

Priestley Smith Specialist School

Pupil premium strategy statement



This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2025 - 2026 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	Priestley Smith Specialist School
Number of pupils in school	95
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	49.3%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025 - 26
Date this statement was published	21.12.25
Date on which it will be reviewed	30.9.2026
Statement authorised by	Joanna Garvey
Pupil premium lead	Joanna Garvey
Governor / Trustee lead	Annie Bearfield

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£45,544
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£9,810.00
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£55354

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan - Statement of intent

All children at Priestley School have an Educational Health Care Plan and the school has a higher proportion of students that are eligible for pupil premium funding than National Average (49.3% compared to NA of 25%). Our aim is to use this funding to help students to achieve and sustain positive outcomes. We aim to close the attainment gap between our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students and will do so through effective quality first teaching as well as planned expenditure to provide access to resources needed. Due our students having a severe vision impairment as well as a significant number having additional needs, our pupil premium cohort have significant additional barriers to learning, in addition to their vision impairments, these included communication and cognition as well as attendance due to complex medical needs. They may also have lower levels of wellbeing, specifically an increased unhappiness score in relation to their school work, compared to their peers without SEND,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/636465/DfE_SEN_Support_Case_studies.pdf

Our intention is to narrow gaps in attendance, progress and attainment and provide a range of experiences and wider school opportunities for our pupil premium students.

To overcome these barriers our pupil premium strategy focuses on ensuring all disadvantaged pupils are:

- Taught by experienced teachers, many of whom Qualified Teachers of the Vision Impaired (QTVI accredited).
- Provided for by our adoption of the National Curriculum Framework for Vision Impaired Children and young People (CFVI) to support their compensatory skills, self-advocacy, social interaction skills and independence.
- Provided with any additional equipment or assistive technology to support their disability.
- Supported to access enrichment experiences and opportunities outside school.
- Provided with timely support to meet social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Receive sharply focused teaching intervention as appropriate, to address any gaps in learning.
- Able to develop their self- esteem and confidence through our specialist Habilitation support.

Our aim is that 100% of our disadvantaged pupils:

- Progress to their next stage in education, training, employment or supported living
- Make strong progress in line with their education and health care plans

- Gain qualifications to support access to their next stage in education, training or employment.

Develop as individuals with a firm sense of self-worth and identity with skills in place to prepare them for the transition to adulthood.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Students have a severe VI which impacts their learning
2	Well being, mental health and safeguarding concerns
3	Access to technology and educational materials
4	Gaps in reading knowledge, skills and/or phonological awareness due to VI, additional SEND and/or support with practise at home.
5	Reduced opportunities to access enrichment in and out of school e.g. cultural, arts and community events, musical instrument tuition

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
Attainment – the impact of severe Vision impairment on learning is reduced	Children with a VI are on average, 2 years behind their sighted peers due to the lack of incidental learning that sighted peers benefit from. Access to the curriculum and learning is supported through a variety of mediums. Students are supported by experienced teacher of Vision Impairments and benefit from the knowledge and guidance of QTVIs.
Well being, mental health and safeguarding concerns are identified and supported effectively	Vulnerable pupils well being needs, including poor attendance, supporting mental health and supporting pupils exposed to safeguarding concerns, are met. As part of the Attendance Strategy, attendance data is analysed regularly and effective actions and interventions shared between SLT and form / class teachers. Support with behaviour through targeted support from a behaviour specialist and through additional SaLT, OT and EP support
Curriculum - Children have access to technology to support their accessibility	Pupils can access a range of assistive technology and PP pupils are not disadvantaged because they do not have IT hardware or technology or connectivity required to access the school's educational learning materials. Students have access to up to date resources for curriculum development utilising Apple technologies
To support and close the gaps in reading knowledge, skills and/or phonological awareness due to VI, additional SEND and/or support parents in enabling children to practise at home.	PP pupils are not disadvantaged as a result of a potential lack of their parents to support and consolidate learning outside of school (e.g. daily reading practice in school). Use of connecting Steps as an assessment tool will help to identify gaps and target interventions across all subjects to the end of KS3, Thrive and Aspire and through tracking documents in KS4&5
Disadvantaged pupils will be provided with high quality access to the arts.	Disadvantaged pupils will gain access to a range of arts and cultural activities throughout the year. These will include access to music tuition, the allotment, opportunities to attend residencies in upper juniors and secondary school as well as the opportunity to participate in trips and visits to art galleries, places of historical interest and an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the world around them through experiential learning.

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: £24,667.80 + £6,071.30 +£6070.26

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Individual literacy, Braille and communication support	Targeted literacy and communication interventions (reading, writing, spelling and phonics) provided by experienced teaching assistant in regular 1:1 teaching sessions. Ongoing all year.	1&4
Purchase of 10 desktop computers and 12 laptops, to support children's development in utilising assistive technologies to improve accessibility skills	Specialist ICT resources have been purchased for individual use to enhance key skills such as touch-typing and accessibility through software like JAWS and ZoomText. These tools aim to improve ICT access skills for targeted students, fostering greater independence in technology use and increasing fluency in written work. Progress will be measured through improved touch-typing levels. We will continue to expand the number of computers available to students to support learning and interaction with technology. Overall, the utilisation of these technologies is designed to enhance curriculum provision and broaden learning opportunities for students.	1 & 3

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

Budgeted cost: OT SaLT £ 6922 EdPs £1368

Occupational Therapy and SaLT support	Targeted SaLT interventions have been implemented with guidance of SaLT and trained TA delivering interventions to enhanced pupils' communication, language development, and functional skills. Through regular, personalised sessions, students are supported to improve expressive and receptive language abilities, improving confidence in social interactions. This also directly supports the whole school focus for literacy and oracy progress and overall academic achievement. Occupational Therapy provision has focused on sensory regulation, and access to learning tools, increased independence in daily school tasks, and better engagement with the curriculum. Through sensory curriculum development Pupils demonstrate greater self-regulation and readiness to learn, reducing barriers to progress.	2
Additional Educational Psychology Support	The Educational Psychology service has supported pupils with (ASC), and complex needs in addition to their VI, to access the curriculum effectively. The EP has Identified individual learning profiles and barriers to engagement, ensuring interventions are tailored to both sensory and social communication needs and provided recommendations for differentiated teaching strategies. The EP has guided targeted interventions for emotional regulation, executive functioning, and communication, reducing anxiety and increasing participation in classroom activities.	2

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

Budgeted cost: £2562 + £3000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Support of Steve Brown, Behaviour Consultant and ASC Specialist (social, emotional, mental health and behavioural needs)	<p>We have engaged Steve Brown from Focuss (https://stevebrownbst.co.uk/) to provide targeted interventions for some of our more dysregulated pupils, including those with (ASC) and complex needs. His specialist approach focuses on emotional regulation, resilience-building, and tailored strategies that enable pupils to access learning more effectively. Through structured sessions and staff coaching, Steve has supported the development of personalised regulation plans, improved engagement in classroom activities, and reduced incidents of dysregulation. This work aligns with our PP strategy by addressing barriers to learning and promoting inclusion for pupils with significant social, emotional, and behavioural challenges.</p>	2
Use of residential and wider trips and visits, music lessons in conjunction with Amber Trust	<p>We have invested in a range of enrichment opportunities for Pupil Premium pupils, including residential experiences, wider trips and visits, and music lessons delivered in partnership with the Amber Trust. These initiatives are designed to remove barriers to learning and promote holistic development.</p> <p>Positive outcomes for pupils include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved literacy and numeracy skills, with a noticeable increase in vocabulary use. • Greater confidence, resilience, and self-esteem. • Enhanced physical development, including fine motor skills. • A stronger sense of responsibility and independence. • Improved emotional well-being and self-regulation. <p>Residential experiences and arts-based opportunities provide experiential learning that builds cultural capital. This is particularly impactful for pupils with visual impairment (VI), who do not benefit from incidental learning in the same way as sighted peers. These experiences allow them to engage fully in activities that broaden their horizons and deepen understanding of the world.</p> <p>Residential also support the development of independent living skills and independent travel, enabling pupils to practice these in a safe, supported environment away from home.</p> <p>Music lessons, part-funded by the Amber Trust, have been supplemented with additional funding for PP pupils to ensure equitable access. These lessons foster creativity, improve auditory processing, and contribute to emotional regulation and confidence.</p>	5

Total budgeted cost: £50660.56

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This year, targeted support for Pupil Premium pupils included a combination of therapeutic, academic, and enrichment interventions designed to address complex needs and remove barriers to learning. Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) support was initially provided by the NHS; however, this provision did not fully meet the needs of all pupils. To ensure adequate coverage, we supplemented NHS provision with private SaLT services from WM SLT. In addition, PP funding was used to provide TA support for SaLT delivery, with the TA receiving training from the WM SLT team. This enhanced approach allowed for more frequent and tailored interventions, improving communication skills and access to learning for pupils with significant language and communication difficulties.

OT interventions were strategically utilised to support PP pupils with profound ASC and ADHD needs. These sessions focused on sensory regulation, fine motor development, and functional independence. OT worked in conjunction with Steve Brown (ASC and behaviour specialist) and the Educational Psychologist (EP) to embed strategies within classroom practice and extend support to families through home visits. Collaborative planning ensured consistency between school and home, with self-control and emotional regulation strategies being developed and implemented effectively.

Specialist music sessions funded by the Amber Trust, with additional PP funding, had a significant impact beyond musical ability. Pupils demonstrated improved confidence and self-esteem. Many performed in class sessions and some performed alongside the Orchestra of the Swan during their visit, and in the Christmas performances, showcasing progress in both skill and personal development.

Residential trips to the Frank Chapman activity centre was highly successful. Activities such as abseiling, forest school, and zip wire promoted resilience, confidence, and independence. For several pupils, this was their first experience away from home, providing invaluable opportunities to practice independent living and travel skills in a supported environment.

Further PP funding was allocated to ICT infrastructure to enhance accessibility for pupils with visual impairment. Investments included updated Windows 11 desktop and laptop computers capable of running JAWS and other specialist software. Specialist tuition focused on assistive technology use was delivered using school resources. Additionally, PP funding supported Braille lessons and individual literacy interventions, improving tactile discrimination and enabling pupils to access Braille and tactile resources effectively.

These combined interventions have led to measurable improvements in pupils' communication, independence, confidence, and emotional regulation. Academic progress was supported through enhanced access to learning, while enrichment activities contributed to cultural capital and personal development. Pupils demonstrated increased resilience, improved engagement in lessons, and greater readiness for learning, particularly those with complex needs and ASC.

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
Occupational Therapy	West Midlands Speech and Language
Speech and Language Therapy	West Midlands Speech and Language
Behaviour Support	Steve Brown ASC and Behaviour support