# Pupil premium strategy statement – Bethersden Primary School – 2025-2028

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged children. 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 | Bethersden Primary School |
| Number of children in school | 117 |
| Proportion (%) of children eligible for pupil premium funding | 32% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3-year plans are recommended)** | 2025-28 |
| Date this statement was published | December 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | December 2026 |
| Statement authorised by | Rebecca Heaton<br>Headteacher |
| Pupil premium lead | Rebecca Heaton |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Emily Upton and Gina Potter |

## Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|---|---|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £51,572 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable) | £0 |
| **Total budget for this academic year** | £51,572 |

| | |
|---|---|
| If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year | N/A |

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including good or better progress for those who are already high attainers. We recognise that, with the current cost of living crisis, there are other children within our school who face similar challenges. The activities we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not. High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers. Our approach is responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we:

- Provide children with an enriched and varied curriculum which provides opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to attain a rounded view of the world
- Ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
- Act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- Anticipate needs such as Speech and Language and pro-actively screen all children in Reception.
- Adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve
- Give pupils the best possible start with targeted support and smaller classes where possible
- Provide all children with high quality teaching
- Use small intervention groups to target additional needs in pupils to help close the attainment gap between different pupils in school

## Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|---|---|
| 1 | Assessments, observations, and discussions with children indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged children. In turn, this leads to a lack of understanding of the wider-world which is required to underpin their learning journey. Significant numbers are below age-related expectations in both reading and writing across all year groups. These are evident from Reception through to KS2 and, in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged children than their peers. |
| 2 | Parental lack of engagement with school. Some of our PP Pupils join the school significantly below the starting points of their Non-PP peers. Some of our pupils have lacked the opportunities to experience early enriching experiences. This sometimes results in them having a less rounded view of the world. |
| 3 | Assessments and observations with children and discussions with RWI teachers suggest disadvantaged children generally have greater difficulties with phonics than their peers. In 2025, 69.2% of the cohort achieved the required mark in the PSC compared to 50% of children who are disadvantaged which was below the national average for this cohort. This negatively impacts their development as readers. |
| 4 | Internal and external assessments indicate that attainment among disadvantaged children is significantly below that of non-disadvantaged children. |
| 5 | Some of our PP Pupils have struggled with mental wellbeing. This impacts on their academic achievement. |
| 6 | Our analysis shows some disadvantaged children and families need additional support to secure and sustain better punctuality and attendance. Our data shows that attendance is lower for children entitled to pupil premium funding compared to those not. |
| 7 | Some of our PP Pupils struggle to engage with learning due to poor concentration, poor self-motivation, difficulties with behaviour for learning and low levels of aspiration. |

## 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 improve oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged children by providing a language-rich curriculum for all children, thus increasing understanding of the wider world. | Assessments and observations will indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged children. This will be evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment. |
| To improve reading attainment among disadvantaged children. All disadvantaged children leave Bethersden at age related expectation for reading | Improved phonics attainment among disadvantaged children by providing intensive support in small groups and one to one with the aim to supporting children to catch up with their peers.<br><br>KS2 reading outcomes between 2025-28, will on average show that more than 65% of disadvantaged children meet the expected standard. |
| To improve writing attainment for disadvantaged children at the end of KS2, through introducing handwriting lessons throughout the school, to develop automaticity in writing. | KS2 writing outcomes in 2025-28, on average will show that more than 60% of disadvantaged children meet the expected standard. |
| To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all children in our school, particularly our disadvantaged children. | Sustained high levels of wellbeing will be demonstrated by:<br>• qualitative data from child voice, child and parent surveys and teacher observations<br>• a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged children |

| | |
|---|---|
| To achieve and sustain improved punctuality and attendance for all children, particularly our disadvantaged children. | Sustained high attendance will be demonstrated by:<br>• the overall attendance rate for all children being more than 96%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged children and their non-disadvantaged peers being no more than 1%.<br>• the percentage of all children who are persistently absent being below 5% and the figure among disadvantaged children being no more than 1% lower than their peers. |

## Activity in this academic year- 2025-2026

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: £47,000

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge Number (s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| A class size of maximum of 20 in EYFS (our cohort with the highest % of PP- 61%) with additional adult support (1 teacher + 2 TAs.<br>1 TA will be NELI trained (Nuffield Early Language Intervention)<br><br>(Teacher- £21K, TA, £26K) | Smaller classes impact on children's progress. Research clearly shows that rapid intervention in the early stages of primary school provides pupils with the best opportunities to succeed. Smaller classes allow adults to work more closely with those children who need extra support. | 1, 3, 4 |
| Letterjoin will be introduced and embedded as a systematic programme to develop handwriting across the school. | Teaching handwriting and spelling (transcription) from the reception year is crucial to ensure that these skills become automatic for children. This will free up their working memory for composition. (Writing Framework, 2025) | 4 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Accelerate progress in KS1 and KS2 in Reading, Writing and Maths.<br>Continue to use Accelerated Reader, Spelling Shed, TT Rockstars / Numbots and Vipers for pupils, providing support towards the teaching of spelling, number fluency and guided reading as well as homework opportunities | Many of our pupils continue to struggle with their reading skills, particularly inference and deduction. Triangulation has identified that the strong teaching of reading is essential in ensuring all pupils will be secondary ready at the end of Year 6. | 3 and 4. |
| All High Prior Attaining Pupil Premium children achieve GDS in reading, writing and/or maths<br>All teachers and TAs are aware of their pupil premium children and their different levels of prior attainment.<br>Ensure pitch and challenge of whole school curriculum is sufficient to fully extend and deepen the learning of high prior- ability pupil premium children | Internal and external data shows limited conversion of high prior-attaining pupil premium children into GDS | 3, 4 and 7. |
| To introduce NFER tests in Years 4 to 6, to identify gaps in understanding, so that teaching can be adapted accordingly. | The school currently relies heavily on formative data- summative data will offer more depth and accuracy in assessment. | 3 and 4. |

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

Budgeted cost: £4500

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| 1:1 tuition of targeted LAC pupils to ensure they are working at the appropriate level. | The government has recognised that highly targeted tutoring by a trained tutor is a powerful tool "because it is a universally recognised method of addressing low attainment and educational inequality."<br>According to the government NTP website, "Strong evidence suggests that the model of targeted, academic support, through highly trained tutors working with small groups and individuals, can make a difference to academic progress that can be expressed in months" | 3, 4 and 7. |
| To improve provision for pupils who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, and require additional support with their well-being through specific interventions (for example, All About Me, Nurture, Drawing and Talking) | Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average, of 4 months' additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year.<br>While targeted approaches to SEL learning seem to have greater impacts on average, approaches should not be viewed in opposition, as most schools will want to use a combination of whole class SEL learning, and targeted support for pupils with particular social and emotional needs.<br>Evidence:<br>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning | 5, 7 |

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

Budgeted cost: £3500

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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| OPAL | OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) provides significant benefits by transforming school playtimes into rich, engaging experiences, leading to improved behavior, enhanced well-being, better physical and social skills, increased creativity, and resilience in children, while also reducing lost teaching time for staff | 1, 5 |
| Continuing the use of Boxall profiles in every class.<br><br>School to continue developing the Nurture programme, and continue training staff.<br><br>Nurture provision interventions introduced, to encourage positive behaviours for learning by identifying and addressing SEMH needs. | Nurture enables teachers to identify, understand, and address pupils' needs with the right support. It helps schools to improve attendance, behaviour and attainment, and reduce exclusions<br><br>It is a well-established intervention, used by many schools, which is supported by a wealth of evidence.<br><br>Evidence:<br><br>https://www.nurtureuk.org/research-evidence/ | 5, 7 |
| To ensure that good attendance is monitored and promoted, through celebration certificates for good attendance, letters to | Evidence on the impact of poor attendance for pupils form disadvantaged children can be found here:<br><br>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/attendance-and-reading-key-barriers-to-disadvantaged-pupils-progress-say-three-in-four-schools<br><br>Prior to the pandemic, in 2016, the government published findings that showed the correlation between poor grades and | 6, 4 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| inform parents, meetings with parents of pupils with 'poor' attendance, and working closely with the SLO. | poor attendance. Since the outbreak of COVID, attendance has been more of a challenge, and continues to be so, even in 2025.<br><br>Overall, the evidence on how effective different approaches are is weak, with very few high-quality studies taking place in English schools. However the school works closely with our SLO to share best practice. | |
| To promote parental engagement through a range of events and opportunities for parents to engage with their children's learning. | The EEF has stated: 'The average impact of the parental engagement approaches is about an additional four months' progress over the course of a year. There are also higher impacts for pupils with low prior attainment.'<br><br>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement | 2, 5, 6, 8 |

## Total budgeted cost: **£52,000**

# Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

## Pupil premium strategy outcomes

**FSP Trends - All Pupils and FSM Ever Pupils Attainment** — *DfE published ** Emerging National

| | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | School | | Kent | | National* | School | | Kent | | National** |
| | All | FSM | All | FSM | All | All | FSM | All | FSM | All |
| % Good Level of Development | 81.3 | 80.0 | 68.0 | 48.7 | 67.7 | 92.9 | 80.0 | 68.9 | 51.0 | 68.3 |
| % Expected Standard Literacy Goals | 81.3 | 80.0 | 70.4 | 51.1 | 70.0 | 92.9 | 80.0 | 71.1 | 53.3 | 70.5 |
| % Expected Standard Mathematics Goals | 81.3 | 80.0 | 78.2 | 62.2 | 77.0 | 92.9 | 80.0 | 78.9 | 63.3 | 77.7 |

**Phonics Trends - All Pupils and FSM Ever Pupils Attainment** — *DfE published ** Emerging National

| | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | School | | Kent | | National* | School | | Kent | | National** |
| | All | FSM | All | FSM | All | All | FSM | All | FSM | All |
| % 32+ - Year 1 | 88.2 | 100.0 | 79 | 63.2 | 80 | 69.2 | 50.0 | 78.3 | 62.3 | 79.9 |
| Number of Year 2 Retakes | 6 | | | | | 4 | | | | |
| % 32+ - Year 2 | 83.3 | 50.0 | 52.1 | 45.3 | 54.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 48.8 | 42.8 | 50.1 |

**KS2 Trends - All Pupils and FSM Ever Pupils Attainment** | ***DfE published ** Emerging National**

| A blank field denotes there is no National data available for that indicator. | | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | School | | Kent | | National* | School | | Kent | | National** |
| | | All | FSM | All | FSM | All | All | FSM | All | FSM | All |
| **R/W/M** | **% Expected Standard+** | 53 | 50.0 | 62 | 42.5 | 61 | 46.2 | 33.3 | 60.8 | 41.7 | 62.1 |
| **R/W/M** | **% Higher Standard** | 0 | 0.0 | 8 | 2.5 | 8 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 9.3 | 2.6 | 8.3 |
| Reading | % Expected Standard+ | 80 | 50.0 | 76 | 61.0 | 75 | 76.9 | 66.7 | 74.7 | 59.5 | 75.0 |
| Reading | % High Score (110+) | 20 | 25.0 | 31 | 18.5 | 29 | 53.8 | 33.3 | 34.7 | 19.1 | 33.3 |
| Writing | % Expected Standard+ | 60 | 50.0 | 74 | 57.5 | 72 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 72.5 | 56.0 | 72.2 |
| Writing | % Greater Depth | 0 | 0.0 | 15 | 5.6 | 13 | 30.8 | 0.0 | 15.0 | 5.8 | 12.7 |
| GPS | % Expected Standard+ | 75 | 75.0 | 69 | 51.4 | 73 | 53.8 | 33.3 | 68.7 | 51.3 | 72.6 |
| GPS | % High Score (110+) | 25 | 25.0 | 28 | 14.9 | 32 | 23.1 | 0.0 | 24.8 | 12.4 | 29.4 |
| Maths | % Expected Standard+ | 73 | 75.0 | 71 | 54.2 | 74 | 53.8 | 33.3 | 71.3 | 54.1 | 74.1 |
| Maths | % High Score (110+) | 27 | 0.0 | 23 | 10.7 | 24 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 24.6 | 11.8 | 26.2 |
| Reading | Average Scaled Score | 105 | 101.5 | 106 | 102.9 | 105 | 107.6 | 104.7 | 105.8 | 102.4 | 105.6 |
| GPS | Average Scaled Score | 104 | 103.0 | 105 | 101.1 | 105 | 103.8 | 100.3 | 104.3 | 100.8 | 105.3 |
| Maths | Average Scaled Score | 103 | 97.8 | 104 | 100.8 | 104 | 102.0 | 94.3 | 104.2 | 100.6 | 104.7 |
| Reading | % Scaled Score 80-89 | 6.7 | 25.0 | 3.5 | 6.3 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.3 | 8.1 | |
| | % Scaled Score 90-99 | 13.3 | 25.0 | 15.7 | 22.1 | | 23.1 | 33.3 | 15.3 | 21.9 | |
| | % Scaled Score 100-109 | 60.0 | 25.0 | 44.8 | 42.5 | | 23.1 | 33.3 | 40.0 | 40.4 | |
| | % Scaled Score 110-114 | 20.0 | 25.0 | 19.7 | 13.2 | | 38.5 | 33.3 | 23.8 | 14.5 | |
| | % Scaled Score 115-120 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.6 | 5.2 | | 15.4 | 0.0 | 10.9 | 4.6 | |
| GPS | % Scaled Score 80-89 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.1 | 7.9 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.4 | 8.7 | |
| | % Scaled Score 90-99 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 21.4 | 30.5 | | 38.5 | 66.7 | 21.5 | 30.4 | |
| | % Scaled Score 100-109 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 40.8 | 36.4 | | 30.8 | 33.3 | 43.9 | 38.9 | |
| | % Scaled Score 110-114 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 15.9 | 9.9 | | 15.4 | 0.0 | 13.6 | 7.7 | |
| | % Scaled Score 115-120 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 12.3 | 5.0 | | 7.7 | 0.0 | 11.2 | 4.7 | |
| Maths | % Scaled Score 80-89 | 6.7 | 25.0 | 4.3 | 8.3 | | 7.7 | 33.3 | 5.9 | 11.4 | |
| | % Scaled Score 90-99 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 19.1 | 27.2 | | 38.5 | 33.3 | 17.4 | 24.7 | |
| | % Scaled Score 100-109 | 46.7 | 75.0 | 48.7 | 43.4 | | 38.5 | 33.3 | 46.7 | 42.3 | |
| | % Scaled Score 110-114 | 26.7 | 0.0 | 15.6 | 8.2 | | 7.7 | 0.0 | 15.8 | 8.8 | |
| | % Scaled Score 115-120 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.9 | 2.6 | | 7.7 | 0.0 | 8.8 | 3.0 | |

## Pupil Premium Strategy Reviewed

As a result of our 2025 Pupil Premium Strategy:

- All pupils benefitted from our OPAL provision, improving behaviour for learning, well being, physical and social skills and offering enriching experiences
- Nurture has been embedded into all classrooms, with all pupils benefitting from the social, emotional and mental health benefits this brings.
- Attendance for the school was above the national average.
- Children continue to benefit from a smaller class size in Reception, to focus on closing the gap early on.

- Writing attainment is particularly strong in 2025 in Key Stage 2- with no gap between PP and non PP children.
- Reading attainment for PP children was strong in Key Stage 2. 66.7% of FSM pupils reached the expected standard, compared to 59.5% in Kent.

To continue to be developed:

- PP children continue to lag behind their peers in their outcomes. Closing the gap continues to be a priority. Maths Key Stage 2 outcomes for FSM pupils was particularly weak (33%)
- Outcome data was stronger in phonics, GLD and KS2 combined in 2024. This is a result of changing cohorts.