

Pupil premium strategy statement – Castle Academy



This statement details our school's use of pupil premium for the period of 2025-28 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	Castle Academy
Number of pupils in school	
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	86 children 19%
LAC	0 Service children 1 LAC 1 Post LAC
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025 - 2028
Date this statement was published	1st September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	1st September 2026
Statement authorised by	Mr Dan Lugg (Executive Head) Mrs Ruth Brennan (Head of School)
Pupil premium lead	Mr Dan Lugg Mrs Ruth Brennan
Governor / Trustee lead	Mr David Hood

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£138,590
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£ 0
Total budget for this academic year	£138,590

If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	
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Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

At Castle Academy, we are a school which prides itself on its inclusive approach, high expectations and our supportive learning environment. Our aim is for pupils to achieve, belong and thrive.

When creating our Pupil Premium Strategy we recognise the importance of considering the context of the school and the subsequent challenges faced. We will use research conducted by the EEF to support decisions made around the usefulness and implementation of different strategies and their value for money.

Common barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils can include weak language and communication skills, less support at home, lack of confidence, attendance and punctuality issues and more frequent behaviour issues. There may be complex situations that prevent children from flourishing. We recognise that the challenges are varied and there is no 'one size fits all'.

As recognised by the EEF, we acknowledge that 'good teaching' is the most important tool schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils' and we intend to focus heavily on developing quality of teaching through focused CPD of teachers and strong recruitment processes.

The key principles of our strategy:

- Promote an ethos of attainment for all
- Individualised approach to address barriers
- High quality teaching
- Focus on outcomes for individuals
- Decisions based on data and respond to evidence.
- Clear, responsive leadership setting high aspirations and responsibility for raising attainment to all staff

Our ultimate objectives are:

- To narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
- For all disadvantaged pupils to make or exceed nationally expected progress rates.
- For all disadvantaged pupils to have attendance of around national average of all students (96%).
- To provide opportunities to ensure that all disadvantaged pupils engage in the wider curriculum and enrichment opportunities.
- To support our pupil's health and wellbeing to enable them to access learning at an appropriate level.

We aim to do this through:

- Ensuring that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all the pupils
- Ensuring that appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, this includes ensuring that the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils are adequately assessed and addressed
- When making provision for socially disadvantaged pupils, we recognise that not all pupils who receive free school meals will be socially disadvantaged
- We also recognise that not all pupils who are socially disadvantaged are registered or qualify for free school meals. We reserve the right to allocate the Pupil Premium funding to support and pupils or groups of pupils the school has legitimately identified as being socially disadvantaged.

Pupil premium funding will be allocated following a needs analysis which will identify priority classes, groups or individuals. Limited funding and resources means that not all children receiving free school meals will be in receipt of pupil premium interventions at one time.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Approximately 83% of pupils speak English as an Additional Language.
2	Many new pupils have limited cultural and wider experiences.
3	Many disadvantaged pupils have lower prior attainment and gaps in their learning.
4	A significant proportion of disadvantaged pupils have SEND as well.
5	Some of our most disadvantaged pupils are not always fully supported at home, with parents not ensuring that learning and attendance are as strong as they could be.

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
All PP pupils make good rates of progress and attain well including those with English as an Additional Language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils will be at or above National Standards for disadvantaged pupils.• School's targets for disadvantaged pupils as set out in the SIP are achieved in all year groups.• The gap between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils diminishes.• Targeted interventions enable disadvantaged pupils make accelerated progress.
All disadvantaged pupils have opportunities and benefit from wider curriculum and enrichment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School trackers show that disadvantaged pupils, in all year groups, engage with extra curriculum and enrichment activities.• Pupil interviews show disadvantaged pupils have made positive attitudes towards learning.• Parent feedback, gathered through focus groups, indicates satisfaction with opportunities provided.• Attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils show measurable improvement.

Teachers have good knowledge of needs of PP pupils and have the skills to address them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to support, coaching, CPD staff have the training to adapt • Targeted interventions are planned appropriately and tracked to monitor impact • ISPs are deployed effectively to support disadvantaged pupils • Teachers provide timely feedback in learning to help disadvantaged pupils make good progress. • Staff receive training to meet specific needs of disadvantaged pupils including SEND
Parents more effectively support their pupils learning and engagement in school life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental workshop events are well attended. • Parents better understand how to support their pupils • Parents understand the importance of high attendance • Attendance improves above national average for disadvantaged pupils.

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: £29,591

Activity	Cost	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Staff receives support, training and coaching to improve high quality teaching.	£2,121	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WalkThrus evident in lessons • Coaching strategy showing positive impact on teaching practice • Consistent use of the Teaching and Learning Framework by all staff • EEF research findings applied to practice 	1, 2, 3, 4
Targeted interventions and focussed tracking of progress	£3,888	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISP Interventions and in class support • Pupil Progress meetings • Edukey audits • ISP Training and implementation • Pupil Voice Feedback • Daily Books Looks • Data analysis and monitoring 	1, 3, 4

Staff receive training on pupils with multiple vulnerabilities	£3,888	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted support strategies for SEND & PP pupils evidenced. Intervention trackers on Edukey Training for staff 	1, 2, 3, 4
Family Support Worker increases parental engagement	£8,900	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies and records of parental engagement Improved communication logs and attendance at workshops/events 	5
Staff training to support all classes providing a rich stimulation of language and vocabulary	£8,257	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oracy and EAL strategies evident in all lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WalkThrus used deliberately to enhance vocabulary and language Twinkl subscription for resources and intervention support Widgets used to support all pupils <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working walls embedded in all classrooms as a tool to support pupils Chatterway training is implemented by ISPs 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Subject leadership training on supporting Pupil Premium Pupils across the curriculum	£2,537	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptations and alterations made to ensure pupil progress Planning scrutinise, book looks and pupil voice demonstrate that needs are being met 	1, 2, 3

Targeted academic support (for example, support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £65,867

Activity	Cost	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
EAL strategy quickly identifies interventions needed for disadvantaged pupils with EAL	£19,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intervention trackers on Edukey EAL Baseline and progress assessments EAL Lead to train staff on strategies for interventions and in class Pupil Progress meetings 	1, 2, 3,
Staff are trained in the specific	£9,308	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff confidently identify pupils requiring the language programme. 	1, 2, 3

language programme <i>Chatterway</i> to support disadvantaged pupils with EAL.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained and implement the programme effectively, leading to accelerated progress in language development Pupil voice demonstrates increased confidence and improved use of language. 	
ISPs are used in class interventions to support pupils with multiple vulnerabilities.	£22,800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISPs are trained to identify the specific needs of pupils in order to adjust and amend work in class, ensuring they achieve. Widgets and targeted resources are used effectively to support pupils with multiple vulnerabilities. Images and flashcards are used alongside working walls to engage and support pupils. 	1, 2, 3
Analysing and monitoring the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.	£14,759	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance officers share disadvantaged pupil attendance data with staff, comparing it against national benchmarks and non-disadvantaged pupils. Attendance officers increase communication with teaching staff to identify reasons for absence and address barriers to attendance. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils meets or exceeds national standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings with parents of disadvantaged pupils by the class teacher and then attendance officer happens when attendance starts to become a concern. Arbor AI system for attendance monitoring and tracking 	4

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

Budgeted cost: £43,132

Activity	Cost	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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Every disadvantaged pupil is provided with two pieces of uniform during the academic year.	£5,100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School records confirm that all disadvantaged pupils receive at least one item of uniform each year. Parent feedback highlights reduced financial pressure and increased support from the school. Pupil voice reflects a sense of belonging and pride in wearing the school uniform. Improved consistency in uniform standards across disadvantaged pupils is observed by staff. 	2, 4, 5
Every disadvantaged pupil will receive financial support to access enrichment opportunities including 1 x curriculum trip	£12,369	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance records confirm funding has been allocated to ensure disadvantaged pupils can access trips, clubs and enrichment activities. Participation data shows disadvantaged pupils engage in a wide range of enrichment opportunities at rates comparable to their peers. Parent feedback highlights appreciation for financial support enabling their children to access experiences otherwise unaffordable. Pupil voice reflects enjoyment and positive attitudes towards learning as a result of enrichment opportunities. 	2, 4, 5
Parent workshops are well attended by disadvantaged pupils' parents.	£850	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance registers show strong participation of disadvantaged pupils' parents at workshops. Parent feedback surveys and focus groups highlight the value and relevance of workshops. Increased parental engagement is evidenced through follow-up actions, such as improved home-school communication and support for learning at home. Staff observations note greater confidence among parents in supporting their children's learning. 	5
Full time Family Support Worker appointed to work with vulnerable families.	£24,813	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies demonstrate positive outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable families supported by the Family Support Worker. Records show increased parental engagement through meetings, workshops and targeted support sessions. Improved attendance and punctuality of pupils from families receiving support. 	5

Total budgeted cost: £138,590

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year 2024/25

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

Desired outcome	Chosen action/approach	Impact:
Teaching All PP pupils make expected or better progress based on their starting points	<p>Early assessments identify gaps in learning with termly targets set and reviewed for all Pupil Premium pupils so that early intervention can be added to support if needed, this will include catch up beyond the school (1, 2, 3, 4)</p>	<p>The use of NTS assessments has enabled gaps to be identified. Interventions have been completed within lessons, using a retrieval and cognitive load theory approaches, pupils are able to know and remember more and the Rosenshine Principles and Teaching and Learning Framework has supported this.</p> <p>The curriculum is adapted well for disadvantaged pupils, meaning that they are able to achieve ambitious outcomes and this is evident in pupils' books and pupil voice activities completed by subject leaders.</p> <p>Disadvantaged pupils also have a love of reading and the impact of early reading interventions has been positive in enabling disadvantaged pupils to catch up.</p>
	<p>Pupil premium pupils' targets are aspirational pupil and pupil premium documentation has a clear focus for these pupils; all actions and interventions, along with impact discussed. (1,2)</p>	<p>The inclusion of PP pupils on pupil progress sheets has enabled there to be a more explicit dialogue based on these pupils' progress when teachers are meeting with Senior leadership at termly pupil progress meetings. This enables teachers to monitor the progress of these groups of pupils more closely. This also enables teachers to provide in class interventions to ensure that pupils catch up.</p> <p>Adaptations made to the curriculum have shown positive outcomes in pupils' books and there is evidence the PP pupils are achieving ambitious</p>

		<p>outcomes. Pupil voice is showing that these pupils know and remember more.</p> <p>Where there are concerns teachers have been quick to address these so that learning objectives remain aspirational and pupils can achieve these, with the scaffolds and small step modelling approaches. This has enabled these pupils to secure understanding of the components of a task, leading to the composite.</p>
	Ensure quality of feedback for all PP children is purposeful and progressive and move learning forward (1, 4)	<p>Feedback provided is addressing next steps in learning. This is becoming evident in wider curriculum books. There now needs to be more evidence in the addressing of fundamentals when teachers are provision feedback in order for further impact to be seen.</p> <p>In some classes the drive to have a relentless approach when marking basic skills has been positive in enabling pupils to make progress.</p> <p>There now needs to be a more consistent approach to this with subject leaders now having a focus on this when monitoring the outcomes and progress of PP pupils.</p>
	Staff training programmes and support with provision for PP pupils (1, 2, 3, 4)	<p>Staff have been provided with training regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching training • Reading expectations • Writing moderation • Mathematics • Year group planning support • Subject leadership working parties • Academy Improvement Partner support • Support from a variety of consultants • Training linked to phonics • Support linked to planning

		<p>All staff have access to a coach in school.</p> <p>Staff are beginning to ensure the most disadvantaged pupils are remembering what has been taught. This is evident in pupils' books and subject leaders' monitoring evidence.</p> <p>Staffs' understanding of retrieval and cognitive load theory has had an impact on the way in which lessons are planned. The use of the Walkthrus and instructional coaching is beginning to have an impact on teaching and learning and this is evident in pupil voice documentation.</p> <p>Staff understand the rationale and research included in the Teaching and Learning Framework and this has had an impact on the way they plan and deliver lessons, avoiding cognitive overload, providing scaffolds where needed and using a small step approach. This is evident in learning walk documentation linked to the Walkthrus.</p>
	Ensure all classes provide a rich stimulation and provision of language/vocabulary stimuli (1, 2)	<p>Classes are now accessing Widget to ensure that key vocabulary is accessible to all pupils, particularly those with EAL or SEND and this has supported the implementation of knowledge organiser for these pupils, enabling them to use retrieval in order to know and remember more.</p> <p>High quality texts are used as part of the English curriculum, exposing pupils to more adventurous vocabulary.</p> <p>Those pupils who have arrived new to country have made positive progress, in particular communication but also their reading, writing and mathematics outcomes.</p>

	<p>Inform teachers and support staff which pupils are disadvantaged, including those who share multi-vulnerabilities. (4, 5)</p>	<p>All teachers now have a secure awareness of the pupils who have multiple vulnerabilities. This has enabled them to adapt the provision accordingly so that these pupils can access the curriculum content; this was seen during our SEND audit.</p> <p>The impact of coaching and the Walkthrus is now evident with pupils accessing the curriculum well and knowing and remembering more. Pupils are able to recall their learning across the curriculum.</p> <p>During moderation a selection of disadvantaged pupils were requested to discuss their learning, this showed a positive outcome.</p>
Desired outcome	Chosen action/approach	Impact:
<p><i>Targeted academic support</i></p> <p>To address where pupils are when they return in September, identify gaps in learning and plan and deliver appropriate interventions, ensuring that pupils are targeted who are not on track.</p>	<p>Identified pupils, particularly those who have fallen furthest behind are provided with additional support and structured interventions to help them to fill gaps in learning. This can be delivered 1:1 and/or in small groups. This may also be incorporated as part of lessons.</p> <p>(1, 2, 3, 4)</p>	<p>The vast majority of PP pupils have made at least expected progress from their individual starting points across Reading, Writing and Maths. Where some pupils may not have moved from W to Exp and Exp to GD, there is evidence in books that these pupils have made progress within each of these bands.</p> <p>There is evidence that the marking of basic skills is beginning to have an impact with the majority of pupils correcting these when needed. However, a more consistent approach is needed to enable greater impact. This will again be a focus for the academic year 2025-26.</p>
	<p>Early assessments identify gaps in learning with termly targets set and reviewed for all Pupil Premium pupils so that early intervention can be</p>	<p>The use of NTS, NMM and other assessment data is used to inform targets, and these were reviewed termly. Teachers made adaptations to</p>

	added to support if needed, this will include catch up beyond the school (1, 2, 3, 4)	<p>intervention groups and tutor groups to support pupils where needed.</p> <p>There has been a clear process to the early identification of those pupils who are disadvantaged and teachers have identified a potential SEND need. This early identification has enabled these pupils to be provided with scaffolds and models to access the full curriculum.</p>
Teachers know and understand how vulnerabilities influence pupils' learning and can, as a result, plan and deliver teaching and learning, which minimises negative impact and enhances accelerated learning.	<p>Parent workshops/online clips to raise understanding of how to support pupils in all areas of the curriculum</p> <p>Parental courses to develop parental skills.</p> <p>Use ParentPay for contact with parents to improve communications.</p> <p>Use social media (Twitter, Facebook) and the school's newsletter to inform parents of forthcoming workshops.</p> <p>Monitoring closely those parents are not engaging and be creative in overcoming barriers (5)</p>	<p>Parents have a clear understanding of what their child is learning, their areas of strength and areas of development. This information is then used to support pupils at home.</p> <p>Letters sent home where pupils are not completing home learning has helped to improve completion.</p> <p>There has been positive engagement in attendance at TLC meetings.</p>
	<p>Family support given, attendance monitoring and support, including rewards for pupils and families and working with other outside professionals e.g. EHA. (5, 6)</p>	<p>Attendance for some persistent absentees has improved. Pupils and families' attitudes have improved towards school and their learning, leading to better outcomes for pupils. This includes those pupils on safeguarding plans.</p> <p>The attendance of pupil premium pupils is strong and above national average. Where there are concerns the attendance officer is quick to address this, engaging parents in contracts and providing additional support where needed.</p>

	<p>Highlight targeted children and offer parents daily breakfast support and care. <i>(Identify pupils with the greatest need)</i></p> <p>Introduce children to healthy options and self-sufficiency. Social skills are developed through interaction with a variety of ages, games and conversations. (2)</p>	<p>Those pupils who have attended breakfast and after school club have had a settled start and end to the day, thus resulting in improved attitudes towards their learning. This strategy has also enabled us to monitor these pupils being in school on time.</p> <p>Those PP pupils who are part of an EHA have been offered this provision and where there has been concerns relating to a healthy lifestyle this has had a positive impact, evidence of this can be seen in these pupils' books.</p>
<p>100% attendance at Termly Learning Conferences, IEP meetings, and any safeguarding meetings. To also show positive engagement in other activities during the year.</p>	<p>Analysing and monitoring attendance and lateness weekly of all pupils. Attendance letters sent to parents where pupils attendance is below 96%. Daily phone calls home for all absent children. Meetings with parents where attendance is a concern and support is offered through engagement with outside agencies. (2)</p>	<p>Letters and weekly messages are sent to parents where their child has fallen below the national average for attendance.</p> <p>Parenting contracts are also in place where needed. Home visits have also helped to ensure that the attendance of PP pupils is positive.</p> <p>Staff are aware of those pupils whose absence is below the national average and they have been proactive in engaging with parents, improving attendance of some pupils.</p> <p>The weekly newsletter has included information linked to attendance and this has raised the profile of attendance and helped to educate parents- impact of lost learning.</p>
	<p>The SENCO is proactive in monitoring the progress of these pupils and supporting and advising teachers on appropriate strategies and intervention to use. (1, 2, 3, 4)</p>	<p>All pupils identified have made expected progress in line with starting points, and individual targets which have been set by the class teacher alongside the SENCO. The adaptation of the curriculum is secure and those pupils who are disadvantaged and PP have access to the broad and balanced curriculum.</p> <p>Early identification has ensured that interventions are in place sooner. Those pupils who need additional support</p>

		have been provided with scaffolds and models to achieve ambitious outcomes. There is targeted intervention to support pupils to progress well through the RWInc programme.
Desired outcome	Chosen action/approach	Impact:
<p>To identify the interests of all PP pupils so that appropriate enrichment opportunities are provided, contributing to improving mental health and wellbeing, resulting in pupils developing and maintaining positive learning behaviours.</p>	<p>Develop strategies to support identified individuals to include providing a nurturing environment/sense of purpose for our most vulnerable children. Staff will model positive relationships with an emphasis on the development of language, communication and social skills.</p> <p>(2, 3)</p>	<p>Some children who are attending nurture sessions have developed regulation strategies to aid learning. Relationships with external agencies have been further strengthened. This has enabled positive signposting for parents and provides an accurate support network.</p> <p>Interventions and additional clubs have supported pupils' mental health and have contributed towards improved attitudes towards school and their learning.</p> <p>There continues to be a reduction in the number of Immediate 3s for pupil behaviour.</p> <p>Where there have been concerns relating to a pupil's behaviour, interventions have been place, including behaviour plans.</p>
	<p>Develop strategies to support identified individuals to include providing a nurturing environment/sense of purpose for our most vulnerable children. Staff will model positive relationships with an emphasis on the development of language, communication and social skills.</p> <p>(2, 3)</p>	<p>Improved attitudes to learning for all pupils, enabling them to feel safe, secure and valued. This can be evidenced in the outcomes of all PP pupils, and in discussion with them. There is evidence that all staff have positive relationships with pupils and go above and beyond to ensure that pupils make progress.</p>

	<p>Through nurture interventions pupils are able to self-regulate in order to use strategies that enable them to access all curriculum content.</p> <p>(2, 4)</p>	<p>Improved attitudes to learning have enabled pupils to access the curriculum better. There have been improvements seen in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence • Self-esteem • Communication and support <p>The use of the Walkthrus have provided teachers with ways in which to ensure that PP pupils can access the curriculum. This includes the use of scaffolding and modelling. Instructional coaching and the support this provides has improved teaching and learning, in particular for those teachers who are ECTs.</p>
	<p>Monitor PP pupils' attendance and follow up quickly on absences. First day response provision.</p> <p>Provision of early start breakfast club</p> <p>(2, 4, 5)</p>	<p>Attendance for some persistent absentees has improved. Pupils and families' attitudes have improved towards school and their learning, leading to better outcomes for pupils. This includes those pupils on safeguarding plans.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Trips and visitors • PTA events, e.g. mufti days, discos, movie nights • After School Clubs • Music lessons (Rocksteady) • PE opportunities • Breakfast club • Lunch time clubs <p>(2, 4)</p>	<p>A range of enrichment activities have ensured that pupils remain engaged with school and their learning, with pupils accessing activities specific to their needs.</p> <p>All pupils who have participated have demonstrated an improved attitude towards school and their learning, with some pupils demonstrating improved confidence and self-esteem, impacting on positive outcomes.</p> <p>Although a positive outcome has been achieved a more creative approach will take place during the academic year 2024-25.</p>

Castle Academy Pupil Premium Data 2024- 2025

	All	Pupil Premium	Non-Pupil Premium
Attendance	95.9%	94.0%	96.3%
EYFS Good Level of Development	66%	38%	71%
Y1 Phonics Screening Check	78%	82%	77%
Y2 Phonics Screening Check	90%	80%	95%
Y6 Reading	76%	67%	80%
Y6 Writing	80%	53%	89%
Y6 Maths	92%	87%	93%
Y6 SPAG	80%	60%	86%
Y6 RWM	68%	53%	73%