

## Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2021 to 2022 academic year) 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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

### School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Hexham Middle School
Number of pupils in school	467
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	14%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	2021/22 – 2023/24
Date this statement was published	December 2021
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2022
Statement authorised by	Graeme Atkins, Executive Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Liam Watters, Head of School
Governor / Trustee lead	Kate Chaplin, Trustee

### Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£81,900
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£9,280
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£91,180

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

At Hexham Middle School, we have designed an ambitious and empowering curriculum which has success for all learners as its core. The curriculum is driven by our ethos and 'outstanding eagerness to promote good learning'. The curriculum promotes a building of respect, high expectations rooted in a love of learning, education in its broadest sense and shaping children as citizens of the wider world.

We have high expectations for all pupils and carefully plan a curriculum to enable success for all, despite varied starting points and backgrounds. We want all pupils to make rapid and sustained progress in their learning and to achieve well. We aim to create a positive learning environment where success for all is celebrated, and pupils are enabled to access all aspects of school life. This is implemented through delivery of the strategies within this statement.

As part of the strategy, we have an unrelenting focus on improving the quality of teaching and consistency of experience for all pupils; providing targeted academic support where it is needed to enable strong progress; implementing a programme of tailored wider support and care and offering a vibrant calendar of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities. All of these areas combine to provide a well-planned approach to closing the disadvantage attainment gap whilst ensuring the very best educational experience for all learners. It is our upmost priority to improve academic outcomes for our disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils to enable them to progress to the next stage of their education with the skills and experience they require.

Incorporated within this strategy is a focus on education recovery which incorporates both internal and national analysis to identify priority areas within our school's curriculum. Our approach ensures that the children who need the most support, including our disadvantaged learners, have access to tailored provision.

At the heart of the strategy is a detailed understanding of our pupils and their needs and backgrounds. We work hard to invest in building relationships with our pupils and their families. We respond to the needs of our children and adapt our provision accordingly. This strategy is not the responsibility of one member of staff. Our whole staff team understand the intentions and the strategies are adopted at a whole-school level with a shared understanding that raising achievement and enhancing experience for our disadvantaged learners is the priority for us all. This focus is reinforced through whole school professional learning and in investment in strategy groups incorporating senior and middle leaders as well as tutors, teaching and support staff.

### Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Reading

	Diagnostic assessment, ongoing teacher assessment and discussion with teachers and pupils show a significant gap in reading development between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged peers. We have also found that reading is an area of concern for a wider group of pupils following the periods of school closure (when compared with 2018-29 achievement data).
2	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>Diagnostic assessment, ongoing teacher assessment and discussion with teachers and pupils show a significant gap in mathematics development between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged peers. This is particularly noticeable in pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills.</p>
3	<p>Improving literacy</p> <p>Based on current assessment, we will continue to drive forward improvements in the teaching of literacy across all curriculum areas. This includes the development of vocabulary ('buzzwords' approach) to close the vocabulary gap, the incorporation of reading into all subjects' curriculum planning, the development of a reading strategy 'VIPERS' which can be used across subjects and the implementation of renewed literacy-focused feedback.</p>
4	<p>Social, emotional and behavioural</p> <p>We are experiencing higher levels of referrals for additional social, emotional and behavioural support. This has had a particular impact on disadvantaged and vulnerable learners. We have a greater number of pupils who require additional mentoring and support to enable them to fulfil their potential and remove barriers to their achievement.</p>
5	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Attendance analysis for the past year shows that disadvantaged pupil attendance was 4% lower than their non-disadvantaged peers. There is now a higher level of persistent absence, particularly in KS3, for disadvantaged pupils. This attendance concern has increased due to the pandemic, and, for some disadvantaged pupils, this has continued in the new term.</p>
6	<p>Parental engagement</p> <p>For some disadvantaged pupils, the level of parental engagement and home learning impacts on their progress. This may present as issues with organisation, preparedness for learning and general engagement in learning. As a school, we intend to continue working closely with parents and carers to encourage active engagement in learning and their child's educational experience.</p>

### 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 reading comprehension and fluency across KS2 and KS3.	Strategies implemented will lead to an overall improvement in reading teaching which will impact on pupils' attainment, progress and reading confidence. This will be observed in both outcomes and in lesson observation/ assessment.

	In KS2, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving expected standard in reading will be in line with their non-disadvantaged peers.
Children with significantly lower reading ages able to read with greater fluency and phonic awareness.	Targeted support plans including phonics teaching, small group support and 1:1 reading (coupled with the wider reading strategies) will see the gap between chronological age and reading age close for disadvantaged pupils. This impact will be closely monitored throughout the year and beyond.
Improved mathematical outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.	In KS2, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving expected standard in maths will be in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. In KS3, test outcomes will be monitored closely to ensure that the disparity is reducing, and that targeted support is provided rapidly.
Embedding of literacy approaches across all curriculum areas.	Across the school and following ongoing professional development through implementation of the literacy development plan, the quality of education review (incl. book reviews) will show an embedding of the school's approaches based on latest research. We will see an improvement in disadvantaged pupils' vocabulary retention incl. spelling.
Improve and sustain the attendance of all pupils, including disadvantaged learners.	Sustained high attendance demonstrated by the overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than X%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being continually reduced and the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below X% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than X% lower than their peers.
Improve the engagement and wellbeing of disadvantaged pupils in wider curriculum and enrichment opportunities.	A tracking system will be implemented which means that disadvantaged pupils' participation is closely monitored, and that swift action is taken to address gaps. Disadvantaged pupils will engage in school life and opportunities on offer.  Through pupil voice, surveys and reviewing pastoral data, pupils will show increased engagement in school life.
Increase levels of parental engagement to enhance the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.	Parents regularly engaging with the Class Charts app.  1:1 parent meetings taking place throughout the year to build relationships, confidence and trust. A mentoring programme is in place for pupils which builds stronger home-school links.  Calendar of opportunities for parent support in place including reading sessions. Online parents' evening option to increase attendance for disadvantaged pupils – review the attendance data.

### 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: £39,700

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Review and continue to develop curriculum planning with ambition for all learners at its core from year 5 to year 13 with a specific focus on developing the teaching of reading.	An investment in curriculum planning with a particular focus on developing the reading approach and curriculum has been shown to have +6 months positive impact. This will include further development of the whole class reading model, engaging with other schools and implementing strategies such as reading VIPERS. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies</a>	1, 2 and 3
Purchase of diagnostic assessments for all year groups including GL baseline and end of year testing and CAT4 testing (in the absence of KS2 SATs data).	Standardised tests 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: <a href="#">Standardised tests   Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a>	1, 2, 3
DP Focus Group to continue their focused work targeting all aspects of this plan.	Our experience has shown that it is more effective for a team to be invested in the development plan and to lead on aspects to ensure that momentum is sustained, and approaches are reviewed continually based on the success of their implementation. This group comprises all senior and middle leaders who target their focus and report back on actions/ successes/ impact/ challenges etc.	1 to 6
Professional development for staff including release time for colleagues.	A programme of professional development will be calendared to further embed the school's '10 Elements of Great Teaching'. This will focus on metacognitive strategies and their successful implementation across the curriculum. <a href="#">Metacognition and self-regulation   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a>	1, 2, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £50,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Fresh Start phonics programme purchased and implemented (incl. training).	Implement the Fresh Start phonics programme for learners whose reading age is significantly below their chronological age and where reading fluency is a concern. This scheme is widely used and is currently being assessed by the EEF for impact. Phonics investment for struggling readers is shown to give +5 months positive impact.	1 and 3

	<a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</a>	
Intervention staff recruited to provide targeted support in all year groups. This includes an intervention coordinator for KS2 as well as one maths and one English specialist for KS3.	Small group tuition is most effective when learning is well-matched to the needs of the pupils attending. Targeted and regularly reviewed intervention planned in conjunction with class teachers will target gaps and provide additional support. This will take several forms and will focus on developing reading comprehension, fluency, mathematics, spelling and grammar as well as memory and retention. Interventions will build confidence through well-planned practice time. <a href="#">Small group tuition   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a>	1 to 3
Purchase of online learning platforms to provide personalised tutoring and increase rates of home learning.	Engaging with individualised tutoring can support progress by +5 months. The use of online tutoring means that sessions can also be accessed remotely. We implement and make successful use of programmes such as Reading Plus, Maths Whizz and Maths Flex to support online tutoring. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition</a>	1, 2, 3 and 6

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

Budgeted cost: £37,100

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Engage with the Poverty Proofing programme alongside Children's North East.	Based on positive experiences of other schools and the impact of the charity's work in the region, we will engage with them to review the school's policies and procedures. This will have a specific focus on the impact of the pandemic on children and young people and will involve sessions with SLT, pupils and parents.	1 to 6
Increase disadvantaged pupil mentoring and recruit a Pupil Support Worker to provide targeted wellbeing, behaviour and emotional support.	There has been a considerable rise in the number of referrals to external agency support and in the proportion of children requiring additional social and emotional support in school. The EEF shows a positive +4 months on the implementation of effective intervention here. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</a>	4, 5 and 6
Attendance monitoring, tracking and intervention from the new cross-trust Attendance Officer.	Building on the guidance set out by the DfE below as well as engaging with local academy chains who have turned the tide on persistent absence, targeted support and intervention will be provided. DfE's <a href="#">Improving School Attendance</a>	5

Forest School curriculum for disadvantaged pupils.	Although the research base is minimal and no ‘months progress’ is articulated, we have observed positive social and emotional benefits of our pupils engaging with a Forest School curriculum. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning</a>	4
Parental engagement sessions planned throughout the year. This will include online events, reading workshops and 1:1 meetings (informal) to provide support materials etc.	Implement an approach of parental engagement sessions which empower parents to better support their child’s learning and engagement. Research shows +4 months progress. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement</a>	6
Contingency allocation for day-to-day expenditure such as uniform, Breakfast Club, equipment etc.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	1 to 6

**Total budgeted cost: £127,300**

## 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 2020 to 2021 academic year.

Overall, we maintained strong progress towards achieving the objectives established in the plan. The impact of the pandemic meant that our focus day-to-day was very much on ensuring that disadvantaged learners got the best possible experience in terms of remote learning, pastoral care or in-school provision. The school worked to ensure that all learners had access to an online device, had regular contact with school (including form teachers on a daily basis) and that school places were made available where possible. Despite this, it is clear that not all objectives were fully met due to the impacts of COVID-19 and that our disadvantaged learners were negatively impacted by the ongoing affects of lockdown and isolation.

The quality of remote provision was very strong and attendance at live lessons was high. Despite this, and the catch-up work in school, disadvantaged pupils' data shows gaps in learning. We have noticed the most significant impact in reading, which is why the strategy moving forward will focus so heavily on this crucial area. We have also observed gaps in writing development (particularly at the higher standard) and leaders/ teachers will continue to address this.

Our work to strengthen curriculum planning including collaboration with other schools did not progress at the desired pace due to challenges around working together and priorities moving to planning a remote curriculum for learners. This will now continue into the new strategy. The direction is clear and progress has been made in many areas to improve the cohesion between key stages particularly in key stage 3 between middle and high schools.

Attendance strategies were well implemented and this continued throughout lockdowns with the team encouraging school attendance, especially where remote learning was not being accessed. The school provided face-to-face education for a large number of key workers and vulnerable pupils and made every effort to ensure that all disadvantaged learners (who could not or would not access resources a home) attended school. Despite this, the impact of the pandemic on attendance is clear with higher levels of PA. This is why the new strategy accounts for this and work has already been accelerated to address these issues.

Targeted academic support continued successfully and had a positive impact on pupils. This happened in school (during closure periods) as well as through remote intervention classes. In school, catch-up classes continued.

Despite a comprehensive approach to pastoral care, this was disrupted due to the pandemic. The school managed to provide many extra-curricular opportunities (within restrictions) both in school and virtually. The targeted support for behaviour and wellbeing continued and, although not as impactful as hoped, did have a positive affect and work will continue in the new term with pace.



**Externally provided programmes**

Programme	Provider

### Further information (optional)

This plan will be supported by wider development work, including:

- Strengthening the capacity of our attendance team to enable the objectives above to be met as well as providing additional capacity to allow the Attendance Officer to provide targeted support and to work with families and external agencies.
- Further developing the Partnership liaison including a focus on curriculum planning and assessment so that the joined-up approach continues. This has started successfully from Y7 to Y9 and will now progress from Y3 to Y6. This will impact positively on all pupils including disadvantaged learners.
- Establishing a mentoring programme in school which will see some form tutors being released from class to work with vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. This had a positive impact in 20/21 and will be monitored closely moving forward.
- Training Y8 pupils to become Peer Mentors to provide social support. This is in conjunction with mental health training received in 20/21 as part of the local authority's approach.
- Relaunching the school's teaching and learning policy with a specific focus on how we provide feedback in all subjects and how this is used by learners. This will be based on the latest research here: [EEF evidence](#).

As mentioned in the body of the plan, this work is continually monitored and evaluated through our 'DP Focus Group' made up of senior and middle leaders. With each member focusing on a particular strand (from the identified challenges), we work collaboratively and meet regularly to review the success of our implementation. This approach ensures that this work is high on our agenda and that the approaches are understood and adopted by all colleagues in the team.