

Pupil premium strategy statement – Castle Primary School

Before completing this template, read the Education Endowment Foundation's [guide to the pupil premium](#) and DfE's [pupil premium guidance for school leaders](#), which includes the 'menu of approaches'. It is for school leaders to decide what activity to spend their pupil premium on, within the framework set out by the menu.

All schools that receive pupil premium are required to use this template to complete and publish a pupil premium statement on their school website by 31 December every academic year.

If you are starting a new pupil premium strategy plan, use this blank template. If you are continuing a strategy plan from last academic year, you may prefer to edit your existing statement, if that version was published using the template.

Before publishing your completed statement, delete the instructions (text in italics) in this template, and this text box.

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	293
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	37%
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)	Year 1 of a 3 year plan: 2025/2026 2026/2027 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Full Governing Body
Pupil premium lead	Tom Paddon
Governor / Trustee lead	Val Bishop

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£143,925
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£0
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>	£160,055

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

The overarching aim of our Pupil Premium strategy at Castle Primary School, Tiverton, is to ensure that all barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils — whether academic, social, emotional, attendance-related, or linked to wider circumstances — are identified, challenged and overcome within a caring, ambitious and inclusive environment.

We are committed to ensuring that every disadvantaged pupil is known as an individual. Through structured provision mapping and close staff collaboration, barriers are precisely identified and addressed, enabling pupils to access appropriate support and challenge. Our approach is underpinned by high expectations and a commitment to equity so that all pupils can achieve their full potential.

We prioritise early identification and intervention, ensuring support is in place from the point pupils join Castle. Our provision is designed to develop pupils holistically, enabling them to succeed academically while also supporting their social and emotional development and readiness to learn.

We aim to create a culture where disadvantaged pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. This includes access to high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and a wide range of enrichment opportunities that broaden experiences, raise aspirations and foster a love of learning.

At Castle Primary School, we have uncompromising expectations for all pupils and are determined that disadvantaged pupils achieve strong outcomes and are fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Low attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage in speech, language and communication. Reception baseline for communication and language this year was low this year with only 25% being assessed as being at the expected level. Across the school 20% of children have been identified as needing some form of speech and language intervention. The SENDCo will be undertaking Speech and Language assessments to identify which children may need a speech program intervention which is more intensive.

2	The proportion of disadvantaged children achieving age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths combined at the end of KS2 has been below national averages for the last three years (2023,2024,2025).
3	Observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment. There has been an increase in children with very high anxiety who need support to get into the school building in the morning.

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Pupils with speech and language difficulties are identified promptly, enabling targeted support that leads to rapid progress and narrowing of attainment gaps.	Initial Screening Completed Within First Half-Term All pupils are screened for speech and language needs within the first six weeks of joining the school or transitioning year groups. Individual Support Plans in Place Identified pupils have tailored speech and language support plans developed and implemented within two weeks of identification. Regular Progress Monitoring Pupil progress in speech and language is reviewed at least once every half-term, with adjustments made to support as needed. Accelerated Progress Evident At least 80% of pupils receiving support demonstrate above-expected progress in targeted areas within two terms.
By the end of Key Stage 2, the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in achieving age-related expectations is significantly reduced	Termly Data Analysis Pupil attainment data is analysed termly to monitor progress and identify gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. Targeted Intervention Plans Disadvantaged pupils not on track to meet age-related expectations receive tailored intervention which is regularly reviewed.

	Progress Reviews Every Half-Term Intervention impact is reviewed every half-term, with adjustments made to ensure continued progress. Parental Engagement Increased There is an increase in parental engagement at parents evenings and other events across year. Attainment Gap Reduced to Less Than 10% By the end of Year 6, the percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving age-related expectations is within 10% of their non-disadvantaged peers.
The school's systems for supporting pupil wellbeing are robust and effective, ensuring early identification of needs, continuous improvement, and long-term sustainability of pupil wellbeing.	Wellbeing Screening Conducted Termly All pupils undergo a wellbeing check at least once per term to identify emerging needs early. Support Plans Initiated Within Two Weeks Pupils identified with wellbeing concerns receive a tailored support plan within two weeks of identification. Staff Training Completed Annually All staff receive annual training on mental health awareness and wellbeing support strategies. Pupil Voice Reflected in Provision All pupils report feeling safe, supported, and listened to in annual wellbeing surveys. Sustained Improvement Evident Over Time Pupils receiving wellbeing support show sustained improvements in attendance, engagement, or behaviour over three consecutive terms.

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: **£40,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
CPD on 'The Castle Way' instructional model, incorporating WalkThrus and Rosenshine's principles to improve consistency of high-quality teaching.	The EEF highlights that <i>high-quality teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils</i> . Consistency in instructional delivery enhances clarity and reduces cognitive load, especially for vulnerable learners.	2
BookWrites implementation and training to raise writing standards through structured sequence.	The EEF's <i>Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2</i> guidance recommends teaching writing composition through modelling and scaffolding, and using structured approaches to develop fluency and independence	1
Targeted CPD for phonics (RWI), ensuring fidelity and strong early reading delivery.	The EEF's <i>Improving Literacy in KS1</i> report identifies SSP as one of the most effective strategies for early reading, especially for disadvantaged pupils. High-quality CPD ensures staff deliver phonics with precision and confidence.	1
Phase leader coaching, lesson modelling and feedback to drive improvement.	The EEF's <i>Effective Professional Development</i> guidance identifies coaching as a high-impact approach when it includes clear goals, feedback, and opportunities for reflection. Marc Rowland emphasises that <i>pedagogical clarity and leadership coaching are key to raising attainment for disadvantaged learners</i> .	2
CPD for TAs on inclusive classroom practices,	The EEF's <i>Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants</i> report shows that when TAs are trained to deliver structured interventions, they can	1,2 & 3

early maths, phonics and SLCN intervention.	significantly improve pupil outcomes. Training in early maths and SLCN aligns with evidence that early intervention has the greatest impact.	
Continual monitoring and early identification of pupils with SEMH needs with proactive interventions put in place to support.	The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) emphasizes that <i>"social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions have an average impact of +4 months' additional progress over the course of a year."</i> These gains are maximized when schools embed SEL into everyday practice and identify needs early. The EEF also highlights that <i>"monitoring and feedback are essential to ensure interventions are effective and responsive to pupil needs."</i>	3

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

Budgeted cost: **£60,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional Phonics support for those children who are not making the requisite progress.	Additional support given through RWI intervention programmes: Fast Track for those children who are not making rapid enough progress through RWI. The average impact of a well taught, consistent phonics approach is an additional 5 months progress over the course of a year.	1 & 2
Language Enrichment Groups speech and language intervention implemented	Early identification of speech and language difficulties is crucial for improving long-term outcomes in literacy, learning, and social development. According to the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), <i>oral language interventions can lead to up to +6 months' additional progress</i> , especially when delivered early and consistently. Timely support helps close attainment gaps and enhances access to the wider curriculum, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.	1,2 & 3

Effective and targeted use of programmes to improve listening, narrative and vocabulary skills for disadvantaged pupils who have a low level of language skills	All children are assessed using Language Link on entry to EYFS. Targeted support is given to those children who are assessed as having low level language skills. In addition, those children in EYFS who are identified as having speech difficulties are assessed using Speech Link, with targeted support based on the diagnostic assessment being provided where needs are identified. Language Link is used as a diagnostic assessment for children identified by teachers as having a low level of language needs across the school. After a need is identified following the assessment, there are specific interventions that can be downloaded from the website and delivered. Oral language approaches have a high impact on pupil outcomes with an additional 6 months progress across the year.	1,2 & 3
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: **£60,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Wellbeing-focused Early Help support is provided to families in crisis to ensure timely and effective intervention	Early Help and family support workers enable schools to address barriers to learning by supporting families before issues escalate. According to the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), <i>“parental engagement is consistently associated with pupils’ academic success”</i> , with interventions leading to an average of +4 months’ additional progress . Embedding Early Help through trained staff strengthens home-school relationships, improves attendance, and supports vulnerable pupils—particularly those facing disadvantage.	3

Total budgeted cost: £160,000

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Challenge 1

Attainment in phonics, reading, writing and maths is below the national average. Combined scores for maths and reading in Y6 are below the national average.

Phonics Screening

At 86%, our phonics screening results exceed the national average of 80%. This represents an increase of 12% on the previous year's results of 74%. In addition, 83% of our PP children achieved this expected standard in the phonics screen. This not only represents a 13% increase on the previous years results, but exceeds the national average by 16%.

This suggests that the consistent, rigorous structure of a phonics lesson is a teaching approach which is effective for all our children, but in particular, our PP children.

All children	PP Children	NPP Children
86% (national 80%)	83% (national 67%)	88%

KS 1 Results

The results below represent teacher assessment data for year 2 at the end of the 24/25 academic year. Although all data is down on the previous year, there has been a change in profile with the PP children PP children outperforming the NPP children, with the exception of maths. However, a greater percentage of PP children achieved GD than NPP.

	All	PP children	NPP Children
Reading	46% (incl 10% GD)	51% (incl 13% GD)	45% (incl 10%GD)
Writing	36%	38%	35%
Maths	57% (incl 8%)	51% (incl 13% GD)	58% (incl 6%GD)

KS 2 Results

Our PP children continue to be below our NPP children and significantly below the national average.

	All	PP children	NPP Children
Reading	61% (National – 75%)	50% (incl 14% GD)	71% (incl 21% GD)
Writing	53% (National – 74%)	43%	64% (incl 14%GD)
Maths	50% (National – 72%)	28% (incl 7% GD)	71% (incl 14%GD)

KS2 Combined Results

National combined results for 2025 saw 62% achieving combined ARE results. Castle falls below the national in when comparing the whole cohort, PP & NPP cohorts.

All		PP		NPP	
National	School	National	School	National	School
62%	43%	47%	29%	69%	57%

Challenge 2

Low attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage in speech, language and communication Baseline data showed that 13% of children were on track when entering reception for communication and language.

EYFS Baseline 24/25	On Track on entry	EYFS Autumn 2 24/25	On Track	EYFS Spring 24/25	On Track	EYFS Summer 24/25	GLD
Comm & Lang	13%	Comm & Lang	51%	Comm & Lang	67%	Comm & Lang	84%

The final percentage of children achieving GLD in Communication and Language was 84%, however, 63%. This represents a massive increase and indicates successful strategies.

Challenge 3

Access to wider opportunities. Many of our children experience poverty of experience, for example, they have not travelled to areas outside of Tiverton such as the beaches or the moors; they have not had the opportunity to visit science museums, historical venues etc and they have not experienced live performances.

The school has provided financial support for enrichment activities throughout the year including a theatre performance for the whole school, residential for several year groups, trips for each year group or visitors coming in to provide experience days for the children.

Challenge 4

Pupil Wellbeing. Observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment.

All of our pastoral Support and parent support services have continued to be heavily used this year:

Pastoral Support for children in School: 30 children regularly receive pastoral support. Of these, 18 are in receipt of PP. This means that 60% who receive support are PP.

Young Carers: 25 children have been identified as Young Carers. Of these, 17 are in receipt of PP. This means that 68% of our Young Carers are PP.

Pupil premium continue to be over-represented in pastoral need.

Stormbreak was implemented in school to support SEMH but the program did not support in the way that was needed. It has been replaced by a Mental Health Support team who provide support to individuals and have supported in the development of mental health ambassadors.

Challenge 5

Parental Engagement has historically been low at Castle and only exacerbated by recent covid-19 disruption.

We have continued to offer opportunities for parents to be engaged with school: Phonics workshops for EYFS parents, Maths workshops for KS 1 parents, sports day Christmas crafts

and church services. This year also saw continued involvement with our Parent Group, including events such as discos, a Christmas Market and an Easter Egg bonnet parade.

Challenge 6

Percentage attendance at Castle is broadly in line with the Devon rate, which is below national. There are 36 children who are persistently absent with attendance rates of less than 90%. This represents 12% which is below the national average of 16%. However, of these 36, 19 are PP. This means that of our persistently absent children, 53% are PP which is over representative of this demographic.

Attendance Champions have been working with school attendance officer to promote attendance in school, including certificates, recognition of class with highest attendance and attendance assemblies promoting why school is a great place to be. 2024/25 school data was in line with national, with school v national trend comparison showing a relative improvement.

At 93.1%, school was slightly above national with school v national trend showing a relative improvement.

FSM6 persistent absence remains close to national with the trend showing no significant change.