

Pupil premium strategy statement – Leycroft Academy 2024-2025

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	169
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	Reception: 3 Year 1: 5 Year 2: 25 Year 3: 41 Year 4: 25 Year 5: 32 Year 6: 38
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026
Statement authorised by	Paddy Jones Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Paddy Jones
Governor / Trustee lead	Vikash Joshi

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£143,925
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0

**Recovery premium received in academic year 2021 to 2022 can be carried forward to academic year 2022 to 2023. Recovery premium received in academic year 2022 to 2023 cannot be carried forward to 2023 to 2024.*

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

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Our vision: To enable children to understand the world around them and the talents within them, so they can become fulfilled individuals and active compassionate citizens.

Here at Leycroft all pupils have an Education Health Care plan indicating a broad spectrum of barriers to learning. As a school we are committed to both raising targeted academic achievement as well as equally supporting the much wider needs of all our disadvantaged pupils. Pupils come to the school with a very wide and diverse range of additional needs. These broad spectra of needs, as well as varying individual circumstance, means that pupil outcomes are not so easily attributed to socio-economic disadvantage as a single causal factor.

As so many of the pupils at Leycroft can experience multiple barriers to learning, (cognitive, physical, communication or sensory needs) although our plan seeks to reduce any identified gaps in academic achievement between different groups of pupils, of equal importance is the support to the whole school community for these wider holistic barriers. we are focusing on a range of initiatives to support the wider needs of:

- Engagement in learning
- Communication
- Social Interaction

The school also recognises that strong links between school and home are fundamental to pupils' success. We recognise that this is even more important following a time where direct parental access to school has had to be limited. Hence providing parental training opportunities, alongside developing access to shared learning opportunities for parents and carers will also feature in this year's plan.

Communication and PSHE are key areas that challenge our pupils; difficulties in these areas are a barrier to accessing learning opportunities. Supportive techniques and resources are used throughout the school day to help the children overcome difficulties in these areas. Autism and related sensory issues also have an impact on many pupils making it difficult for them to access learning opportunities and develop their independence and life skills at school and within the wider community.

The aim of Pupil Premium in 2025-26 is to ensure that children in receipt of Pupil Premium make progress in line with other pupils in the school. However, we also recognise the need to maintain high standards for all and therefore the end of key stage targets are ambitious for all pupils building on previous successes.

Intent: To use pupil premium to provide the additional teaching and learning resources and support that our children require to make the best progress that they can.

To close and / or prevent any gaps in the progress made by children in receipt of FSM with those that do not. To enhance the provision of the LA's core offer through providing additional time / personnel and / or resources and therapies that are not in the core offer, but which benefit children with SEND. E.g. Speech and Language Therapy.

We will identify which services, resources and training facilitates the provision of the appropriate additional support. We will ensure that best value requirements are met when sourcing and purchasing services and resources. We will match the appropriate additional support with the individual children who have been identified as needing this from their assessment data analysis.

The children's progress in communication, PSHE and independence is enhanced when they learn alongside peers and generalise their skills with each other and in different contexts. As such, it is recognised that the majority of interventions and resources are delivered to pupils within their groups / pairs throughout the day and in different areas. This inevitably means peers who are not directly entitled to pupil premium benefit from such additionality, but this is as well as them, not instead of, or at the detriment of, and is therefore considered to be a positive aspect

Impact: We measure the progress of all of our children through a robust and detailed observations. The individual targets for every child are set in key curriculum areas and barriers to learning in line with their EHCP outcomes. These targets are closely monitored and adapted accordingly: if a child exceeds them, they are challenged to progress to the next step, if they are struggling to achieve them, other interventions and additional support is put in place.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	A proportion of our disadvantaged children display increased dysregulation around the school due to more complex social communication and emotional regulation delays. This means these children will find engagement and participation with the curriculum more difficult.
2	Communication, interaction and engagement skills are significantly lower for the majority of pupils (pupil premium and non-premium) as a result of pupils' special educational needs. Pupils have a range of communication and interaction needs – including being non-verbal, having limited language and understanding, needing to use Makaton and speech output devices, social communication difficulties. Many pupils have difficulties in following instructions and processing information.
3	Pupils reading abilities are below age expected and comprehension skills hinder their ability to be functionally Literate
4	Pupils mathematical abilities are below age expected and hinder their ability to be functionally Numerate

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
Pupils can use a range of communication systems to aid their understanding and to develop functional and expressive communication skills.	Pupils will make progress towards their communication targets. Children will be able to communicate effectively re their needs, preferences, and emotions. There will be a reduction in incidents as children will have access to a means of positive communication to express themselves.
Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils in all subjects, notably reading, relative to their starting points as identified through baseline assessments.	Pupils will make expected or above expected progress in their curriculum targets. Pupils will demonstrate an ability to read for purpose and for pleasure, showing a love of reading.
Disadvantaged pupils have greater confidence and independence to help them engage more with the wider community and prepare for the next stage in their development.	Children will be able to confidently access shops, leisure and entertainment services within the community.
Children develop their resilience, confidence and independence – and know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.	Children will confidently try new experiences and activities and develop some of these into regular hobbies and interests outside of school.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding. this academic year to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention) Budgeted cost: £120,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To implement Occupational Therapy Support to address pupils sensory needs to support them in and out of the classroom.	<p>"If you're working with a pupil who has difficulties with their emotions and behaviour, there may be an issue with their sensory processing. Sensory needs aren't exclusive to children with autism - and they actually impact on a wide range of children in our schools."</p> <p>https://beaconschoolsupport.co.uk/podcast/30 https://beaconschoolsupport.co.uk/send-handbook.php?v=2</p> <p>"How a child processes and responds to sensory information – sight, sound, smell, taste and touch – can be reflected in their emotional reactions. Some children find everyday activities such as dressing themselves, overwhelming and distressing. Our therapists are skilled in helping children develop the 'sensory integration' necessary to manage in these circumstances."</p> <p>https://www.theotpractice.co.uk/how-we-help/conditions/sensory-processing-disorder</p>	1,2,3,4
Purchase of 2 day per week Speech and Language Therapist Support.	<p>The large majority of children in our school have SALT/Communication needs specifically identified as part of their EHCP and this continues to be a growing need. The EEF research has shown that SALT interventions can improve the children's learning across the curriculum. Also, it shows that the impact can be even higher on those from a disadvantaged background. Communication and language approaches.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk</p> <p>Research has shown that poor language skills at age five significantly impact children's literacy and numeracy at age 11, and children in areas of social disadvantage are at greater risk of this.'</p> <p>Importance of spoken language in children's skills and attainment RCSLT 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 7 Language-and-Literacy-briefing_2nd-December-final version-006.pdf</p> <p>The centrality of spoken language to children's</p>	1,2,3,4

	<p>attainment and life chances must be recognised as part of any efforts to recover children's education following the pandemic.'</p> <p>rcslt-social-disadvantage-factsheet.pdf</p> <p>Therefore it is vital that we do our best to improve children's communication skills.</p>	
Comms champions	<p>Through use of our school data those pupils who aren't making expected progress will be identified for IEP support with our experience HLTA. "some pupils will require additional support in the form of high quality, structured interventions to make progress, or to catch up with their peers. Small group and one-to-one interventions provide the opportunity to apply effective teaching strategies with a more intense focus on a smaller number of learning goals" EEF Selecting Interventions Evidence Insights</p> <p>Selecting_interventions_tool.pdf?v=1631171996">https://d2tic4wv01iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/support-for-schools/school-improvement-planning>Selecting_interventions_tool.pdf?v=1631171996</p>	1
Sherborne	<p>Movement experiences are essential to the development of all individuals, and they hold particular significance for those with special needs. For individuals facing unique challenges, the provision of movement experiences must be deliberate, concentrated, and sustained to help them fully realise their potential.</p> <p>Sherborne Developmental Movement is a teaching approach that makes movement accessible, especially for those with limited movement experience, while remaining highly relevant and sophisticated for individuals with backgrounds in physical education or dance.</p> <p>This approach is rooted in the philosophy and theories of Rudolf Laban, a pioneer and founder of modern European dance and movement analysis. It was developed by Veronica Sherborne, who built upon Laban's foundational work to create a method that supports developmental progress through movement.</p>	1,2

Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions) Budgeted cost: £ 9,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Subsidise 2x day equivalent staff from Open Theatre to deliver various projects across the Academy including non-verbal drama.	<p>Research from the Department of Education states too many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds never get the chance to take part in activities outside of school. As a result, they lose out on the benefits – increased confidence which helps social interaction, a real aspiration to go onto higher or further education, more soft skills and a sense of wellbeing and belonging. Playing team sports, doing voluntary work, joining a youth club or singing in a band are also vital in developing networks – which those from affluent backgrounds often have ready-made.</p>	1,2,3,4

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

Budgeted cost: £11,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Educational Psychologist support</i>	Behaviour support will provide children, staff and parents with personalised strategies of how to improve social and 2, 3, 4, 6 targeted behaviour support to those most in need. To provide music for some of our younger pupils one day a week mental health needs. Unfortunately, disadvantaged pupils are more likely to receive behaviour sanctions or be excluded and we need to help prevent this by putting in support and strategies to improve behaviour and social, emotional and mental health needs. Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1-4
Steve Brown		

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year Pupil premium strategy outcomes

Communication Support

Pupil Premium funding has been strategically invested to overcome significant communication barriers faced by many of our disadvantaged children, who often have complex speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) alongside their EHCPs. Two days per week of Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) support has enabled targeted assessments, personalised communication goals, and ongoing staff training.

Communication Champions have led whole-school audits and coaching, developing bespoke action plans and resources such as visual symbols, schedules, and object/photo references.

Impact:

- Pupils have made expected or above expected progress against SALT-set communication targets, expressing needs, preferences, and emotions more effectively.
- Visual supports and consistent routines have reduced frustration and dysregulation incidents, improving engagement in learning and social activities.
- Staff confidence and consistency in communication support have increased through intensive coaching, resulting in more effective classroom environments.
- External reviews highlight calmer transitions and enhanced emotional regulation linked to these strategies.

Sherborne Developmental Movement

The introduction of a dedicated Sherborne practitioner has brought a structured movement-based framework tailored to the developmental and learning needs of our students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Rooted in Rudolf Laban's movement theory, Sherborne supports physical, social, and emotional growth through guided movement activities.

Impact:

- Improved physical coordination, balance, and gross motor skills, including posture and stability.
- Enhanced social interaction and trust through partner activities.
- Increased self-awareness, confidence, and emotional growth as pupils explore movement safely.
- Notable improvements in attention span and focus during and after sessions, positively influencing learning engagement.

Behaviour Support (Steve Brown)

Targeted professional development led by Steve Brown has deepened staff understanding of the diverse Special Educational Needs in our school, including Autism, PDA, sensory differences, executive functioning, and associated behaviours. This expertise has informed our behaviour approach, which redefines behaviour management with clear, tiered plans and a focus on emotional regulation.

Impact:

- Staff are better equipped to understand and respond to behaviours, leading to a calmer, more confident school culture.
- The tier system and revised behaviour plans provide clear, actionable strategies tailored to individual needs, improving safety and support.
- Behaviour incidents have decreased, with significant reductions in crisis peaks for some pupils.
- Behaviour data collection has improved, enabling data-informed decisions and targeted interventions.

Open Theatre Projects

Funding has subsidised one days per week of Open Theatre staff delivering inclusive projects, including non-verbal drama, which provide vital opportunities for pupils to develop confidence, social skills, and a sense of belonging beyond the classroom.

Impact:

- Increased pupil confidence and social interaction skills.
- Enhanced aspiration towards further education and personal development.
- Development of soft skills and wellbeing through participation in creative, team-based activities.
- Broader social networks formed, supporting pupils' inclusion and community engagement.

CPD

This year, we have placed a strong emphasis on enhancing communication strategies, addressing sensory needs, and refining behaviour management across the school. Our professional development sessions have been carefully designed to support this focus, including refreshers and

in-depth training on key areas such as PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), effective communication techniques, and understanding autism spectrum conditions.

Staff have engaged with comprehensive training on sensory processing, including the complexities of Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) and Extreme Demand Avoidance (EDA), as well as social communication and interaction challenges. Behaviour strategies have been a core component, with a focus on accurately identifying individual pupil needs and tailoring support accordingly.

Occupational Therapy (OT) input has been integrated into our behaviour management approach, with guidance provided on implementing OT strategies effectively within the classroom. These sessions have reinforced best practises and ensured consistency in supporting pupils' sensory and emotional regulation needs.

Overall, this targeted professional development has equipped staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to create a more responsive, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all pupils, particularly those with complex needs.

Summary

The focused use of Pupil Premium funding at Leycroft Academy has driven measurable progress in communication, physical development, behaviour management, and social engagement. These interventions collectively reduce barriers to learning, promote wellbeing, and support disadvantaged pupils to thrive academically and personally.