

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Ferns Primary Academy

Before completing this template, read the Education Endowment Foundation's [guide to the pupil premium](#) and DfE's [pupil premium guidance for school leaders](#), which includes the 'menu of approaches'. It is for school leaders to decide what activity to spend their pupil premium on, within the framework set out by the menu.

All schools that receive pupil 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.

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	84
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	29.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2024 – 2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Ed Gittins
Pupil premium lead	Ed Gittins
Governor / Trustee lead	Ian Ayre

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£54,760
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>	£54,760

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

The Ferns is located in the Farnborough, in the north-east of Hampshire. The school is a one form entry primary with mixed year 1/2, 4/5 and 5/6 classes. Intake is primarily from the local catchment area with children from both the Fernhill and Cherrywood catchment areas. These are identified as being highly deprived areas. Many of the children who also come to us are recently arrived in the country, some claiming refugee status and staying at a local hotel, others arriving with families who have care sector visas.

Our goal is to ensure that our learning community develops the skills and mindset to thrive and take on the world as respectful, kind, well rounded citizens. We aim for all children, regardless of their socio-economic background or experiences, to achieve positive outcomes academically, socially and emotionally. We aim for all children to develop our school values of aspiration, integrity, respect, positivity and resilience by building resilience and self-esteem so that all children can thrive and barriers are eliminated. The intention is to close the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and the rest of the cohort so that progress is accelerated. Our strategy is underpinned by this moral purpose and is a whole school approach.

We aim to achieve our goal through high quality teaching across the school, where all staff make good use of assessment to ensure that gaps are closed. Research shows that this is the most important factor in the achievement of all pupils, especially those from areas with a high deprivation indicator. We want all children to receive and access our ambitious curriculum. We intend to provide targeted ELSA and wider social and emotional support through a range of personalised and whole school activities. Enrichment activities will be embedded in the curriculum to raise aspirations and develop children's understanding of the world.

We recognise that there is established link between the home learning environment at all ages and children's performance at school and therefore aim to engage with and support our parents and families in supporting their children.

We have identified that attendance is a high priority. Only when children are in school and accessing the curriculum, will we be able to achieve our goal to remove barriers and achieve positive outcomes.

All staff will be responsible for ensuring all our work through the pupil premium will be aimed at accelerating progress, moving children to at least age-related expectations.

We will:

Provide high quality teaching, effective feedback and targeted interventions

Professional development for staff to ensure high quality teaching
Improve oracy and vocabulary skills
Improve access to wider opportunities, for example by paying for activities, educational visits and residentials if appropriate. Ensuring children have first-hand experiences to use in their learning in the classroom.
Provide focused well-being support for all and targeted support where needed to meet the social and emotional needs of children
Develop effective home school links so that all are engaged in the learning

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	On entry and in school data indicate language and communication skills amongst disadvantaged pupils are significantly behind age related expectations.
2	On entry data indicates low attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas and in particular with social and emotional, and literacy skills
3	More frequent behaviour difficulties and SEMH need; low self-esteem, poor resilience and lack of support from home
4	A number of our pupil premium cohort have attendance and punctuality issues
5	Social and Emotional and mental health needs in family lives and Social Service involvement which impacts on their well-being and learning. The pandemic resulted in a greater number of children needing support with their mental health and an increase in the number of referrals made to outside agencies. We need to foster a positive attitude to learning, positive self-esteem, good levels of resilience and emotional intelligence.
6	Deprivation in the local area increases the barriers and challenges faced by children and their families. They have more limited life experiences and aspirations. There are also challenges to physical health as a result of food poverty.

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
Attainment levels improved and more in line with national expectations for Reading, writing and maths	<p>More children will achieve age related expectations.</p> <p>All teachers confident using a mastery approach in maths</p> <p>All teachers using a Talk for Writing approach</p> <p>All staff confident in the teaching of phonics (ELS) and reading</p> <p>Progress is rapid and is evidenced in books, observations and ongoing assessment. Improved combined % ARE / SS for pupils</p>
Improve phonics and reading; gaps in language and communication skills minimised rapidly in Year R	<p>Classrooms are a language rich environment and high-quality teaching supports oracy and vocabulary development.</p> <p>Children will read with greater confidence and reading for pleasure will be promoted.</p> <p>Year R data for disadvantaged children demonstrates gaps are narrowed</p>
Children become resilient learners able to persevere at challenging tasks and able to recognise and appreciate their effort and progress	<p>Children speak positively about their learning, identifying characteristics of good learners and are able to identify their strengths and areas for development</p> <p>Children value their work and this is evidenced in presentation</p>
Attendance and punctuality are above expectations and children arrive ready to learn.	Attendance rate for all groups is 96%+
Teaching and learning occurs with few interruptions due to behaviour	Behaviour in school is very good with few incidents of low-level disruption
Pupils emotional needs are supported so that they are able to engage in their learning and behavioural incidents are reduced	ELSA and nurturing provision will build self-esteem and promote positive attitudes to learning. Families are supported and links fostered through Family Support Workers, Kite Hub and parental support
Children have a greater understanding of the world around them enriched by a variety of experiences	Curriculum includes a wide range of opportunities for enrichment including visits, visitors and experiences.

	<p>Additional opportunities for swimming lessons are available for Year 2 and above.</p> <p>Children are excited by the curriculum (evidenced through pupil book studies.)</p>
<p>Attainment levels improved and more in line with national expectations for Reading, writing and maths</p>	<p>More children will achieve age related expectations.</p> <p>All teachers confident using a mastery approach in maths</p> <p>All teachers using a Talk for Writing approach</p> <p>All staff confident in the teaching of phonics (ELS) and reading</p> <p>Progress is rapid and is evidenced in books, observations and ongoing assessment. Improved combined % ARE / SS for pupils</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: £11,450

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><i>Consistent approach to phonics embedded across the school (ELS)</i></p>	<p>EEF guidance on literacy development - https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/literacy-ks-1</p> <p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Strong evidence to suggest oral language interventions have a high impact</p>	<p>1</p>

<i>Reading training (PD meetings)</i>	EEF guidance on literacy development KS2 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/literacy-ks2 Recommendation 2 & 3	1
<i>Development of high quality dialogue</i>	EEF guidance on literacy development KS2 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/literacy-ks2 Recommendation 1	1
<i>Improve progress and attainment in mathematics</i>	EEF guidance on Improving Mathematics in Early Years and KS1 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/early-maths https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/maths-ks-2-3 EEF guidance on Improving Mathematics in Early Years, KS1 and KS2 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/literacy-ks-1 All Recommendations The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the NCETM, drawing on evidence based approaches:	3
<i>Develop Talk for Writing approach to writing</i>	Identify training needs. Writing planning will be completed by staff trained in TfW approach. Director of Education to oversee development of curriculum and implementation of writing approach. Evidence indicates collaborative activities that provide opportunities to learn/hear language often also provide opportunities for wider learning through talk. Skills such as social awareness, relationship skills, and problem solving are developed. The writing scheme selected builds on these principles	1,2,3
<i>Improve Parental Engagement - Maths / English packs</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teachinglearning-toolkit/parental-engagement EEF guidance on effectiveness of Parental Engagement Strategies The EEF toolkit shows that Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps. Promote attendance of families at parent evenings so that they can fully engage with the learning of their child (Phone calls and additional meetings)	5

& workshops; IT skills workshops		
High quality teaching & feedback marking	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/feedback Ofsted Inspection Framework Work within school and across the Trust will ensure that all staff are confident in what constitutes high quality teaching. Director of Education to oversee PD for staff and quality of education. Role of Teaching and Learning lead developed and given high profile. Evidence indicates that this is an essential lever to help improve pupil attainment. High quality teaching ensures long-term retention of knowledge.	2,3
Support staff will increase skill level to support children and deliver interventions	EEF Effective Professional Development and Making the Best use of Teaching Assistants High quality staff PD is essential and is planned to be delivered by the Trust. Support staff to attend training sessions, focused on specific areas that have been identified to support the children they work with.	2, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £12,260

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Training staff to deliver targeted	Oral language interventions Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF There is a strong evidence base that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high quality	1.2

interventions: NIM, Number sense (or equivalent); for speech and language – Elklan and Talk Boost	classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading:	
Implementation of KS2 ELS programme	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/literacy-ks2 Recommendation 5	2
LSA support (closing the gap) and booster groups	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidancereports/teaching-assistants Evidence shows a positive impact of interventions delivered through the targeted deployment of LSAs, where they are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals. Also, positive impact of small group tuition	1,2,3
Team Teach training for key staff	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teachinglearning-toolkit/behaviourinterventions Staff will have the confidence and skills to de-escalate situations and support children in their self-regulation.	3

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

Budgeted cost: £31,050

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number (s) addressed
ELSA provision	EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk	3,4,5

<i>and Thrive Provision</i>	Having regular ELSA input helps children to develop self-awareness, regulate their emotions and be able to cope with social and emotional challenges that may affect their learning. Children learn better in school if their emotional needs are met. Evidence from the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit suggests that effective ELSA sessions can lead to learning gains of +4 months over the course of a year.	
<i>Range of after school clubs, such as judo and dance</i>	https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/sites/default/files/files/resbr3-final.pdf Nuffield Research into After school clubs found taking part in after school clubs was thought to have a range of positive benefits. These included providing access to enriching new experiences, providing opportunities for children to succeed, fostering self-esteem and confidence, supporting the academic curriculum, improving fitness, providing opportunities to socialise, as well as opportunities for relaxation and enjoyment.	3,5
<i>Welfare Officer to monitor and improve attendance</i>	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/just-one-day-off-can-hamperchildrenslife-chances Research shows that attendance is an important factor in pupil achievement. Pupils who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than pupils who do not have regular attendance. Targeting of PA.	5
<i>Family Support worker involvement and parenting classes</i>	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/just-one-day-off-can-hamperchildrenslife-chances The EEF toolkit shows that Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps.	5
<i>Trips, visitors, experiences (including Y6 residential)</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teachinglearning-toolkit/arts-participation Whilst there has been no extensive research on the impact of school trips, there are many reasons to ensure all pupils have access to learning opportunities & workshops beyond school. School trips are a way of enhancing the learning process and broadening our pupils' life experiences.	1,3,5
<i>Breakfast Club provision (inc. breakfast)</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projectsandevaluation/projects/magic-breakfast?utm_source=/projectsandevaluation/projects/magic-breakfast&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_search&search_term=brea kfs EEF Magic Breakfast evaluation found that supporting schools to run a free of charge, universal breakfast club before school delivered an average of 2 months' additional progress for pupils in Key Stage 1. Evidence also suggests pupil behaviour, as	3, 5

	measured by a teacher survey, improved in breakfast clubs schools.	
<i>Behaviour and Anti bullying training</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teachinglearning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions EEF research indicates both targeted interventions and universal approaches have positive overall effects (+ 4 months). PD provided for staff	3,5
<i>Subscribe to Hampshire library service and develop use of school library</i>	As some children have limited resources at home, this gives access to a wide range of current books (including online) which promote a love of reading. https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/understandingimpact-and-characteristics-school-libraries-and-readingspaces/ The review found that there was evidence of an association between school library use and reading attainment. For children receiving free school meals, library users in this group showed higher reading enjoyment, increased reading and writing for pleasure, and tended to read and write a greater variety of material relative to non-library users.	1
<i>Contingency fund for identified issues (e.g. cool milk, uniform)</i>	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	5

Total budgeted cost: £54,760

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Evidence continues to show a dramatic improvement in behaviour.			
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total number of suspensions	60	74	40
Suspensions have been dramatically reduced in the last 3-year cycle, and internal data is shown below.			

The school had its OFSTED inspection in October 2025 and was found to be 'Good' in all areas. The report states:

'This school is improving rapidly. There is an absolute determination that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will achieve their best. Since the previous inspection, the school has made many positive changes to the way it works. All members of staff appreciate these changes. Support for pupils with SEND is well considered. The school identifies pupils' additional needs precisely. Effective partnerships with parents and carers and other organisations ensure that these pupils get the extra support that they need.'

Although still below national average, outcomes for pupil premium children rose at the end of KS2 nearly tripled in 2024/ 2025- from 25% combined to 67% combined. This puts The Ferns at nearly 20% above national average.

School disadvantaged compared to national disadvantaged		
School	National	National distribution banding
19%	46%	Below (sig-)
67%	47%	Small cohort
25%	46%	Small cohort
7%	44%	Below (sig-)

For reading, writing and maths, there was a similar improvement in KS2 outcomes, placing the school again above national average. While the three-year trend is still far from where we would like it to be, the trend is of an upward trajectory.

School disadvantaged compared to national disadvantaged

School	National	National distribution banding
38%	62%	Below (sig-)
67%	63%	Small cohort
25%	62%	Small cohort
36%	60%	Below (non-sig)

School disadvantaged compared to national disadvantaged

School	National	National distribution banding
24%	59%	Below (sig-)
67%	59%	Small cohort
25%	58%	Small cohort
14%	58%	Below (sig-)

School disadvantaged compared to national disadvantaged

School	National	National distribution banding
33%	60%	Below (sig-)
67%	61%	Small cohort
25%	59%	Small cohort
29%	59%	Below (sig-)

MTC outcomes are also on an upward trend for all pupils, including Pupil Premium children, as identified by the IDSR.

Year	Cohort	School	National	National distribution banding	Trend	Year group context
3-year	41	20.3	20.6	Close to average (non-sig)	Not applicable	Not applicable
2025	15	22.5	21.0	Above (non-sig)	No sig change	High - FSM, High - SEN
2024	15	19.3	20.6	Below (non-sig)	No sig change	High - SEN, Low - Stability
2023	11	18.2	20.2	Below (non-sig)	Not available	-

There is a similar upward trend for year 1 phonics screening, the school now sits at well above national average.

Year	Cohort	School	National	National distribution banding	Trend	Year group context
3-year	37	57%	80%	Below (sig-)	Not applicable	Not applicable
2025	15	87%	80%	Above (non-sig)	No sig change	-
2024	11	45%	80%	Below (sig-)	No sig change	High - SEN
2023	11	27%	79%	Below (sig-)	Not available	High - FSM, High - SEN, Low - Stability

In 2024/25, the curriculum for all year groups included at least one external visit and pupil premium children were enabled to attend trips, with financial support where needed. This included the Year 6 residential trip in January 2025. Pupil premium children were also invited to join in with after-school clubs and activities, such as swimming and Boogie Pumps. Previously, all children were not able to participate. Financial support was given to families in need and where transport was not available to alternative provision. We were also able to support our Pupil Premium children to attend a variety of community focused events, such as litter picking, fence painting and attending the local council offices. As a result of these activities, our school was awarded the Hart and Rushmoor Community School of the year 2025 award.

There is a free breakfast club for all children daily from 8 to 8.35am. There is also a free after school club between 3.15 and 4pm for all pupils.

Attendance rates for disadvantaged pupil rose from 84.8% in 2023/ 24 to 88.4% in 2024/ 25. Within the context of having very low pupil numbers, this is a notable improvement but clearly there is still work to do to catch up with the non-disadvantaged children with an attendance of 94%. Welfare and attendance officers have worked, and will continue to work, with families to see improvement. As a trust, all academies now have an attendance champion who works alongside SLT to ensure attendance systems and processes are maintained.

Year	Cohort	School	National
2024/25 (2 term)	32	88.4%	92.4%
2023/24 (3 term)	37	84.8%	92.0%
2022/23 (3 term)	52	85.8%	91.6%

Parent conference sessions were attended by all pupil premium families. Additional meetings were arranged if they were not able to attend initially.

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
TTRS	Maths Circle
Nessy	Nessy Learning
IXL	IXL learning
Oxford Owls online	Oxford University Press
ELS	Oxford University Press

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**

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

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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.