

Pupil premium strategy statement 2024-2027 update Feb 2026

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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

| Detail | Data |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| School name | The Sir John Colfox Academy |
| Number of pupils in school | 754 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 22% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended) | 2024-2027 |
| Date this statement was published | 5 September 2024 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | Mid point review February 2026 |
| Statement authored by | Adam Shelley |
| Pupil premium lead | Laura Cornish |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Geoff Jones |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|---|---------------------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year (2025-26) | £ 191,666.47 |
| Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year | £0 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable) | £0 |
| 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 | £191,666.47 |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across the curriculum.

The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils, irrespective of prior attainment, to achieve that goal. We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those in care, those who have a social worker or are young carers. The activity we have outlined in this statement will also support those students who are not disadvantaged.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve.
- Provide appropriate support for SEMH and wellbeing.

The academy will also encourage engagement with learning through events which enrich cultural capital and an extensive extra-curriculum programme.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|---|
| 1 | <p>Our observations, end of year assessments and discussion with pupils suggest that disadvantaged students have fallen behind with their learning when compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. This is a picture shown nationally as well as locally.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Assessments, observations and discussions with KS3 pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils generally have lower levels of reading comprehension than peers. This affects their progress in all subjects.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Our discussions with pupils and parents suggest that disadvantaged students often have low aspirations, for example, not considering higher education or higher-level career prospects. This affects their engagement with learning as they do not always recognise its significance to improve quality of life when they are older.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Our assessments (including wellbeing survey), observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment.</p> <p>Despite the pandemic having been over for a while now, we continue to see a significant number of students with mental health needs, frequently due to the effects the pandemic had on them, with a large number of these coming from a disadvantaged background.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Our attendance data over the last 3 years indicates that the gap between absence among disadvantaged pupils compared to whole cohort has been increased from 2.5% to 5.7%</p> <p>The gap between disadvantaged pupils that have been 'persistently absent' compared to their peers has also increased from 6.2% to 23.8% during that period. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress and the pandemic has had a significantly greater impact for these students compared to their peers.</p> |

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan in Sep 2027** , and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

| Intended outcome | Success criteria |
|---|--|
| Improved attainment among disadvantage- targeted students across the curriculum at the end of KS4 | By the end of our current plan in 2026/27, the average attainment score will increase so that the gap between attainment of disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged students will be reduced to less than one. 2023 data showed an average attainment 8 score of 3.7 compared to 4.7 for the whole cohort. |
| Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across KS3. | Reading comprehension tests demonstrate improved comprehension skills among disadvantaged pupils and a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers. Teachers will also recognise this improvement through greater engagement in lessons and higher quality work and contribution to class discussion. |
| To achieve and sustain improved well-being for all students, including those who are disadvantaged, so that all students feel happy and safe in school. | Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2024/25 demonstrated by: · qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. |
| To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all students, particularly our disadvantaged students, so that long term absence for disadvantaged students decreases. | Sustained high attendance from 2024-27 demonstrated by: the overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 6%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced to 2%. · The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 15% and figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 3% higher than their peers. |

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: £54616

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <p>Purchase of NGRT diagnostic assessments. Training will be provided for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted correctly and used to inform QFT.</p> <p>This information will be included in pupil profiles of disadvantaged students so that staff understand the barriers and needs more fully to better inform QFT</p> | <p>Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction:</p> <p>Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p> <p>OFSTED Report 2014- This report (using case study evidence) stated that success was found when staff used their broad knowledge of pupils and their families to identify potential barriers to individual pupils attaining their goals and realised when talented pupils might not fulfil their potential in a particular subject or skill because of a lack of opportunities outside of school, or a lack of family finances. The report stated that success was achieved when it was recognised that pupils were at risk of underachieving because of particular circumstances,</p> | <p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</p> |
| <p>Increase the number of groups in the core subjects from 5 to 6 for each year group to enable smaller class sizes for those students with low prior attainment so that the teacher can employ a wider range of strategies and provide more extensive feedback.</p> | <p>Evidence suggests that reducing class sizes to below 20 has benefits on attainment as well as improved behaviour and attitude.</p> <p>Reducing class size, EEF</p> | <p>1, 2,</p> |
| <p>Provide support to complete homework through:</p> | <p>The evidence shows that the impact of homework, on average, is five months' additional progress.</p> | <p>1, 2,</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---------|
| <p>Access to library and on-line resources after school</p> <p>CPD investigating quality of homework</p> <p>Knowledge organisers available on-line</p> <p>Laptops provided to disadvantaged students to enable them to work at home.</p> | <p>Homework, EEF</p> <p>The EEF suggests that for many pupil premium students, the provision of space and resources for them to complete work can have tangible benefits. The EEF also reports that the deployment of Teaching Assistants is pivotal to improving progress, and the most effective way is where they are delivering intervention to small groups or individuals.</p> | |
| <p>CPD Research Projects will focus on quality first teaching. Teachers will investigate different themes and then share good practice. This will be led by the Challenge Co-ordinators.</p> | <p>The EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) repeatedly point out that 'quality first teaching' helps every child, including those who are pupil premium.</p> <p>Specifically, the EEF report that high quality individual feedback is extremely effective, alongside developing effective metacognition in the classroom.</p> <p>There is strong evidence that "what happens in the classroom makes the biggest difference, good teaching for all pupils has a particular benefit for disadvantaged students" (EEF Attainment Gap Report 2018).</p> | 1, 2, 3 |
| <p>Reading is included in the curriculum for years 7 and 8 for two hours per week.</p> <p>The programme will include external providers to stimulate and extend creative writing,</p> | <p>The EEF report that the improvement in reading comprehension can have a high impact for moderate cost when money is invested, with 6-month average progress for a given intervention.</p> | 2 |

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

Budgeted cost: £85 600

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| To improve the academic outcomes for year 11 students through: | The EEF report that one to one tuition can have a moderate impact when there are short, regular sessions. The report suggests that | 1, 3 |

| | | |
|--|---|------------|
| <p>Masterclasses delivered by specialist teachers in school for Y11.</p> <p>Subject specific intervention during February half term and Easter.</p> <p>Small group intervention after school.</p> <p>Intervention support from Heads of Departments in English, Maths and Science.</p> <p>Reading lessons for KS3.</p> | <p>maximum impact is achieved when the sessions run for 6-12 weeks.</p> | |
| <p>To provide individual mentoring support for disadvantaged students to build resilience, raise aspirations and support academic achievement. This will be done through participation co-ordinators.</p> | <p>Research shows varied results for mentoring programme, but some issues are resolved in our programme as the mentors will not drop out of the programme, they are well trained and will be able to see the students over time once the programme has finished.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mentoring</p> | 1, 3, 4, 5 |
| <p>Literacy and numeracy interventions for identified year 7, 8 and 9 students. Delivered by HLTAs and specialist teachers within SEND.</p> | <p>The EEF report that the improvement in reading comprehension can have a high impact for moderate cost when money is invested, with 6-month average progress for a given intervention.</p> | 2 |
| <p>Provision of materials and learning resources for pupil premium students (including laptop access)</p> | <p>The EEF report that the provision of digital technology has a moderate impact on progress.</p> <p>The Sutton Trust reported that in the first week of the January 2021 lockdown, just 10% of teacher's overall report that all their students have adequate access to a device for remote learning. While 17% report that more than 1 in 5 of their students don't have such access</p> | 1, |
| <p>Funding for educational trips and visits</p> | <p>To ensure that all students can access educational trips and visits in order to ensure they have equitable access to the curriculum as their non-pupil premium peers and also to help boost their aspirations.</p> | 1, 3, 5 |
| <p>Music Tuition and alternative provision to support curriculum</p> | <p>The EEF report that Arts participation approaches can have a positive impact on other parts of the curriculum, and beyond this,</p> | 1, 3, 5 |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | participation in the Arts can be extremely valuable to young people. | |
|--|--|--|

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

Budgeted cost: £58400

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| To provide ELSA support, Inclusion Centre support or Educational Psychologist support as appropriate to those students with SEMH needs. | The EEF report on social and emotional learning and it has been identified that this has an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships and supporting student welfare and well-being. in school. Effective social and emotional learning can lead to 4 months average progress on attainment. | 4, 5 |
| To increase aspirations so that attendance becomes more relevant to students, through careers programmes including individual careers advice. Post-16 will include visits to colleges, universities and Waterstone's scholarship. This activity should also reduce the number of NEETs. | OFSTED (Pupil Premium report 2014) comment on success where careers advice and experiences are carefully mapped and recorded for all disadvantaged pupils. The EEF reports on focusing interventions based on exposing them to opportunities, particularly those based on higher education which can lead to increased aspirations for students. | 3, 5 |
| To improve transition for students from KS2 to KS3 through an enhanced program for disadvantaged students, including visits to the school and Inclusion Centre staff working with pupils at primary school. | All students are visited by their new HOY and those who need additional visit are invited into school to help support them with transition. This includes SEND and PP students. To enable all students to get a sense of belonging we have set up 6 event during the year which bring parents into school to build these crucial relationships. | 4, 5 |
| To improve attendance through regular tracking by HOY and KS leaders. Close liaison with Locality Team. | The National Foundation for Educational Research (2019) reports that on average, the association between being absent from school and KS4 outcomes is worse for disadvantaged pupils than their more affluent peers. The difference is small but statistically significant. For example, if a disadvantaged pupil missed six weeks of school at KS4, their P8 score would be predicted to be an additional 0.05 lower than a more affluent | 5 |

| | | |
|--|---|---------|
| | pupil with the same absence rate. It is therefore critical that we are able to track attendance and target students efficiently. | |
| Face to face parents' evenings to enable greater access by parents, with Heads of Year contacting PP parents to encourage attendance and offer alternative meetings where necessary. | The EEF report that Improving parental engagement can have a moderate impact on progress. The EEF note that developing effective parental engagement to improve children's attainment is challenging, but the use of technology can support this. | 1, 4, 5 |

Total budgeted cost: £198,616

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the **2024-25** academic year.

Key Stage 4

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments.

The data demonstrated that, at Key Stage 4, the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils continued to narrow. Attainment 8 outcomes show that the gap reduced from 9.83 points to 9.38 points, indicating sustained improvement in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils relative to their peers.

To help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils, we compared their results to those for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at national and local level, as well as to outcomes achieved by our non-disadvantaged pupils. We recognise that pupils included in this performance data will have experienced some disruption due to Covid-19 earlier in their schooling, which will have affected individual pupils and schools differently. The data demonstrates that, at Key Stage 4, the gap in achieving the Basics continued to close. The gap at grade 4+ reduced from 27.7 to 24.7, while the gap at grade 5+ reduced significantly from 24.6 to 12.4. This indicates stronger progress for disadvantaged pupils, particularly at the higher attainment threshold.

We have also drawn on school data and observations to assess wider issues impacting disadvantaged pupils' performance, including attendance, behaviour and wellbeing. Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils met expectations, and we are at present on course to achieve the outcomes we set out to achieve by 2027/28, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above.

Our evaluation of the approaches delivered last academic year indicates that targeted academic interventions and focused support at Key Stage 4 were particularly effective in reducing attainment gaps, especially at grade 5+. However, attendance remains an area requiring further improvement to secure sustained progress.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

| Programme | Provider |
|------------------|-----------------|
| | |
| | |

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

| Measure | Details |
|--|----------------|
| How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year? | |
| What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils? | |

Further information

Further information (optional)

RAG Rating Analysis (Aligned to Strategy Criteria)

Teaching (Quality First Teaching, Curriculum Access, Literacy) – **AMBER**

Achievements

Investment in Quality First Teaching has supported improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, particularly at Key Stage 4.

CPD focused on feedback, metacognition and classroom practice has contributed to the continued narrowing of the Attainment 8 gap.

Reading has been prioritised through NGRT assessments and curriculum time in Year 7 allowing earlier identification of need.

Smaller class sizes in core subjects have supported improved engagement and more targeted feedback for pupils with low prior attainment.

Next Steps 2026-27

- Improve consistency in how literacy strategies are embedded across all subjects.
- Strengthen the use of assessment data to adapt teaching more rapidly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Further support staff in using pupil profiles effectively to tailor classroom strategies.

RAG Rationale

Teaching is securely improving outcomes, but variability in impact across subjects and cohorts means further refinement is needed before this area can be rated green.

Targeted Academic Support (Intervention, Tutoring, KS4 Support) – **GREEN**

Achievements

Targeted academic support has had a strong and measurable impact.

Attainment 8 data show the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils reduced from 9.83 to 9.38 points.

There has been particularly strong improvement at grade 5+, where the gap reduced from 24.6 to 12.4.

Masterclasses, subject-specific intervention, small-group support and leadership involvement from Heads of Department have been effective in raising attainment at Key Stage 4.

Next Steps 2026-27

- Sustain current intervention models, particularly those focused on grade 5+ outcomes.
- Ensure early identification of pupils requiring intervention to maximise impact.
- Continue close monitoring of intervention effectiveness and value for money.

RAG Rationale

Clear evidence of impact on attainment outcomes justifies a green rating for targeted academic support.

Wider Strategies (Attendance, Behaviour, Wellbeing, Aspirations) – RED/AMBER

Achievements

Robust systems for monitoring attendance are in place, with regular tracking by Heads of Year and key stage leaders.

SEMH support through ELSA, Inclusion/HUB/SEL provision and external professionals has supported individual pupils' wellbeing.

Aspirational activities, careers guidance and enrichment opportunities have improved engagement for some disadvantaged pupils.

Next Steps 2026-27

Attendance remains the most significant barrier to achievement for disadvantaged pupils.

FSM attendance declined from 89.8% in 2023–2024 to 88.6% in 2024–2025, while unauthorised absence increased from 1.7% to 3.1%.

Although attendance for non-FSM pupils also declined slightly, the gap remains substantial and unauthorised absence is disproportionately higher for FSM pupils.

- Intensify early intervention for FSM pupils with emerging attendance concerns.
- Strengthen parental engagement and communication strategies.
- Increase collaboration with external agencies where attendance issues are linked to wellbeing or family circumstances.
- Set short-term attendance targets and review progress more frequently.

RAG Rationale

Despite strong systems and support in place, attendance outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have not improved sufficiently, warranting a red for attendance and Amber for support rating and continued strategic focus.

Overall Summary

The RAG alignment demonstrates that targeted academic support is securely effective, teaching strategies are improving but require greater consistency, and attendance remains the key priority area requiring sustained and intensified action. This alignment ensures that funding decisions, actions and evaluation are clearly linked to impact and next steps within the Pupil Premium strategy.