

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

School Overview

Detail	Data
School name	Athelstan Primary School
Pupils in school	606 (Oct 24 Census)
Proportion of disadvantaged pupils	33% (Oct 24 Census)
Academic year on years covered by statement	2024/2025 - 2026/2027
Publish date	September 2025
Review date	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Lisa Watson, Acting Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Lisa Watson, Acting Headteacher
Governor lead	Richard Joel, Chair of Governors

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium allocation this academic year	£321,896
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£321,896

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 progress for those who are already high attainers. We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have involvement with outside agencies. The activities we have outlined in this statement are 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 strategy has also been integral to wider school plans for education recovery, notably in its targeted support through tutoring for pupils whose education has been worst affected, including non-disadvantaged pupils. Our approach will be 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 will:

- ensure all pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified to ensure pupils keep up rather than catch up
- ensure all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessments, observations and discussions indicate poor speech, language deprivation and a general lack of vocabulary among many pupils. This is evident from Reception through to KS2.
2	On entry to Reception, over the last three years, between 89-92% of our disadvantaged pupils have arrived below age-related expectations compared to 65-96% of other pupils (entry data in September 2024, however, showed disadvantaged pupils were outperforming other pupils but at the end of the year, this gap had closed). Assessments and observations indicate that disadvantaged pupils have greater difficulty with phonics in FS than their peers.
3	Internal and external assessments indicate that disadvantaged pupils perform significantly below their non-disadvantaged peers in combined reading, writing and maths in KS2
4	Fortnightly tests and end of key stage assessments indicate that disadvantaged pupils perform significantly below their non-disadvantaged peers in spelling, which then impacts upon final SPaG outcomes
5	Assessments and observations indicate that the education and wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged pupils were negatively impacted by the pandemic and this continues to be a concern. These findings are supported by national studies. This has resulted in significant gaps in knowledge leading to pupils falling further behind age-related expectations, especially in writing.
6	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues including limited emotional resilience and low self-esteem. Challenges, such as a lack of enrichment opportunities, together with poor morning, evening and bedtime routines have impacted negatively on disadvantaged pupils.
7	Attendance data indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been, on average, at least 4% lower than non-disadvantaged pupils. In addition, we have some families who live outside of catchment and struggle with punctuality. High mobility is also a barrier, as some families move for work or are rehoused far away after being housed in a nearby confidential address.

Intended Outcomes

Intended Outcomes	Success criteria
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To improve language acquisition and vocabulary	Assessments, observations, discussions with pupils indicate improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils and a wider use of vocabulary in written work.
To achieve at least national figures for GLD	Outcomes in 2025/26 and over the three-year period show that more than 75% of disadvantaged pupils achieve GLD.
To achieve at least national figures for PSC	Outcomes in 2025/26 and over the three-year period show that more than 85% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard in the PSC in Y1 and 95% in Y2
To ensure attainment in reading, writing and maths combined is at national figures for all pupils in KS2	KS2 outcomes for combined reading, writing and maths show that more than 75% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard.
To ensure pupils have an improved understanding of spelling patterns	Fortnightly spelling test results across each year group increase Y2 and Y6 spelling outcomes are above 75%
To ensure and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly those who are disadvantaged	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2025/26 and over the three-year period demonstrated by: • Qualitative data from pupil voice, parent/carers discussions, feedback from the Pastoral Team and observations within school • Increased participation in extracurricular activities
To achieve a whole school attendance target of 96% for all groups and to ensure persistent absence figures are no greater than 12%	Sustained high attendance from 2025/26 and over the three-year period 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 being reduced by 2%. • The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below the national figure of 12.6% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils reducing from 16% to 12%.

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching

Budgeted cost: £131,110 - 41% of total spend

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Daily vocabulary enrichment through our words of the week (formerly VIP) and a focus across the whole curriculum on language acquisition.	Research shows the importance of the explicit teaching of vocabulary and how this supports pupils to communicate effectively and achieve academically.	1, 2, 3
Development of an oracy curriculum to	https://my.chartered.college/research-hub/	

include a progression map detailing language content for each year group High quality CPD focusing on oracy, providing purposeful speaking and listening activities Continuation of our annual 'No Pens Day' to promote oracy across the school	explicit-vocabulary-teaching/#:~:text=Research%20has%20shown%20that%20children%20can%20learn,take%20on%20the%20meaning%20of%20new%20words. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2	
High quality and regular White Rose Maths CPD together with a tight focus on arithmetic, to ensure there is quality first teaching in morning sessions and that afternoon interventions compliment this. WalkThru CPD built into the existing CPD calendar with dedicated time for paired observations and instructional coaching between teachers every half term. High quality Writing for Pleasure CPD to ensure we create a writerly community. Support from Assistant Headteachers and release time for English leaders to ensure high quality teaching (using the WalkThru model, WRM and W4P). Purchase of W4P and WalkThru subscriptions.	Research shows that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap and promoting effective CPD plays a crucial role in this. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/effective-professional-development/EEF-Effective-Professional-Development-Guidance-Report.pdf	2, 3, 5
Regular development days with the RWI Consultant. Access to the online training portal with the RWI Leader to ensure there is a high standard of phonics teaching and tutoring in EYFS and KS1. Daily coaching by Deputy Headteacher to ensure high quality teaching. Purchase of RWI resources to maintain strong phonics teaching for all pupils.	https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/effective-professional-development/EEF-Effective-Professional-Development-Guidance-Report.pdf Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics	2
Roll out of Emile Spelling across Y2 to Y6 with high quality CPD to support teachers' practice Purchase of Emile Spelling scheme of work	Research shows that pupils should be explicitly taught spellings and be given extensive opportunities to practice them. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2	4

Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £61,439 - 19% of total spend

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
High quality and regular CPD for support staff to improve the quality and impact of questioning during interventions. Purchase of WalkThru subscriptions.	Research shows that small group tuition can have an impact of up to four months' progress over the course of a year and that by providing training to those delivering these interventions increases the impact. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition	3, 5
Daily one-to-one tutoring in EYFS and KS1 to accelerate progress in reading for pupils falling behind age-related expectations.	Research shows that high quality one-to-one tuition is effective for improving pupil outcomes. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition	2, 5

Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £128,537 - 40% of total spend

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Providing an effective Pastoral Team, including a Family Support Worker, to support pupils and families across a range of areas including behaviour, well-being and good routines.	According to figures from the Department for Education, pupils who receive Free School Meals are more likely to receive a permanent or fixed period exclusion compared to those who do not. The most common reason for exclusion is persistent disruptive behaviour. Pupil behaviour will have multiple influences, some of which teachers can directly manage through universal or classroom management approaches. Some pupils will require more specialist support to help manage their self-regulation or social and emotional skills. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	5, 6, 7

	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	
Providing access to a broad range of extended services, including Breakfast Club, extra-curricular activities and a new after-school club, run in collaboration with Blossom Tree Learning.	Research shows that participation in extracurricular activities supports pupils' academic and personal development https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1230758.pdf Working with parents to support pupil's learning. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-parents	5, 6
Embedding principles of good practice as set out in the DfE's Improving School Attendance advice to improve attendance and readiness to learn for the most disadvantaged pupils.	Guidance has been informed by schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and PA. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance	7
Exposing our pupils to a range of enrichment curriculum experiences (ACEOs) which they would not normally have access to within their own home life.	Pupils who are exposed to a wide range of experiences and culture develop character-building qualities which will help them succeed in later life. https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/childrensengagementwiththeoutdoorsandsportsactivitiesuk/2014to2015 Building a culture of community and belonging will also improve pupils' attendance. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/leadership-and-planning/supporting-attendance/build-a-culture-of-community-and-belonging-for-pupils	5, 6, 7

Total budgeted cost: £321,086

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

GLD data for 2025/26 showed 72% of disadvantaged pupils achieving GLD, compared to only 70% of all pupils (an increase from last year's figure of 63%).

Our Y1 PSC outcomes increased from 76% last year to 83%, with 82% of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard. Y2 pupils not meeting the standard last year took the recheck in June, with a 94% result overall for the cohort (this figure includes two pupils who were disapplied for the second year running). 90% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard.

In the Y4 MTC, the average score dipped slightly for all pupils in comparison to the previous year (21.4 to 21.2) with disadvantaged achieving an average score of 20.7. 71% of all pupils gained a score of 20 or more (64% for disadvantaged pupils), and 31% of all pupils achieved full marks (21% of disadvantaged).

In Y6, 57% of all pupils and 41% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in combined reading, writing and maths.

All pupils have been offered a wide range of extracurricular clubs throughout the year, although the offer has substantially decreased due to staffing capacity. This aside, every single child from Y1 - Y6 has experienced at least one extra sporting opportunity this year - with the majority attending at least two activities either outside of school or with the sports coach in additional weekly sporting sessions. 21% of disadvantaged pupils attended Breakfast Club free of charge at some point during the academic year. Pupils funded in the RockSteady band, performed in whole-school assemblies for pupils and their parents at the end of each term and approximately a quarter of the pupils holding an area of responsibility have been disadvantaged.

Whole school attendance for the academic year 25/26 was 94.2%. This was affected by term-time holidays which accounted for 0.8% of absence; illness accounted for 3.3% of absence, and unauthorised absence accounted for 1.4% of absence. The excessive temperatures in the summer term also negatively impacted our attendance data. At the end of the school year, 89 pupils were classed as persistently absent which has reduced since last year.

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

GLD data for 2024/25 showed 63% of disadvantaged pupils achieving GLD, compared to 70% of all pupils. This was a significant increase on last year's figure of 50%.

Our Y1 PSC outcomes fell this year, with 76% all pupils and 59% of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard. This was cohort specific but was also affected by a reduction in one-to-one tutoring and reduced capacity for daily coaching, both due to staffing issues. In the Y2 phonics recheck, 99% of all pupils and 96% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard.

Y2 results were either broadly in line or higher than the 2024 national figures for all pupils in both expected and greater depth and significantly higher than our own results last year in reading and writing; maths and SPaG were broadly in line with last year. Disadvantaged pupils performed better in reading compared to national disadvantaged figures in 2023 but lower in writing and maths. For greater depth, disadvantaged pupils were lower than the 2024 national figures for all pupils across all subjects.

In the Y4 MTC, the average score was slightly higher than last year's results. 73% of all pupils gained a score of 20 or more (81% for disadvantaged pupils), with the average score standing at 21.4 (21 for disadvantaged). 31% of all pupils achieved full marks (27% of disadvantaged).

In Y6, 71% of all pupils (51% in 2024) and 65% of disadvantaged pupils (33% in 2024) achieved the expected standard in combined reading, writing and maths.

All pupils have been offered a wide range of extracurricular clubs throughout the year, with 53% of all pupils

and 48% of disadvantaged pupils having attended at least one of these, which is lower than those for the previous academic year. 21% of disadvantaged pupils attended Breakfast Club free of charge at some point during the academic year. Pupils funded in the RockSteady band, performed in a whole-school assembly for pupils and their parents at the end of the year.

Whole school attendance for the academic year 24/25 was 94.0%. This was affected by term time holidays which accounted for 0.9% of absence; illness accounted for 3.6% of absence and unauthorised absence accounted for 0.6% of absence. At the end of the school year, 96 pupils were classed as persistently absent.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Read Write Inc Phonics	Ruth Miskin
Emile Spelling	Emile Education
White Rose Maths	White Rose Education
WalkThrus	Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli

Service pupil premium funding

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	Pupils had access to members of the Pastoral Team for emotional support. Extended opportunities for pupils to represent school in sporting events and to hold an area of pupil responsibility. Funding to take part in RockSteady, a weekly musical band session, culminating in a performance to parents at the end of the year.
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	Teachers and the pastoral team reported positive wellbeing amongst our one service child, who demonstrated a confident and happy approach to school life, both academically and emotionally. Although not linked to funding, this child's father visited the school during Careers Day to talk to the children in KS2 about his career in the Armed Forces.