

Pupil premium strategy statement – Rushey Mead 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	1758
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	24.1%
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)	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026
Statement authorised by	Victoria Barwell
Pupil premium lead	Helen Mugglestone
Governor / Trustee lead	Sally Cox

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 412,800
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£ 23,000
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£ 436,850

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Rushey Mead, one of our guiding principles is a commitment to social justice, social mobility, and the development of the whole child. Our intention is that every student, regardless of prior attainment, need, or background, has access to high-quality provision and achieves highly, both academically and beyond the classroom. We are determined to also ensure that disadvantaged students have opportunities to broaden their cultural capital through a variety of enrichment experiences.

Our Pupil Premium strategy is designed to address both common challenges and individual needs. Whilst we recognise that Pupil Premium is only a partial indicator of disadvantage, our approach combines whole-school initiatives that benefit all students with carefully targeted, personalised interventions. Alongside this, we pay close attention to the needs of vulnerable pupils, such as those with a social worker, young carers, and children in care—whether or not they are eligible for the funding.

We acknowledge that disadvantage is complex and multifaceted, so our response must be equally wide-ranging. We aim to support students' academic, social, emotional, and organisational development. This involves a collective effort: teachers, tutors, mentors, pastoral staff, SENCOs, parents, and external agencies all play a vital role. Through high expectations, strong pastoral systems, and the commitment of our Pupil Premium Champions, we work to remove barriers so that disadvantaged students can thrive in all aspects of school life.

Our approach is rooted in the belief that an ambitious curriculum is an entitlement for every student. We do not dilute or reduce provision for disadvantaged learners; instead, we ensure all benefit from a strong curriculum design and the highest standards of teaching. Every member of staff understands their shared responsibility for disadvantaged pupils, and we are clear that quality-first teaching, through direct instruction, is the most effective way to close gaps.

We remain committed to ongoing reflection and improvement. By continually reviewing and refining our Pupil Premium strategy, we ensure disadvantaged students are supported effectively and are never further disadvantaged whilst in our care.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Cultural Capital - Research shows that students eligible for the Pupil Premium often have had fewer cultural and enriching experiences than other pupils, creating barriers in language, wider understanding, and sometimes aspirations.
2	Literacy – Key Stage 2 data and baseline testing show that a high proportion of our disadvantaged cohort start secondary school with delayed literacy levels.
3	Achievement – There remains an in-school gap between Pupil Premium students and their peers, despite pupil premium students at Rushey Mead consistently achieving better than their non-PP peers nationally.
4	Attendance – Despite the narrow in school gap, national trends show that disadvantaged students are significantly more likely to be persistently absent than their peers. This gap in attendance reduces access to learning and directly affects progress and attainment.
5	Wellbeing – Many disadvantaged pupils face social and emotional challenges, including anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, which are being intensified by the cost-of-living crisis. The pastoral team identify that the number of Pupil Premium students experiencing difficulties is proportionally higher than other students.
6	Safeguarding - Internal data shows that over 50% of our safeguarding referrals are made for disadvantaged students whilst they only represent 24.1% of the school population. This results in a large proportion of our Assistant Heads of Years' (DSL) time being spent supporting disadvantaged students.

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
1. Cultural Capital - Disadvantaged students experience a range of high-quality enrichment experiences so they: - build their cultural capital - build their social capital - develop wider soft skills - can fully access and appreciate the curriculum - have clarity about their post 16 options - move onto meaningful post 16 destinations - develop their whole selves during their time at Rushey Mead	The proportion of disadvantaged students in extra- curricular and co-curricular opportunities at least matches the proportion of the whole school cohort (24.1%) Representation of disadvantaged students on trips and visits at least matches the proportion of the whole school cohort (24.1%) The proportion of disadvantaged students graduating on the Rushey Passport at least matches the proportion of the whole school cohort (24.1%) Specific enrichment trips for disadvantaged students run in each year group Destinations data shows all disadvantaged students have suitable post 16 pathways The curriculum enables meaningful opportunities for building cultural capital across a wide range of disciplines
2. Literacy – Disadvantaged students are able to access the full KS3 and KS4 curriculum without literacy being a barrier. - Students identified as needing support receive targeted interventions and make gains in their identified area of literacy development - All targeted students make gains in their identified area of literacy improvement which in turn enables them to fully access the curriculum and make accelerated progress. - Disadvantaged students develop a life-long love of reading for pleasure.	Reading assessment data shows that disadvantaged students read at a level that enables them to access the full curriculum Reading assessment data shows accelerated progress in those receiving interventions Reading assessment data shows clear gains in reading year on year DDIs and Pupil Pursuits show that disadvantaged students can access the full curriculum confidently and are supported with appropriate scaffolds where needed

	Borrowing rates from the library show that disadvantaged students read for pleasure with a rate of at least equal to others nationally. National Literacy Trust data indicates that disadvantaged students develop better habits of reading for pleasure than others nationally.
3. Achievement: - Disadvantaged students benefit from the whole school approach to teaching and learning. - Disadvantaged students achieve well in public examinations compared to national averages and go onto meaningful post 16 pathways. - Attainment gaps are narrowed between disadvantaged students and their peers. - Individual barriers to learning are removed so that the targeted disadvantaged and vulnerable students are supported in their academic growth. - All staff are aware of the Pupil Premium Strategy and their part in it, having high expectations for all students.	Disadvantaged students achieve as well as others nationally in BASICS and other key attainment measures. Progress and attainment gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers in school are reduced, compared to 2025 outcomes. Termly tracking data shows that interventions and mentoring time have an impact on improving attitude to learning, attendance and progress over time. Staff articulate high aspirations for disadvantaged students the importance of high-quality teaching through direct instruction.
4. Attendance: - Disadvantaged students regularly attend school, feel a sense of belonging and have positive in-school relationships with staff and peers. - The whole school attendance strategy supports disadvantaged students and their families to maintain regular attendance. - Disadvantaged students who struggle with regular attendance receive timely and targeted support from the Team Around the Year Group.	Overall attendance rate for disadvantaged students is at least at national average for others The in-school attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers is well below the national gap. The proportion of disadvantaged students who are Persistently Absent (PA) is below the level of PA for others nationally. Disadvantaged students targeted for additional support for attendance show improvement in attendance figures across the academic year.
5. Wellbeing: - Sustained and improved wellbeing for all pupils, with particular support for disadvantaged students, so that they are engaged, confident, and able to make strong academic progress.	Effective programmes support students' social and emotional needs, including counselling, family support workers, Assistant Heads of Year and MHST colleagues.

- Students requiring additional support receive a bespoke offer of targeted support from skilled professionals, which positively impacts their wellbeing.	Qualitative data shows that disadvantaged pupils report and are observed to have improved well-being, engagement, confidence, resilience, attendance, behaviour, and academic progress. Disadvantaged students who are targeted for SEMH interventions show better self-regulation, better relationships with staff and peers, better motivation and higher grades in internal reporting Students requiring it, have access to high quality alternative provision and are thriving there.
6. Safeguarding - Disadvantaged students receive timely, consistent, and effective safeguarding support. - Strong in-school Early Help offer supports disadvantaged students and their families. - Regularly signposting to outside agencies and community projects to support families in need. - Referrals for additional support are targeted and purposeful to ensure families can access the help they need.	All staff consistently identify and make safeguarding referrals, with disadvantaged students' referrals addressed promptly and accurately logged. Tailored support plans implemented within agreed timeframes, leading to observable improvements in disadvantaged students' wellbeing, attendance, and engagement.

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: £ 200,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Provide PL time and training so that across all subjects there is high-quality teaching through Direct Instruction following the Rushey CEMT Model of Great Teaching</i>	The best strategy for reducing the gap is quality-first teaching through direct instruction. High-quality teaching EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Effective Professional Development EEF	2,3
<i>Provide PL time and training so that across all subjects there is strong curriculum design ensuring that each subject curriculum is inclusive, with a multiple focus on language, metacognition & key vocabulary being explicitly taught.</i>	Subject leads use evidence from cognitive science, metacognition and literacy to shape the curriculum. An evidence-informed approach to... Durrington Research School Teaching metacognitive strategies is an inexpensive method to help pupils become more independent learners. Metacognition and self-regulation Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	2,3
<i>Provide training for staff so that there is a DSL Assistant HOY attached to every year group and four senior leaders and two family support workers are also DSL trained.</i>	Children learn best when they feel safe and valued	6
<i>Purchase baseline diagnostic reading software so that data is used regularly to identify those needing extra support and to monitor their progress over time. Teachers use</i>	When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups, leading to improving outcomes. Diagnostic assessment EEF	2,3

<i>reading ages data to inform planning and use scaffolds for support.</i>		
<i>Invest in a team of teacher educators equipped with knowledge and skills to embed evidence informed practice across the school.</i>	NPQs in classroom teaching or specialisms develop the skills and progress the careers of teachers and leaders at all levels as well as, ultimately, improving student outcomes. Research Agenda theme: Teacher Recruitment and Retention EEF	2,3
<i>Provide sufficient PL time to ensure that every staff member understands their role in supporting disadvantaged students and to foster a unified approach across the school.</i>	Sharing values around the unique strengths and needs of your pupils will unite your school community around what is being put in place to support the children in your setting. The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium EEF	All
<i>Additional Period 6 lessons in Year 11 provide a supportive, teacher-led environment for disadvantaged students to complete their revision activities.</i>	Extending school time can lead to improved attainment through additional learning hours providing pupils with more exposure to teaching, more time to engage with content, and generally more learning. Extending school time EEF	2,3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 118.000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>The PP Champions & Assistant PP champions roles continue to be funded.</i> <i>Termly tracking data is used to identify cohorts of disadvantaged students at risk of underachieving.</i> <i>PP Champions & Assistant PP champions mentor their identified cohort, setting targets and providing bespoke interventions.</i>	Closing the disadvantage gap - One to one and small group mentoring offers greater levels of interaction and feedback compared to whole class teaching which can support pupils to spend more time on new or unfamiliar, overcome barriers to learning and increase their progress through the curriculum. One to one tuition EEF High quality interventions have a big impact on the outcomes of struggling pupil premium students. Using pupil premium EEF educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk	All
<i>Targeted reading interventions are provided for struggling readers, including small group withdrawal</i>	Targeted support matched to individual pupil needs can be employed to help boost literacy Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	2,3

<i>with specialist reading development mentors</i>		
<i>The reading and language development team (RLDT) work with pupil premium students who are new to English.</i>	Targeted support matched to individual pupil needs can be employed to help boost language development & oracy. Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	2,3
<i>Librarian & Assistant Librarian develop and encourage a love of reading through assemblies, competitions and incentives</i> <i>Library borrowing data is shared with year teams and PP champions and assistants so they can champion and support further.</i> <i>Reading is promoted through universal tutor time read aloud sessions</i>	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English Reading comprehension strategies EEF word-gap.pdf	2,3
<i>Homework completion of disadvantaged students is closely monitored, and homework support groups are offered for those identified as struggling with completion.</i>	Making a Difference with Effective Tutoring EEF	2,3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 118.000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>NHS mental health surveys to enable identification of students requiring additional support</i> <i>Layers of support for students' mental health to allow them to develop a healthy self-esteem and mental health and improve their emotional wellbeing:-</i>	Mental health & safeguarding concerns negatively affect the education and readiness to engage with education of pupil premium students. Using pupil premium guidance for school leaders	5

- <i>Team Around the year Group support for struggling disadvantaged students</i> - <i>Full time qualified on-site counsellor</i> - <i>ELSAs in school deliver ELSA support sessions</i>		
<i>All disadvantaged students receive a one-to-one careers meeting, a mock interview and are supported with college applications.</i>	High-quality careers advice can make a real difference to young people's outcomes after school, particularly those from disadvantaged homes. Poorer young people more likely to have career aspirations that... EEF	1
<i>Enrichment trips and experiences are subsidised for disadvantaged students & specific enrichment trips for disadvantaged students run in each year group</i>	Evidence indicates that attending extra-curricular activities has a positive impact on attendance at school, behaviour and relationships with peers. Life skills and enrichment EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1
<i>Disadvantaged students at risk of becoming PA supported by tutors, year teams and Family Support workers.</i> <i>Family Support Workers develop strong relationships with hard-to-reach families of disadvantaged students, including supporting with transport to school as needed</i>	Supporting attendance EEF	4,5
<i>Breakfast club offered to disadvantaged students and encouraged where punctuality and attendance are a concern</i>	Breakfast clubs Evidence into Action TES, How to Build an Effective Breakfast Club: What the Research Says	5,6
<i>Contingency fund for acute issues.</i>	Based on our experiences, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	All

Total budgeted cost: £ 438,000