staff funding is being used strategically to raise attainment and improve wellbeing.	

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

Budgeted cost: £ 9500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed

Embed Arbor package to improve communication and support reporting on absence in school	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance/toolkit-for-schools-communicating-with-families-to-support-attendance#:~:text=save%20you%20time.-,Text%20messages,rates%20by%204%20percentage%20points • Weekly reports for absences to facilitate tracking. • Warning letters sent out to parents. • Attendance information from Insight discussed with parents at parent evenings.	1
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's guidance on https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance This will involve training and release time for staff to develop and implement new procedures working alongside appointed Family Support Workers and Attendance Officers	Embedding the DfE's *Working together to improve school attendance* guidance, with time and training for staff and clear roles for Family Support Workers and Attendance Officers, brings several concrete benefits: **Higher and more sustainable attendance** • Consistent systems (early identification, monitoring, follow-up) reduce persistent absence. • Clear roles mean quicker response to emerging issues before they become entrenched. **Earlier, more effective support for families** • Family Support Workers and Attendance Officers can work proactively rather than reactively. • Structured conversations with parents/carers identify barriers (health, transport, routines, anxiety) and address them sooner. **More consistent practice across the school** • Training ensures all staff apply attendance policies in the same fair, transparent way. • Pupils and families receive the same messages and expectations from every adult, reducing confusion and complaints. **Stronger relationships with parents and carers** • The guidance emphasises working *with* families, not "doing to" them.	1

	• Regular, supportive contact improves trust and makes difficult conversations about attendance easier and more productive. **Improved safeguarding and wellbeing** • Better recording, monitoring and follow-up mean risks linked to poor attendance are spotted earlier. • Attendance is seen as a key part of pupils' welfare, not just a data target. **Clearer leadership, accountability and use of data** • Defined roles for leaders, governors, attendance staff and class teachers ensure no gaps in responsibility. • High-quality data tracking helps target interventions at the right pupils and evaluate what works. **Stronger school culture of aspiration and belonging** • A whole-school focus on attendance reinforces messages about the value of education. • Pupils feel that their presence is noticed and matters, supporting engagement and behaviour. **Better alignment with external partners** • Shared procedures make it easier to work with the Local Authority, health, social care and early help services. • The school is better placed to evidence its work if legal or formal processes are needed. **Compliance with national expectations and Ofsted focus** • Using DfE guidance shows that the school meets current expectations for attendance practice. • Ofsted expects robust systems, leadership oversight, and work with families; embedding the guidance helps demonstrate this.	

Provide increased opportunities for children to access more cultural capital eg. Theatre, museum, art gallery visits	**Stronger language and communication** • New experiences give children fresh vocabulary and ideas. • They have more to talk, read and write about, which supports literacy. • Helps close language gaps between children from different backgrounds. **Better understanding of the curriculum** • Visits and real-life experiences make abstract topics concrete (e.g., a castle visit brings history to life). • Children remember concepts more deeply because they can link them to something they've seen or done. • Supports cross-curricular learning (art linked to history, science in nature, etc.). **Higher aspiration and motivation** • Seeing workplaces, universities, theatres or professionals broadens children's sense of "what's possible". • Children can picture future careers and roles they didn't know existed. • This often increases effort and engagement in class. **Social and emotional development** • New situations help children develop confidence, independence and resilience. • Working in groups on trips or projects builds cooperation, listening and empathy. • Cultural stories and histories help children understand emotions and moral choices. **Wider world knowledge** • Children learn about different places, times and cultures beyond their immediate environment. • They begin to understand diversity, traditions and perspectives different from their own. • This supports tolerance, respect and a sense of global citizenship. **Improved creativity and imagination**	

	• Exposure to art, music, drama, and stories stimulates creative thinking. • Children learn new ways to express themselves (drawing, acting, composing, designing). • Creative skills link to problem-solving and flexible thinking across subjects. **Enhanced sense of identity and belonging** • When children see their own culture, language or history reflected, it affirms their identity. • Learning about many cultures helps them see that everyone has a story and place in society. • Builds pride in their own background and respect for others'. **Bridging disadvantage** • Schools can provide experiences some children might not get at home (theatre, museums, travel). • This helps reduce inequality in knowledge, confidence and cultural awareness. • Over time, this "bank" of experiences supports better educational and life outcomes. **Stronger family and community links** • Cultural events, visits and projects can involve parents and local organisations. • This strengthens school–home partnerships and children's sense of being part of a community.	

Total budgeted cost: £ £77,752

Part B: Review of 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.

At the time of assessment there were 46 disadvantaged pupils, 18 disadvantaged pupils also had a special educational need and/or disability..

For Reference:

Year Group	Number of Children eligible for Pupil Premium
R	3
1	10
2	7
3	3
4	8
5	6
6	9

Outcome 1: Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.
Success Criteria Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment. KS1 Phonics results an increased number of children meet the expected standard

Evidence and impact, headlines Numbers of disadvantaged pupils meeting age-related expectations

	Reading	Writing	Phonics
R	2/3	0/3	
1	5/10	0/10	8/10
2	5/7	3/7	6/7 resits
3	3/3	3/3	
4	5/8	1/8	

5	4/6	1/6	
6	3/9	3/9	

Outcome 2: Improved reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils.
Success Criteria: KS2 reading outcomes in 2024/25 show that more than 50% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard. KS1 Phonics results an increased number of children meet the expected standard For disadvantaged pupils to reach age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Phonics

Evidence and impact, headlines Numbers of disadvantaged pupils meeting age-related expectations:

	Reading	**Phonics**
R	2/3	
1	5/10	8/10

2	5/7	
3	3/3	
4	5/8	
5	4/6	
6	3/9	

- **Outcome 3:** KS2 maths outcomes in 2024/25 show that more than 50% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.

- **Success Criteria:**
- Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2024/25 demonstrated by:
- qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations
- Impact of 'Time for You' Sessions
- a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils

Evidence and impact, headlines Numbers of disadvantaged pupils meeting age-related expectations

- In 2024/25, 33% Pupil Premium children achieved expected standard at the end of KS2. 44% of this cohort were working below the expected standard.
- 31% of all children Pupil Premium children achieved the expected standard in maths.
- 18 pupils in this cohort of 46 are SEND.

• **Outcome 4:** To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.
• **Success Criteria:** • Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2024/25 demonstrated by: • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • SHEU Survey 2023/24 • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils

Evidence and impact, headlines Numbers of disadvantaged pupils meeting age-related expectations:

Pupil Voice:

Pupil Voice is central to measuring the impact of our curriculum and maintaining a safe and nurturing environment for pupils. Surveys are carried out termly and have different focuses. Our monitoring cycle also incorporates pupil voice using questions from the Anna Freud survey for Pupil Wellbeing so we know the outcomes are strong.

Sheu Survey 2024/25:

Each Year children take part on the SHEU survey which captures information about health and wellbeing and lifestyle for children across our locality and nationally. Our children showed a good awareness of where to go if they needed help with mental health. They outperformed other children in understanding online safety and had a strong understanding of the impact of a healthy lifestyle.

Participation in Enrichment opportunities:

Pupil Premium children continue to miss out on enrichment opportunities outside of school. We continue to set aside money to enable disadvantaged children to access trips and visits that require additional cost.