

Pupil premium strategy statement – The Orchard School



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. Based on October 2025 census.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	107
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	75.7% (81 pupils)
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)	2025-2026 to 2027-2028
Date this statement was published	31 December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Aaron Janes (Chair of Governors)
Pupil premium lead	Luke Mussett
Governor / Trustee lead	Rosie Bishop

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£105,768.34
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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>	£105,768.34

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At The Orchard School, Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares. Everything we do is shaped by our mission and values of Trust, Belonging, Aspiration, Voice, Pride and Curiosity, ensuring every pupil feels safe, valued and understood.

Our disadvantaged pupils often join us with significant gaps in learning and belonging. Many have experienced disrupted education, high levels of emotional dysregulation, extended periods out of school, and unmet SEMH needs. Our aim is to ensure these pupils can grow, thrive and succeed academically and personally through strong relationships, consistency and high-quality teaching.

Our Pupil Premium strategy is structured using the Education Endowment Foundation's tiered approach, ensuring funding is used effectively and sustainably:

- High-quality teaching as the first and strongest lever for improvement for all disadvantaged pupils
- Targeted academic support to address specific learning gaps where high-quality teaching alone is not sufficient
- Wider strategies to remove non-academic barriers to learning, including attendance, behaviour, regulation and family engagement

This approach aligns with the DfE Menu of Approaches and is adapted to our SEMH context through Therapeutic Thinking (TT).

Our strategy focuses on:

- Strengthening Foundational Learning, particularly reading and writing.
- Embedding the Writing Framework and consistent curriculum sequencing.
- Supporting emotional regulation so pupils remain in learning.
- Reducing time out of class and unstructured movement.
- Improving attendance through early intervention and family support.
- Increasing aspiration, belonging and cultural capital through enrichment.
- Embedding TT across all phases to support regulation, reflection and positive relationships.

This strategy is closely aligned with our School Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation Framework and is reviewed termly to ensure impact for disadvantaged pupils.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Significant gaps in reading accuracy, comprehension and writing stamina. Disadvantaged pupils often arrive with disrupted literacy learning. This limits access to the wider curriculum and is a SIP priority under Foundational Learning and curriculum sequencing. (SEF: Quality of Education)
2	Emotional dysregulation and anxiety impacting ability to stay in class. High levels of SEMH need lead to time out of learning, heightened behaviour, and difficulty transitioning. This directly links to SIP priorities around Therapeutic Thinking, reducing corridor time, and consistent relational practice. (SEF: Behaviour and Attitudes)
3	Lower attendance and persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils. Many disadvantaged pupils have experienced exclusion, anxiety or trauma, resulting in inconsistent attendance patterns. Improving this is a SIP and SEF priority. (SEF: Behaviour and Attitudes – Attendance)
4	Limited access to enrichment, social capital and wider personal development. Restricted life experiences reduce belonging, aspiration and pride. Enrichment is central to SIP and ties directly to MVV. (SEF: Personal Development)
5	Inconsistent regulation strategies and routines at home. Family stress, housing instability or low capacity to support routines contribute to dysregulation, lower attendance and gaps in learning. (SEF: Leadership & SEND)
6	High levels of speech, language and communication need. SLCN significantly affects learning, regulation and independence. This links to SIP curriculum work and the SEF focus on adapting teaching for SEND/SEMH. (SEF: Quality of Education / SEND)

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
<i>Outcome 1: Disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress in reading and writing</i>	Improved NGRT scores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved writing stamina and structure using the Writing Framework Increased participation in reading for pleasure Phonics progress secures decoding for all identified pupils
Outcome 2: Improved regulation and increased time in learning for disadvantaged pupils	Reduced recorded minutes out of class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer behavioural incidents requiring intervention Pupils using TT language and regulation strategies reliably
Outcome 3: Improved attendance for disadvantaged pupils	Attendance moves closer to whole-school target <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in persistent absence Stronger engagement from families through early support
Outcome 4: Disadvantaged pupils access richer enrichment, cultural capital and personal development	Higher participation in trips, clubs and outdoor learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil voice evidences greater belonging, pride and aspiration
Outcome 5: Pupils with SLCN show measurable gains in communication	Increased vocabulary and sentence structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved social communication skills Greater independence in spoken and written tasks

Activity in this academic year

Our planned activity for 2025–26 is organised in line with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) tiered approach, ensuring that the majority of Pupil Premium funding is invested in high-quality teaching, with additional targeted academic support and wider strategies used to address specific barriers experienced by disadvantaged pupils. This structure supports sustainable improvement while meeting the complex SEMH needs of our school community.

Teaching (EEF Tier 1)

Budgeted cost: £5,755.34

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole-school Writing Framework implementation, including staff CPD, coaching and moderation	EEF evidence shows high-quality teaching has the greatest impact on disadvantaged pupils. Clear frameworks improve consistency, reduce cognitive load and support writing outcomes.	1
Consistent phonics and reading fluency approach (Little Wandle, guided reading and daily reading routines)	EEF literacy guidance highlights phonics and fluency as key drivers of early reading progress, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.	1
Embedding Foundational Learning routines and the Orchard Way across all classrooms	EEF behaviour guidance shows that consistent routines and expectations improve engagement and reduce disruption.	2
Therapeutic Thinking (TT) training and modelling for all staff	EEF social and emotional learning evidence supports relational approaches that improve regulation and readiness to learn.	2
Use of adaptive and assistive technology to support reading, writing and regulation	EEF digital technology guidance supports targeted use of technology to scaffold learning and accessibility.	1,6

Targeted academic support (EEF Tier 2)

Tier 2 funding primarily supports specialist staffing and structured interventions, enabling targeted small-group and one-to-one academic, communication and SEMH support for disadvantaged pupils. Interventions are carefully matched to identified need, time-limited where appropriate, and closely monitored to ensure they complement high-quality classroom teaching and support pupils’ readiness to learn.

Budgeted cost: £84,508.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Small-group and 1:1 literacy intervention for disadvantaged pupils with identified gaps	EEF small group tuition guidance shows strong impact when sessions are structured and time-limited.	1
Targeted writing intervention for pupils with low stamina or structure	EEF evidence supports targeted academic support where high-quality teaching alone is insufficient.	1
Speech, language and communication intervention groups	EEF SEND and SLCN evidence highlights the importance of targeted language support for learning and regulation.	6
Targeted academic, communication and SEMH interventions delivered by Intervention Coordinators and Learning Mentors for disadvantaged pupils with identified needs.	EEF evidence indicates that structured small-group and 1:1 interventions, delivered by trained staff and closely matched to pupil need, can have a positive impact on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.	1,2,6
Therapeutic mentoring linked to readiness to learn and engagement in lessons	EEF evidence on targeted SEMH support shows positive impact when interventions are focused and relational.	2, 6
Short-term maths catch-up interventions where learning has been disrupted	EEF targeted support guidance for closing specific gaps.	1

Wider strategies (EEF Tier 3-attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Tier 3 funding is used to address wider non-academic barriers to learning that disproportionately affect disadvantaged pupils at The Orchard School. This includes attendance support, family engagement, therapeutic and counselling provision, enrichment opportunities and the development of regulation spaces. These strategies support emotional wellbeing, engagement and readiness to learn, complementing targeted academic interventions and high-quality classroom teaching.

Budgeted cost: £15,505.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance monitoring, early-morning contact and family liaison for disadvantaged pupils	EEF attendance guidance shows early intervention and strong relationships improve attendance.	3, 5
Targeted pastoral and Pupil Support Team interventions to reduce time out of class	EEF behaviour and SEL evidence supports proactive regulation strategies and relational support.	2
Family engagement meetings and support plans to strengthen routines at home	EEF parental engagement evidence highlights improved outcomes when schools support families with practical strategies.	3, 5
Enrichment activities, trips and outdoor learning experiences for disadvantaged pupils	EEF arts participation and enrichment evidence supports wider strategies that build engagement, confidence and aspiration.	4
School counselling and therapeutic support to address emotional wellbeing, anxiety and trauma for disadvantaged pupils.	EEF social and emotional learning and wellbeing evidence supports targeted therapeutic support to improve emotional regulation and engagement in learning.	2,3,5
Development and use of regulation spaces and sensory support	EEF SEL and SEND guidance supports structured environments that improve emotional regulation.	2, 6

Total budgeted cost: £105,768.34

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

During the 2024–25 academic year, Pupil Premium funding was used to support disadvantaged pupils’ academic progress, emotional regulation, attendance and personal development. This work aligned closely with the School Improvement Plan priorities around Foundational Learning, Therapeutic Thinking, behaviour, attendance and inclusion.

Academic achievement

Disadvantaged pupils made stronger progress in reading, particularly where systematic phonics teaching, structured reading routines and targeted reading interventions were delivered consistently. Pupils receiving targeted reading support showed improved decoding, fluency and confidence, with a significant proportion making accelerated progress across the year. Progress in writing was more variable. While improvements in writing stamina and structure were evident in some classes, inconsistency in approaches across phases limited impact for all disadvantaged pupils. This directly informed the prioritisation of a whole-school Writing Framework within the current strategy.

Behaviour, regulation and readiness to learn

Therapeutic Thinking approaches, alongside strengthened pupil support systems, contributed to improved regulation for many disadvantaged pupils. There was a notable reduction in behaviour incidents, physical assaults and time out of class as the year progressed, particularly from Term 3 onwards as systems became embedded. Pupils receiving targeted mentoring and pastoral support demonstrated improved engagement and an increased ability to remain in learning. However, a small cohort of disadvantaged pupils with complex SEMH needs continued to require high levels of support, particularly during transitions and unstructured times. This remains a focus within the current strategy.

Attendance

Attendance for disadvantaged pupils remained below national benchmarks, reflecting the significant SEMH needs of the cohort. Whole-school attendance for 2024–25 was 74.06%.

When adjusted to account for pupils accessing part-time or therapeutic timetables, attendance rose to 84.79%, providing a more accurate reflection of engagement for disadvantaged pupils accessing bespoke provision. Attendance improved for some disadvantaged pupils following targeted family engagement, early intervention and reintegration planning. Persistent absence remained a challenge for a small number of pupils, and attendance continues to be a priority within the wider strategies of the current plan.

Personal development and enrichment

Disadvantaged pupils who accessed enrichment opportunities, outdoor learning and wider curriculum experiences demonstrated increased confidence, engagement and a stronger sense of belonging. Pupil voice and staff observations indicated that enrichment contributed positively to emotional regulation, motivation and relationships. Access to enrichment was not yet consistent for all disadvantaged pupils, informing a renewed focus on equitable participation within the current strategy.

Speech, language and communication

Targeted speech, language and communication interventions supported improved vocabulary, social communication and independence for disadvantaged pupils with identified SLCN. Impact was strongest where interventions were regular, well-matched to need and closely linked to classroom practice.

Overall evaluation

Overall, the school was partially on track to achieve the intended outcomes of the 2024–25 Pupil Premium strategy. Strengths included improvements in reading outcomes, regulation for targeted pupils and engagement through enrichment. Areas requiring further development included consistency in writing provision, sustained improvement in attendance for pupils with complex SEMH needs and further reduction in time out of class. These findings have directly informed the priorities and activities outlined in the current Pupil Premium Strategy.

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
Forest School	Willowbank
School Counselling (external)	Chris Harding-Counsellor

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<i>For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:</i>
How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils



Further information (optional)

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