Pupil premium strategy statement – Djanogly City Academy

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	1279
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	44
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	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Andy Smith
Pupil premium lead	Helen Heath
Governor / Trustee lead	Adrian Stephenson

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£584,636.
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*	£584,636.

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, attain highly across the curriculum and develop their cultural capital.

The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support all disadvantaged pupils to achieve these goals regardless of ability. We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker, and young carers. The activities we have outlined in this statement are also intended to address the needs of all, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching and raising language levels are 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 is also integral to wider school plans for education recovery, to raise aspiration and provide opportunities to develop cultural experiences. We want a focus on removing barriers that have been exacerbated over the pandemic and on raising levels of resilience and well-being in young people. We are providing targeted support in the form of tutoring, family support assistance, attendance and punctuality support and evidence-based early intervention models for pupils with social, emotional and mental health concerns.

Our approach will be responsive to common community challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment - both academic and behavioural - rather than assuming disadvantage itself is the cause of underachievement or lack of resilience. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work they are set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which 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	Data tells us that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to arrive in school below the expected standard in reading and writing. When prior data is available it indicates that more than 35% of pupils arrive below age-related expectations with more than 55% of these pupils being disadvantaged. This also corresponds with the amount and proportion of pupils who arrive with reading ages more than two years below their chronological age.
2	Data tells us that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to arrive in school below the expected standard in mathematics. Where prior data is available, 37% of all pupils arrive below expected in maths, with 55% of these being disadvantaged.
3	Behaviour and observational data show an increase in the number of pupils with SEMH as their primary learning need. 35% of pupils on the SEN register have SEMH as their primary learning need. In addition, a further 16% have SEMH as a secondary need. This is of higher prevalence in pupils who are disadvantaged. A lack of resilience and ability to recover from setback has had an impact on progress in all subjects. This has impacted pupil ability to manage their behaviour and cope with challenge particularly in key stage 3.
4	Our assessments, observations and data suggest that the education and wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged pupils have been impacted by their lived experiences either in this country or in their home country. This has led to a decrease in both academic and emotional resilience and makes them vulnerable to underperforming. Outcomes and attendance data shows an increase in pupil anxiety and school refusal as well as a decrease in attainment and aspiration in this cohort of pupils. This has led to increasing knowledge gaps already widened by the pandemic and is resulting in pupils falling further behind age-related expectations.
5	Our observations, notes and contact with social care suggest disadvantaged pupils continue to be impacted by breakdowns in family relationships, lack of access to resources and issues around parenting. This impacts on progress where pupils are unable to focus on lessons as their emotional state is in flux. The number of referrals made by staff for pupils with emotional needs continues to be higher in children who are disadvantaged.
6	Disadvantaged pupils attend less well than their non-disadvantaged peers across the academy. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils has remained consistently lower, with higher rates of persistent absence in this group. In 2021/22 and 2022/23, the attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils was 3% and 4.9% respectively. This widened to 6% in 2023/24. While overall rates of persistent absence decreased during 2023/24, reducing persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils remains a key priority.

	For 2023/24, the persistent absence rate for disadvantaged pupils stood at 35%, compared to 18% for non-disadvantaged pupils. Although the attendance gap has since narrowed to 4% in 2024/25, returning to levels seen in 2021/22 and 2022/23, the overall figure remains high. Persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils was 39.4% in the previous academic year, representing a 10% disparity compared to their peers. This suggests that while overall attendance has improved slightly, a significant proportion of disadvantaged pupils, particularly those with attendance below 90%, continue to face considerable barriers to regular attendance.

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 rates of progress for disadvantaged with pupils achieving inline or above their non-disadvantaged peers	Progress 8 for disadvantaged is the same or higher than for non-disadvantaged pupils Progress 8 for disadvantaged is higher than the national average
Increased attainment for disadvantaged pupils including a reduction to the in-school gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils achieving 4+, 5+ and 7+ in both Maths and English.	In-school targets for all pupils of A8: 4.5 P8: 0.3 EM7+: 10% EM5+: 40% EM4+: 60%
Effective intervention and whole school strategies to support numeracy and literacy and reduce the number of pupils whose reading age is below their chronological age	Assessments in maths demonstrate that pupils who arrive in school below expected make rapid progress and there is a decreasing gap between non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged pupils. Reading comprehension tests demonstrate an increasing proportion of pupils with a reading age of at least their chronological age and there is a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers. Whole school literacy CPD leads to improved practice in the classroom.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2025/26 demonstrated by: • qualitative data from pupil voice, pupil and parent surveys and teacher observations. There is a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.

To achieve and sustain improved attendance with a reduction to the in-school gap for attendance between disadvantaged and their non-disadvantaged peers. Increased attendance levels. Reduction in the PA rate and reducing the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils.	Sustained high attendance from 2025/26 demonstrated by: • Improved overall attendance • Reduction in persistent absenteeism • Closing the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils • The overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 9%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced by 3%. The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent moves towards national average and the figure among disadvantaged pupils is no more than 5% higher than their peers.
To increase the cultural capital of our pupils with a focus on enrichment and aspiration.	Increased confidence in speaking and writing about cultural and social topics. High engagement in enrichment groups, particularly for those who are disadvantaged. Strong recruitment into sixth form with a focus on the disadvantaged pupils. High proportion of disadvantaged pupils participate in activities, trips, and extra-curricular activities.
To improve the behaviour of pupils with SEMH and develop levels of resilience	Behaviour teams support pupils with SEMH to build resilience and help pupils develop strategies to cope with setbacks in the classroom so that: • Behaviour incidences on Class Charts are reduced • Repeat referrals to RTL are reduced • There are fewer suspensions

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: £ 108, 673

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments for pupils joining the school midyear.	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction: Standardised tests | Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress | Education	1, 3, 5

Training will be provided for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted correctly in line with the newly revised assessment framework	Endowment Foundation | EEF	
Accelerated Reader used with years 7 & 8 in fortnightly English lessons and as part of weekly reading sessions Reading programmes implemented weekly for years 9, 10 and 11 including 'Diverse Shorts' for year 9 and non-fiction texts for KS4 Half-termly literacy CPD for all staff. Intervention programmes for all identified pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 including: • LEXIA • Abigail Steele phonics programme • Herts for learning fluency project • Buddy reading	Accelerated Reader has earned high ratings and endorsements from multiple researchers and education organisations: Accelerated Reader meets the Every Pupil Succeeds Act requirements for strong evidence. The Promising Practices Network gave Accelerated Reader a "**proven** program" rating. https://www.renaissance.com/products/accelerated-reader/evidence/ Evidence-based research studies have demonstrated that Lexia's literacy program, Core5, contributes to students' success on standardized reading assessments. In multiple studies published in peer-reviewed journals, Lexia Reading Core5 has been found to accelerate the development of literacy skills. www.lexialearning.com Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way – starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex – it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read. Phonics is a highly effective method of teaching word reading. https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/10/12/everything-you-need-to-know-about-phonics-in-schools/	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
Use of TT Rockstars and targeted intervention from the SEND team for those pupils arriving in school significantly below	"The transition between phases of education – notably early years to primary, and primary to secondary – is a risk-point for vulnerable learners. Schools need to diagnose pupils' needs as soon as possible in order to put in place effective support to help those falling behind to catch up" EEF_Attainment_Gap_Report_2018_-_print.pdf	

expectations in mathematics.	"In a 2016 controlled trial experiment at a large mainstream comprehensive school in the UK involving 430 students, those who participated in the Numeracy Ninjas programme for one academic year achieved on average, double the rate of progress over the students in the control group"' Numeracy Ninjas – A numeracy-boosting programme	
Extensive CPD programme for all staff including time dedicated to subject specific pedagogical development. Weekly sessions focused on key priority areas including contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, effective assessment and literacy provision Use of SISRA observe to ensure regular QA and feedback leads to targeted and specific CPD that improves the quality of teaching.	"The most important school-level factor for pupil attainment is teacher effectiveness: evidence shows that the difference between being taught by a good versus bad teacher is equivalent to a whole year of learning for disadvantaged pupils". https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/EPI-Annual-Report-2018-Lit-review.pdf Effective Professional Development | EEF "High-quality CPD for teachers has a significant effect on pupils' learning outcomes. CPD programmes have the potential to close the gap between beginner and more experienced teachers." Evidence review: The effects of high-quality professional development on teachers and students - Education Policy Institute	1, 2, 5
Careers progression programme for staff including coaching and half-termly career-stage leadership training.	"There is a link between cultivation of leadership in teachers and their job satisfaction and retention intentions. This strategy of 'cultivation of leadership' involves giving teacher opportunities for authentic participation in decision-making processes to promote teacher voice and development of leadership potential". https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/leadership-approaches	
Purchase of IRIS Connect video coaching system to provide staff the opportunity for self-reflection, peer	"Mathematica's investigation of video coaching found that five cycles of video-based coaching enabled by IRIS Connect and Teachstone improved student achievement. The impact was both statistically and practically significant; video-based coaching improved	

coaching and to provide higher quality mentoring in order to consolidate training and improve teaching .	student achievement, the equivalent of an additional two months of instruction. Student achievement of novice teachers that received video coaching was even higher – the equivalent of an additional two and half months of instruction over the school year." https://blog.irisconnect.com/uk/teacher-coaching-student-achievement	

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

Budgeted cost: £100,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
1:1 tutors in English, maths and science to work with identified disadvantaged pupils. Teachers timetabled to work in Compass (in house alternative provision) to work with pupils who are disadvantaged and who have SEMH needs.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Small group tuition | Toolkit Strand | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF "Targeted small group and one-to-one interventions have the potential for the largest immediate impact on attainment". EEF_Attainment_Gap_Report_2018_-_print.pdf https://edclass.com/mental-health	

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

Budgeted cost: £375,963

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Implementation of the Routes to Inclusion initiative and subsequent pathway interventions to provide pupils who have low-level SEMH needs with additional targeted support and intervention.	Nottingham City Council's behaviour strategy provides a systematic, graduated response to meeting the needs of children presenting with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. http://r2i.org.uk/	2, 3, 4
Growth of inclusion and SEND teams to ensure Compass provision and the Intervention Hub provide additional support and targeted interventions to disadvantaged pupils with significant SEMH and SEND.	Children and young people who were suspended from school are more likely to have behavioural difficulties, difficulties with peers and attention difficulties. Those who were excluded also have lower scores for positive wellbeing, emotional strengths and skills and support networks. www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk Social and emotional learning | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) 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 though universal or classroom management approaches. Some pupils will require more specialist support to help manage their self-regulation or social and emotional skills. Closing the Disadvantage Gap (EEF Toolkit) ASE IIS.pdf	2, 3, 4
Further development of Post 16 provision and relevant training for leaders to provide aspirational activities for KS4 pupils including careers events and specialist pathways, leadership opportunities,	"New NFER research highlights the importance for these (disadvantaged) students of understanding how you learn and of creating environments where pupils believe their ability will develop over time, rather than something that is fixed. Resilient pupils were also more likely to have a growth mindset. That is, resilient pupils recognise challenges as external,	

subject specific buddy support and resilience sessions.	understanding they can be confronted and tackled. They believe that their efforts at school contribute to their success in school and the future". Research: How to ensure more disadvantaged students succeed	
Employment of a full-time careers lead and careers coordinator to support a growing, academy-wide careers curriculum	"High quality careers education, information, advice and guidance is vital to ensure young people can access jobs that suit their talents and aspirations. For those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, this advice is particularly important, as they are less likely to have access to support from family and friends, or to have networks which provide an insight into a wide range of career options. Accessing independent and impartial advice on education, training and career paths is therefore a central plank of social mobility, empowering young people to make informed decisions about their future pathways." https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Paving-the-Way.pdf	
Creation of additional leadership roles to support personal development and growth of enrichment including Head of Personal Development, an Enrichment lead and Duke of Edinburgh co-ordinator. Significant curriculum funding for trips to enrich pupil learning and breadth of experience, providing opportunities that might not otherwise be available to them. Wide-ranging after school enrichment offer enhanced with resources to offer a quality experience. Funded music lessons Support for pupils who are disadvantaged with uniform	"Building cultural capital is essential to teach acceptance and the skills needed for pupils to become citizens able to participate fully in our modern global multicultural societies…We need to start identifying opportunities to build Cultural Capital in the classroom through subjects and experiences outside the classroom". Building 'Cultural Capital' In Schools: What Is It and Why Is It Important? - Global School Alliance "There is intrinsic value in teaching pupils creative and performance skills and ensuring disadvantaged pupils access a rich and stimulating arts education". Closing the Disadvantage Gap (EEF Toolkit) ASE IIS.pdf An Unequal Playing Field found that the school you go to, the area where you grow up, and your socioeconomic background largely determine what types of activities are available outside the classroom. There was a direct link between	

and meals including a fully funded breakfast club.	household income and participation for almost all extra-curricular activities which were included in the survey. Children from the poorest households were much less likely to take part in any extra-curricular activity, but particularly music and sport. An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility - GOV.UK	
Maintaining systems to track provision for pupils with SEN and to track and monitor those with safeguarding concerns. Edukey MyConcern	The CDC's Adverse Childhood Experiences study (ACES) uncovered a link between childhood trauma and chronic disease in adulthood. Using these systems to track provision, intervention and concerns enables us to monitor and provide support to pupils.	
Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE's statutory 'Working Together' documentation.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.	2, 3, 4, 5
Following the EWS structure for 'graduated partnership approach'. Attendance Manager works closely with the service to ensure referrals and regular meetings happen in line with the new National Framework for Penalty Notices. Collaborative work with the Inclusive Attendance Initiative provides external support to monitor and strengthen the academy's attendance systems. Regular deep dives offer an additional layer of oversight and guidance, helping to drive attendance improvement initiatives forward. In house training and CPD delivered to the Attendance Team on a weekly basis.	Research has found that poor attendance at school is linked to poor academic attainment across all stages (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; London et al., 2016) as well as anti-social characteristics, delinquent activity and negative behavioural outcomes (Gottfried, 2014; Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001). This is of particular concern to the EEF because evidence suggests many students with poor attendance are likely to be those from disadvantaged backgrounds" Attendance-and-Persistent-Absence-ESC-Submission.pdf	2, 3, 4

Utilising Power BI dashboards to better use data to target key cohorts and streamline early intervention systems. Working in partnership with key 'stakeholders' including attendance at weekly EWO Meetings, half-termly cluster meetings and termly targeted support meetings. Supporting the ETIO project attendance mentors by providing a confidential workspace across two sites to operate from.		
DCA Strategy Group established with key members of the Senior Leadership, Inclusion and Attendance team to ensure different strands of need are discussed on a weekly basis to provide a holistic approach and secure targeted support.	Work done by the Challenging Behaviour Foundation shows the importance of different experienced stakeholders working together https://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/what-we-do/national-strategy-group/	2, 3, 4
Full-time counsellor on site to support pupils External counsellor employed to meet increased need	"Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment." Closing the Disadvantage Gap (EEF Toolkit) ASE IIS.pdf	

Total budgeted cost: ££584,636.

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Summary

Academic outcomes

Improving the attainment and progress of pupils who are disadvantaged remains a key priority with targets and subject actions related specifically to this, in the academy and department improvement plans. Although we have implemented a wide range of evidence-informed approaches aimed at reducing the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, a difference in outcomes is still evident. Our priority therefore remains that every pupil, regardless of background, makes good progress and that the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged is reduced. Our data tracking mechanisms and linked data review meetings all prioritise the progress of disadvantaged pupils; identifying gaps between groups and providing support and intervention to disadvantaged pupils as a priority.

Performance data in 2025 shows us that the number of disadvantaged pupils achieving 4+/5+ in both English and maths has fallen and whilst pupil attainment remains close to average in English, maths, humanities and languages, the gap is widening overall and pupils are below average in science and the open basket. Disadvantaged pupils have made progress in some key areas however, including an increase in pupils achieving 4+ and 5+ in English language and 5+ in English literature, and higher and middle attaining disadvantaged pupils (as determined by CATs on entry) increasing their average attainment grade in English and maths. When looking at gender, improvements have also been seen in the attainment of disadvantaged boys; there was an increase of 8.6% in the number of boys achieving 5+ in both English and maths and a 12% increase in the number of boys achieving 5+ in English. The gap has widened for girls however and current strategies and actions reflect the gap between disadvantaged boys and girls and between girls and their non-disadvantaged peers.

Our data suggests that pupils who attend more than 95% of the academic year (whether disadvantaged or non-disadvantaged) make good progress. 54.3% of disadvantaged pupils with 95%+ attendance achieved EM 4+ and 37.1 % achieved 5+ compared to 25% and 14.3% EM4+ and 5+ respectively for those disadvantaged pupils with less than 95% attendance. This data supports our belief that pupils who regularly attend Djanogly City Academy, whether PP or non-PP, achieve well and we consistently focus our attention on improving rates of attendance by ensuring a systematic and coordinated approach, a more detailed explanation of which can be found below.

Improving literacy levels of our disadvantaged pupils

We are dedicated to improving literacy levels for all of our pupils. We have a significant support and intervention package including a wide range of targeted interventions, including phonics intervention, LEXIA sessions, buddy reading, and work with Herts for learning on improving fluency, with a high proportion of our disadvantaged pupils bene-

fiting from this intervention. We also worked closely with the DfE 'Priority Literacy' project during 2024/25 and have a substantial package of CPD for all of our pupil-facing staff.

On average, reading age data shows that approximately 35% of all pupils arrive at school behind the age-related expectations with disadvantaged pupils making up nearly 60% of these. Throughout 2024/25, a number of literacy strategies including diagnostic testing, intervention pathways, accelerated reader, dedicated whole school CPD and standalone reading lessons for all pupils ensured that by the end of 2025, pupils who had entered in 2023 had made strong progress with nearly three quarters of disadvantaged pupils making progress in their reading age and their standardised score which gives an indication of how pupils are performing relative to a national sample of pupils of the same age. In autumn of 2024, Ofsted praised the suite of targeted interventions in use, including the phonics programme and additional English sessions and recognised how we use these to "ensure that all pupils develop the skills they need to access the curriculum". In September 2025, 37% of pupils arrived in school below the expected standard in reading with 63% of these being disadvantaged pupils. Additionally, 57% of pupils who are in the bottom 20% of readers are disadvantaged and this cohort has an average reading age of 7. All of these pupils are receiving a suite of intervention including timetabled phonics sessions with trained specialists and weekly LEXIA sessions. We also have timetabled reading lessons once per week and access to one-to-one reading through our reading buddy programme. Data at the end of the first term has showed that over a third of these pupils have already made progress with both their reading age and standardised score and with just a term's worth of support, the average reading age has increased by over 7%. Intervention will continue throughout the year for identified pupils and will adapt as needed.

Providing a high-quality curriculum and quality first teaching

Research tells us that high quality teaching is the single biggest factor in improving pupil outcomes and closing the disadvantage gap and we are committed to ensuring that all pupils receive high quality lessons where teaching strategies are informed by the most up-to-date pedagogical research. We have made significant changes to our curriculum over the last four years and are committed to providing a curriculum that has both breadth and depth whilst being contextually relevant and interesting to our pupils. We believe the curriculum is the progression model and we have high expectations for all. Curriculum development is always a priority and we ensure curriculum leaders have the training and knowledge necessary to continue curriculum development and refinement and provide the time for our curriculum teams to research, devise and deliver CPD based on subject specific pedagogical research. We continued to prioritise high quality CPD throughout 2024/25 for all pupil-facing staff, focussing on strategies that have the biggest impact. This included literacy development, effective assessment, contextual safeguarding and using trauma-informed strategies to support a positive learning environment.

In addition to providing regular and high quality CPD to improve teaching, we also know that retaining high quality staff is fundamental and our career pathway creates a culture that advocates continued professional development and supports our teachers in their leadership development. By September 2025 we have had over a third of the staff body, including non-teachers, who have completed NPQs and over 50 teachers and support staff on our internal leadership courses. Our ongoing commitment to CPD and a culture that fosters the importance of life-long learning means our staff body are

reflective practitioners who are committed to improving themselves in order to improve the life chances of our pupils. Ofsted recognised the impact of this work and that the school has “taken effective action to strengthen the curriculum” and that “teachers use their strong subject knowledge to design effective sequences of learning”. Teachers therefore have the “highest expectations of each pupil” who “achieve well across the broad and ambitious curriculum” and, as a result, “believe in their limitless potential”.

Building the cultural capital of our disadvantaged pupils

We build cultural capital for our pupils through a variety of ways including our ambitious curriculum, our personal development programme, thematic days and educational visits. As part of our commitment to provide a high-quality careers provision we ensure that all pupils receive support and guidance that helps to prepare them for the workplace. We offer curriculum support across all year groups to ensure pupils receive both in-school and external guidance, engaging and aspirational activities and trips that support their personal development, help them choose their pathway and improve their life opportunities. Some of the activities that disadvantaged pupils benefited from during 2024/25 include INTO University: Careers in focus, Communication in the Workplace, Pathway to Success, Pathway to Medicine, targeted work experience including visits to Nottingham Theatre Royal. All disadvantaged pupils received on average five careers related activities throughout 2024/25.

As part of our wider enrichment programme, we offer over 80 different clubs to pupils which include drama, chess, culture club, Warhammer, dance and public speaking and sports clubs such as badminton, running club, football and netball. Although over 60% of our disadvantaged pupils attended enrichment during 2024/25, it remains a priority to increase the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who take advantage of these. Leaders use pupil voice to ensure we offer enrichment activities that will increase participation, and it remains an ongoing priority to ensure we increase the number of pupils attending our after-school enrichment.

Pupil well-being

Historical evidence has highlighted the profound impact that the pandemic had on levels of attendance and the number of suspensions for our disadvantaged pupils. While overall suspension rates fell by more than 50% in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24, the proportion of suspensions involving disadvantaged pupils remained unchanged, with this group accounting for 70% of all suspensions indicating that pupils from this background continue to have challenges in managing their behaviour in difficult or challenging situations both inside and outside of the classroom. These behaviours have led to an increase in referrals to social care and to provisions such as counselling and CAMHS to support our young people in accessing their education and raising their confidence. We have continued to use trauma informed practice to train our staff to respond to pupils to try and minimise the anxiety felt in school by some of our pupils. Furthermore, the addition of the relational approach to our staff training has supported the development of positive staff-student relationships which further helps to minimise pupils’ anxiety in school. Pupils reported that they had learned to ‘always take care of myself and others’, ‘to talk to someone’, to ‘calm myself down when I am stressed’ and to ‘be confident and believe in myself’. Ofsted findings in autumn 2024 also echoed this, finding that pupils “feel safe, happy, and valued” and that staff “deeply understand pupils’ challenges and provide the help pupils need to succeed”.

Having seen a significant rise in referrals to social care and other provisions over the last two years we are now building on our provision with an increased variety of internal interventions which are implemented much earlier than previously, including a broadening of our external provision network and increased incentives for pupils to attend enrichment. We have amalgamated wellbeing and SEND teams in order to extend and deepen their collaboration and have regular, calendared CPD for staff centred around supporting pupils to understand expectations and become more able to manage their emotions. There is now greater balance in the distribution of 'positive points', with current data indicating that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds earn a comparable number of positive points to their non-disadvantaged peers.

Attendance of disadvantaged pupils

Overall attendance in 2024/25 for disadvantaged pupils was 86.9% and although there remains a negative gap of -5.4% when compared to whole school attendance, attendance for disadvantaged pupils increased by 1.4% and is close to national average. Persistent absenteeism of disadvantaged pupils has also decreased from 40% to 33.9% and the gap between national has reduced by 1.9%. Whole school persistent absenteeism was also less than 23/24 but this figure decreased by more than double for our disadvantaged pupils. This progress reflects a sustained, whole-school focus on attendance as a driver of achievement. However, disadvantaged pupils continue to attend less regularly than their non-disadvantaged peers, and reducing this gap remains a strategic priority for the academy.

As part of our strategic drive to increase the attendance of our disadvantaged pupils, the academy has engaged with the Inclusive Attendance Initiative, which provides external challenge and expertise to monitor systems and evaluate the impact of our attendance strategies. This collaboration ensures alignment with the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance statutory guidance, embedding a proactive and evidence-based approach to intervention. Through joint deep dives and diagnostic reviews, we have refined our procedures for early identification, tiered support, and escalation, ensuring that disadvantaged pupils receive targeted and timely interventions.

A key strand of our work is targeted 1:1 mentoring through the ETIO project, with a particular emphasis on Year 11 disadvantaged pupils. This bespoke support focuses on removing individual barriers to attendance, whether pastoral, academic, or environmental, while fostering strong, trusting relationships between pupils and mentors. This relational approach has been instrumental in re-engaging pupils with education and improving attendance trajectories ahead of critical examination periods.

The academy also promotes the concept of attendance as pedagogy, recognising that attendance is not simply a matter of compliance but a core element of teaching, learning, and culture. Regular CPD is delivered to staff to build a shared understanding of attendance as a learning behaviour, linking classroom engagement, relationships, and recognition systems with sustained attendance improvement. Staff are equipped to identify early signs of disengagement, to use consistent language around attendance expectations, and to apply the GRAD values framework to reinforce belonging and motivation.

This multi-tiered approach, combining external partnership, targeted mentoring, and professional development, has contributed to measurable gains in attendance outcomes and a steady reduction in persistent absence. The focus moving forward is to continue closing the attendance gap for disadvantaged pupils, ensuring that every pupil is present, participating, and achieving to their full potential.

Summary
In summary, our cohort of pupils who are disadvantaged are more likely to arrive in school behind their non-disadvantaged peers and continue to suffer from poor mental health, high anxiety and low self-esteem. These factors can lead to low attendance, school refusal and increasing gaps in achievement. Moving forward, we will continue to focus on improving attendance, providing support for wellbeing and mental health concerns, and providing all the opportunities possible to ensure our pupils who are disadvantaged receive the best teaching possible, the best curriculum possible and achieve inline or above their non-disadvantaged peers.

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
Counselling	Al Hurreiyah