

Pupil Premium Strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Highfields Primary School
Number of pupils in school	140
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	35%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2026/27-2028/29
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Mrs S Garratt
Pupil premium lead	Mrs S Evans
Governor / Trustee lead	S Lee Keow

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£189,100 (projected)
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£189,100

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy plan

	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
2026/27		16	13	16	14	24	22
2027/28	-		16	13	16	14	24
2028/29	-	-	-	16	13	16	14

Statement of intent

The ultimate aim at Highfields Primary School is for all pupils, regardless of their background or the challenges they face, to make good progress and achieve highly across the curriculum. The primary objective of this Pupil Premium Strategy is to diminish the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers and to sustain high levels of attainment in areas where this gap has already been closed.

Historically, attainment data at Highfields has been highly cohort-specific, with gaps narrowing and widening across different year groups. The table above outlines the number of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding within each cohort and projects how these numbers may change over the three-year period covered by this strategy. This enables leaders and governors to identify cohorts that may require additional support and to plan strategically for future need.

Highfields Primary School is a two-form entry primary school located in Sandwell. Through rigorous assessment, monitoring and pastoral support processes, we have identified several common barriers that can impact on learning and achievement for disadvantaged pupils. These include:

Limited opportunities for academic support and enrichment outside school.

Underdeveloped language and communication skills.

Attendance and punctuality difficulties.

Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

In addition, some pupils experience complex family circumstances, including involvement from external agencies and social care services, which can create additional barriers to engagement, attendance and academic progress. Our strategy is designed to address these challenges and ensure that all pupils are supported to achieve their full potential.

At Key Stage 2, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers closed in 2025 and this strong performance was largely maintained in 2026, although a small decline in reading outcomes also affected the combined measure. At Key Stage 1, a small attainment gap remains in reading, whilst a more significant gap exists in writing, reflecting lower attainment across the cohort as a whole. A larger gap of 16 percentage points is also evident in mathematics.

In 2026, there was a notable attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers. However, in the previous year, disadvantaged pupils achieved more highly than their peers in several measures, reinforcing the cohort-specific nature of outcomes within a relatively small school population. This highlights the importance of using ongoing internal assessment and monitoring data, alongside statutory outcomes, to identify emerging needs and target support effectively.

Attendance continues to present a challenge for a proportion of disadvantaged pupils. During the 2025-26 academic year, 31% of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium had attendance below 90%, compared with 18% of pupils across the whole school. Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence therefore remains a key priority within this strategy.

We are addressing this with a mixture of approaches.

We have maintained a focus on high quality teaching for all, ensuring that teaching and learning opportunities suit pupils who belong to vulnerable groups. We have also prioritised funding to maintain some support staff to intervene in the key areas of social, emotional and mental health and communication and language.

The focus for intervention in EYFS and KS1 will be on the new school phonics programme 'Little Wandle' which requires same day 'keep up' support to be provided to pupils who are struggling and a half termly catch up programme to be delivered to those identified through half termly assessments. The DHT and English lead and SENCo will be providing support with the newly introduced 'fluency' element of the scheme for Y2 children and those transitioning into KS2 without a solid base in phonics.

At Highfields, we know children must be ready to learn by ensuring their personal, social, emotional and developmental needs are met. This has been particularly evident over recent years where more children and parents are reporting difficulties relating to SEMH (social, emotional and mental health). While all staff have had training in approaches to support pupils, the strategy includes tailored support and interventions in this area alongside the school's universal approach.

Due to the socio-economic disadvantages that many of our pupils face, there are many experiences and opportunities that are not afforded to them in terms of personal development and preparing for their futures. Highfields intends to keep high aspirations

at the heart of the school's vision and increase the opportunities for personal development available to our pupils.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Language and Communication Development Many disadvantaged pupils enter school with less well-developed vocabulary, oral language and communication skills than their peers. These barriers affect early reading, writing, comprehension and wider curriculum access, particularly in EYFS and KS1. This is reflected in school outcomes, where Communication and Language remains an identified area for improvement and EYFS adult interactions are a key school priority.
2	Progress in phonics and early reading Phonics outcomes remain below national figures, with Year 1 outcomes significantly below national outcomes in 2026. Disadvantaged pupils were disproportionately represented amongst children who do not securely acquire early reading skills in 2026.
3	Gaps in attainment in reading, writing and maths Internal and statutory assessment data show that attainment gaps can emerge between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, evidenced last year in KS1 mathematics and writing, and that outcomes vary considerably between cohorts. Continued focus is required to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve in line with their peers and attain at higher standards where appropriate.
4	Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Needs Some disadvantaged pupils experience SEMH difficulties that affect engagement, attendance, behaviour and academic achievement. For a proportion of pupils, these needs are linked to adverse childhood experiences, family circumstances or involvement from external agencies.
5	Attendance and Persistent Absentee Our attendance data is 3.2% lower for disadvantaged pupils than for non-disadvantaged pupils. However, last year 31% of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium had attendance below 90%, compared with 18% of pupils across the whole school.

6	Complex Family Circumstances and Reduced Access to Enrichment Some disadvantaged pupils face additional challenges outside school, including social care involvement, financial hardship and reduced opportunities for enrichment experiences, which can affect readiness to learn, attendance and aspiration.
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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
For children in KS2 to achieve in line with non-disadvantaged peers including for GDS	Achieve national average attainment and progress scores in KS2 Reading (0), KS2 Maths and KS2 writing (0) in 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29
For children in KS1 to achieve in- line with their non-disadvantaged peers including for GDS	Teacher assessment shows children have met the standard in R,W and M 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29
For disadvantaged pupils in Year 1 to achieve in line with their peers nationally in phonics.	Achieve national average scores in phonics screening 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29
For disadvantaged pupils in EYFS to improve speech, language and communication skills so that they are operating at age related levels.	WellComm scores show that children are scoring 'green' for their age group by the end of Reception and that children have achieved the C&L strands of EYFS 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29
Improve attendance of disadvantaged pupils	Attendance data shows number of disadvantaged children who are persistent absentees is in line with peers 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29

To improve access to enrichment for disadvantaged pupils	Disadvantaged pupils' participation in clubs and enrichment activities, including trips will be in line with, or exceed, that of non-disadvantaged pupils.
To improve social, emotional mental health and well being for disadvantaged pupils	Through pupil voice surveys, at least 90% of disadvantaged pupils will report that they feel safe, supported and included in 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: £45000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Introduce fluency element of little wandle scheme	Highfields Highfields responded to government guidance relating to systematic phonics and purchased the scheme 'Little Wandle'. In 2026/7 the fluency element of the scheme will be introduced in Year 2 and for children in KS2 with an insecure phonics base <i>EEF states There is very extensive evidence to support the use of a systematic phonics programme with pupils in Key Stage 1.</i> <i>EEF Toolkit- High impact for low cost</i>	2,3
Provide staff with ongoing professional development, coaching and instructional support to implement Highfields' evidence-informed Teaching and Learning Principles, including	Highfields SIP identifies the need to develop a shared understanding of evidence-informed pedagogy and improve consistency of teaching. <i>EEF states that high-quality teaching has the greatest impact on closing disadvantage gaps.</i> ☐ Adaptive teaching is particularly effective for disadvantaged and	1,2,3,4

adaptive teaching, retrieval practice, explicit instruction and responsive assessment.	SEND pupils when it maintains ambition and curriculum access. Highfields' SIP identifies inclusion and adaptive teaching as key priorities, with the development of an Inclusion Hub and strengthened universal provision. High-quality adaptive teaching enables disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND to access ambitious curriculum content without reducing expectations. EEF SEND guidance recommends adaptations to teaching as a core component of effective practice.	
Develop Highfields approach to oracy including vocabulary-rich classrooms and explicit vocabulary instruction including higher order vocabulary for GDS pupils	EEF <i>Oral Language Interventions</i> show approximately six months' additional progress. Explicit vocabulary instruction supports reading comprehension and wider curriculum attainment.	1,2,3,
Termly monitoring of the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils including those working at or capable of achieving Greater Depth Standard	Identification of disadvantaged pupils with GDS potential through termly pupil progress meetings.	1, 2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 55,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To provide high quality 'keep up' and 'catch up' support to EYFS and KS1 pupils in-line with the new phonics scheme	Highfields <i>Highfields responded to government guidance relating to systematic phonics and purchased the scheme 'Little Wandle'. In 2023/24 all KS1 cohorts are now at the appropriate</i>	1,2,3

	<i>place in the scheme. The scheme requires same day 'keep up' support to be delivered to children who found the whole class session to be challenging (at a different time) and also identifies children half termly for a 'catch up' intervention. Support staff in EYFS and KS1 will continue to deliver this daily.</i> .	
Deliver Little Wandle Fluency and targeted reading fluency interventions for disadvantaged pupils in Year 2 and Key Stage 2 who require additional support to develop reading accuracy, automaticity and comprehension.	Highfields has identified progress in reading as needing attention, in particular when children transition from synthetic phonics. <i>EEF- There is very extensive evidence to support the use of a systematic phonics programme with pupils in Key Stage 1.</i> <i>EEF Toolkit- High impact for low cost</i> <i>Reading fluency supports comprehension by reducing cognitive load.</i> <i>DfE Reading Framework highlights fluency as a key bridge between decoding and comprehension</i>	2,3
WellComm screening and targeted speech and language intervention to provide high quality early intervention for children with speech and language needs	<i>EEF- Research on TAs delivering targeted interventions in one-to-one or small group settings shows a consistent impact on attainment.</i> <i>EEF Toolkit- Very high impact for low cost</i>	

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

Budgeted cost: £ 70,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Provide targeted SEMH interventions, mentoring, emotional literacy support and therapeutic provision	<i>EEF Social and Emotional Learning approaches provide around four months additional progress.</i> SEMH Toolkit	4,5,6

for disadvantaged pupils experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties.	<i>1 in 10 children have a diagnosable mental health disorder; around 3 children in every classroom (i) 1 in 5 young adults have a diagnosable mental health disorder (ii) Half of all mental health problems manifest by the age of 14, with 75% by age 24 (iii) Almost 1 in 4 children and young people show some evidence of mental ill health (including anxiety and depression).</i>	
To provide mentoring and pastoral support to ensure early help is provided to remove barriers to learning. Mentor 25%	Some disadvantaged pupils experience complex family circumstances and social care involvement. Early Help interventions can reduce barriers to attendance, behaviour and learning. SEMH Toolkit <i>1 in 10 children have a diagnosable mental health disorder; around 3 children in every classroom (i) 1 in 5 young adults have a diagnosable mental health disorder (ii) Half of all mental health problems manifest by the age of 14, with 75% by age 24 (iii) Almost 1 in 4 children and young people show some evidence of mental ill health (including anxiety and depression).</i>	4, 5,
Provide attendance mentoring, personalised attendance plans, parental meetings and targeted pastoral support for disadvantaged pupils at risk of persistent absence.	Attendance is a dedicated SIP priority. DfE attendance guidance highlights early intervention, strong relationships and personalised support as key drivers of improvement.	5
Financial support for children to enable access to educational visits, residential visits and to support purchase of uniform.	- <i>Sandwell trends show 28% of children in Rowley are living in poverty</i> Highfields <i>This money is accessed and spent by parents.</i> Research suggests participation in enrichment activities is associated with improved confidence, engagement and aspiration.	6

	Ensures disadvantaged pupils experience the full curriculum offer.	
Parental Engagement Programme	Highfields SIP prioritises parental engagement within phonics, attendance and EYFS communication and language work. <i>EEF parental engagement approaches show positive impact when carefully targeted.</i>	1,2,5,6
Priority access to enrichment opportunities, competitions, educational visits and leadership roles	Highfields SIP prioritises improving the number of pupils working at the greater depth standard which will be impacted by broadening experiences and developing cultural capital.	1,2
Contingency fund- As PP funding can increase or decrease mid-year, a 10% contingency fund was recommended to school by their advisor.	N/A	all

Total budgeted cost: £ 189,100

(£19,100 contingency)