

Pupil premium strategy statement Shrewsbury Academy

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 | 823 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 36.3% |
| 1 | 2025-2028 |
| Date this statement was published: | December 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed: | December 2026,2027 & 2028 |
| Statement authorised by | Jim Taylor |
| Pupil premium lead | Roxanne Hayes |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Sophy Bellis |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|--|----------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £320,690 |
| 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> | £320,690 |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

- *At Shrewsbury Academy, our ambition is that every student, regardless of background, starting point, or challenge, achieves the highest possible outcomes in progress and attainment. Our pupil premium strategy focuses on supporting disadvantaged pupils to reach this goal, including those who are already high attainers.*
- *A central priority is **reading**. Strong reading skills are the gateway to the entire curriculum and a foundation for lifelong success. Many disadvantaged learners face barriers in comprehension and vocabulary, which limits access to complex texts and exam content. Our strategy places **evidence-based reading interventions** at its core, ensuring pupils develop the literacy skills needed to thrive academically and beyond. Improving reading is not just about raising attainment, it is about **opening doors to opportunity and improving life chances**.*
- *Without strong literacy skills, pupils struggle to access complex texts in every subject, from science and history to mathematics and the arts. The **Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)** highlights that poor reading comprehension and vocabulary are among the most significant barriers to attainment for disadvantaged learners. We are one of the **74% of schools to identify reading as a key challenge** for disadvantaged pupils, alongside attendance.*
- *EEF's **Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools** guidance stresses that literacy is not just an English department responsibility; it is fundamental across all subjects. Our strategy will therefore include:*
- ***Prioritising disciplinary literacy** so every teacher supports reading in their subject.*
- ***Teaching reading comprehension strategies** through modelling and guided practice.*
- ***Providing high-quality interventions for struggling readers.** Literacy as a high-impact priority under "High-quality teaching" and "Targeted academic support." Schools are expected to use evidence-based strategies to close the attainment gap and improve life chances. Strong reading skills correlate not only with academic success but also with better health, employment, and wellbeing outcomes later in life*
- *We will remove barriers to attendance, participation, and inclusion by addressing individual needs, so every child feels valued and connected. Through positive routines, relationships, and responses, supported by ongoing CPD for staff, we will create a culture of belonging where every student experiences "achievement through caring."*

- *High-quality teaching and learning remain at the heart of our approach, complemented by targeted support and enrichment opportunities. All staff share responsibility for raising expectations and outcomes for all students including those for disadvantaged pupils. Our curriculum will be ambitious, broad, and inclusive, underpinned by continuous professional development and evidence-based strategies to ensure equitable access for all.*

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|---|
| 1 | Observations, assessments, and discussions have evidenced that the reading comprehension and inference skills of many of our disadvantaged learners are under-developed, making accessing complex written texts, and some exam style questions, more challenging. Their reading for understanding skills and vocabulary knowledge need additional support to help them achieve better outcomes. |
| 2 | The attainment of many of our disadvantaged pupils is, on average, lower than that of our non-disadvantaged pupils when they join us in Year 7. Without early identification of barriers to learning and appropriate intervention our disadvantaged learners may struggle to access the curriculum and therefore achieve lower GCSE outcomes. |
| 3 | Attendance data shows that absenteeism from school, individual lessons and 'desktop truancy' (students not actively partaking in learning) is impacting negatively on the progress of our disadvantaged cohorts. This is a complex and nuanced challenge which often requires an individual approach and therefore, more investment of time and staff training. |
| 4 | Some of our more disadvantaged pupils feel less connected to the wider school community. We want to foster a greater sense of belonging and inclusion for every child, with no child feeling marginalised due to the challenges they face. Our belonging plan is inclusive of all students, and our ambition is for all students to achieve. |
| 5 | Observations and discussions with pupils and families indicates that some of our disadvantaged pupils need support to widen their aspirations, both in school and beyond. We need to offer them wider enrichment opportunities that enable them to aim high and at the same time, be motivated to succeed academically. |
| 6 | We recognise that the emotional regulation and resilience of many of our learners, especially our most disadvantaged, needs strengthening and supporting. Not all of our disadvantaged pupils have a range of cognitive |

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| | and metacognitive strategies to use when they are dealing with challenging academic work or in other social situations. |
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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 |
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| Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across both key stages, with a particular focus on KS3. | By the end of our current plan (3 years), age related reading ages in KS4 will show gaps have closed, alongside sustained improvements in comprehension, inference, and student confidence. SMART target for reading is to move all students to their age-related reading age. The number of students receiving intervention and narrowing the gap to age related expectations increasing to 100% within three years. |
| Improved attainment among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of KS4, particularly in EBacc subjects and with a focus on English and Maths. | Within the 3 year plan, KS4 outcomes for our disadvantaged cohorts will have improved and attainment will reach national average by 2028 SMART target: reach national average for disadvantaged performance. |
| To improve attendance and engagement in learning for all pupils, in particular our disadvantaged pupils. | The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent will have reduced and the overall attendance and punctuality of disadvantaged pupils will show a sustained improvement by the end of the plan. Behaviour for learning will have improved to be in line with our non-disadvantaged cohorts. SMART target: see an improving three year trend for PA by 5% annually. |
| To improve the wellbeing and participation of all pupils, and their families, including our disadvantaged cohort. The work done, and support given by, The Harbor and Rise, positively impacts on the wellbeing and participation of our disadvantaged or vulnerable pupils and families. | Qualitative student, family and teacher voice will consistently demonstrate high levels of wellbeing in all cohorts. Participation rates in both school events and enrichment activities will increase, especially for our disadvantaged cohort. |
| To increase the promotion of further education opportunities, and investment in enhanced post-16 careers education, | The destinations of our disadvantaged cohort will be as aspirational as their non- |

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| leading to positive destinations for all learners. | disadvantaged peers by the end of the current plan. |
| <p>To improve metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among our pupils, particularly our disadvantaged cohort, in all year groups.</p> <p>To develop our school culture and expectations so that every student, and every family, feels valued and an important part of our school community.</p> | <p>Student voice, learning walks and lesson observations will demonstrate that pupils are more able to regulate their own learning. Student and family voice will also show a greater sense of belonging.</p> |

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: £ 130,170

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| <p>Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance.</p> <p>We will fund professional development and instructional coaching focussed on each teacher's subject area.</p> | <p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for pupils as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject.</p> <p>Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with access to the curriculum and attainment in all subjects.</p> <p>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)</p> <p>Oracy Across the Curriculum: The Evidence - Voice 21</p> | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 |
| Improving Literacy skills through | Use of Bedrock / WRAT5 reading assessments to ascertain baseline, and | 1, 2 |

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| <p>bespoke targeted intervention strategies that accelerate the reading ages of learners in need of intervention.</p> | <p>monitor reading age and progression of learners. Use of Bedrock and other bespoke interventions to address gaps in reading ages and accelerate the ability of our students to read at or above their chronological age related target levels. 15 Reasons Our Schools Tell Us They Love Lexonic Interventions - Lexonic</p> | |
| <p>Recruitment and retention of high quality, specialist teaching and pastoral staff.</p> | <p>Teacher quality is a key influence on pupil attainment (Coe et al., 2020), second only to pupil background (OECD, 2018) and sustained access to high quality teachers is a significant challenge across England. Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy; Supporting teachers to make a difference (publishing.service.gov.uk) Teacher-quality-recruitment-and-retention-lit-review-Final.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</p> | <p>2</p> |
| <p>Investment in developing metacognitive and self-regulation skills in our pupils. This will involve ongoing teacher training and support.</p> | <p>Teaching metacognitive strategies to pupils can be an inexpensive method to help pupils become more independent learners. Disadvantage hindering social and emotional development (teachermagazine.com) Metacognition and self-regulation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> | <p>2, 6</p> |

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

Budgeted cost: £ 109,938

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <p>Purchase and strategic use of standardised diagnostic assessments, with a particular focus on Year 7.</p> <p>Training will be provided for staff to ensure assessments are implemented and interpreted correctly to inform wider teaching and learning strategies and early, targeted classroom and external interventions.</p> | <p>When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups.</p> <p>EEF-Diagnostic-Assessment-Tool.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</p> <p>School Planning Guide 2022-23.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</p> <p>EEF Blog: Learning recovery and the role of diagnostic... EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> | 1, 2 |
| <p>Engaging with the National Tutoring Programme.</p> <p>A significant proportion of the pupils who receive tutoring will be disadvantaged, including those who are high attainers.</p> | <p>Tuition targeted at specific needs can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils, those with identified knowledge gaps, or at risk of (or already) falling behind.</p> <p>It can also be used to support or boost attendance for some of our more vulnerable pupils.</p> <p>One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> | 1, 2, 3 |

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

Budgeted cost: £ 80,582

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
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| <p>Developing our whole-school culture through</p> | <p>Culture and behaviour programmes are crucial to underpin high quality teaching and learning. They take time and</p> | 2, 3, 4, 5 |

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| <p>positive routines, relationships and responses.</p> | <p>investment to implement well and are more likely to have an impact on attainment outcomes when implemented at a whole-school level.</p> <p>The foundation of securing both improved attendance and outcomes is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.</p> <p>WHEN THE ADULTS CHANGE Paul Dix</p> <p>Sam Strickland's Leadership Blog (wordpress.com)</p> <p>Teach Like a Champion 3.0 Teach Like a Champion</p> <p>Research to understand successful approaches to supporting the most academically able disadvantaged pupils (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Improving Behaviour in Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> | |
| <p>Continued work on engagement, support, and building positive relationships with families to improve wellbeing and school attendance.</p> | <p>The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Removing barriers to attendance involves building strong, trusting relationships, and working together. Strategies and actions to improve school attendance must involve a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff, the governing body, Local Authority, and other local partners.</p> <p>Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> | <p>3, 4</p> |

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| | <p>Attendance interventions rapid evidence assessment EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions Early Intervention Foundation (eif.org.uk)</p> | |
| Enrichment and participation in artistic and creative activities | <p>Arts participation approaches are valuable in and of themselves and can also have a positive impact on academic outcomes in other areas of the curriculum, particularly literacy and mathematics.</p> <p>An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Arts participation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> | 1, 2, 4, 5 |
| Further development of careers education, including work experience opportunities, to help improve aspirations and outcomes for our pupils. | <p>High quality careers education can be crucial in developing the knowledge, confidence and skills young people need to make well-informed, relevant choices and plans for their future. Evidence suggests that it can have double the impact for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, some of whom are less likely to have family or friends with the insight and expertise to offer advice.</p> <p>To what extent can careers education tackle disadvantage? The Careers and Enterprise Company</p> <p>Careers review.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</p> <p>SYM873648 Careers-Education-Infographic (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</p> | 2, 5 |
| Contingency fund for acute issues. | <p>Based on our experiences and those of schools similar to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.</p> | ALL |

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Total budgeted cost: £ 320,690

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Analysis the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2024/25 academic year using key stage 4 performance data and our own internal assessment:

- Attainment 8 (which is a measure of GCSE attainment across 8 subjects) was 26.33 for our disadvantaged pupils, compared to 37.99 for their non-disadvantaged peers. Both figures are below national levels showing significant gaps in attainment and the need for further intervention to narrow gaps in performance for disadvantaged learners. Mapping this to age related reading data, shows a strong correlation to lower levels of literacy for disadvantaged learners, resulting in the drive for not just disciplinary literacy but an improved reading culture and targeted bespoke interventions for students in this plan.
- 9.3% of our disadvantaged pupils were entered for the English Baccalaureate, or EBacc, (which is a measure of educational performance taking account of GCSE marks in English, mathematics, history or geography, science, and a language), compared to 6.7% of our non-disadvantaged cohort.
- The performance of our pupils, including our disadvantaged cohort, in terms of raw attainment is disappointing when compared to national figures, and did not meet expectations.
- Reading interventions began in 2024 with the broad implementation of Bedrock reading age assessments. 92% of students were tested. Of those tested around 40% of students required intervention on top of an improved disciplinary literacy approach under the universal offer, in the form of Lexonic leap and Advance. 8 staff are now trained to deliver small group targeted interventions. The width of these interventions needs to be further increased in 2025 with Rise funding from January 2026 in addition to PP being targeted to ensure more students receive the interventions they require.

In-school evaluation tells us that some of this is due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly on wellbeing, mental health, and attendance. However, it is also clear that some of our previous Pupil Premium strategies are not having the impact we had hoped for. This current year group did not sit KS2 sats making the assessment of progress impossible.

- Our evaluation of the approaches delivered last academic year indicates that although some progress has been made, there is still work to be done in all strands of our strategy.

- The intended outcomes, planned activities, and budget allocations for 2025 - 2028 and beyond have therefore been refined and strengthened, with key evidence-based initiatives identified and highlighted for implementation, to help to support improved KS4 performance measures in the coming years.
- A continual review process, including an objective evaluation of both implementation and impact of the strategy, will underpin our efforts to improve outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils, and this document will be regularly updated to reflect the findings and any planned adjustments.

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 |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Bedrock Reading age Assessment | Bedrock |
| Lexonic Leap | Lexonic |
| Lexonic Advance | Lexonic |

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

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

Further information (optional)

- *Our pupil premium strategy is embedded within the wider School Improvement Plan and our Belonging Plan. Planning follows the EEF's recommended five-step cycle: diagnose barriers, select evidence-based approaches, implement with fidelity, monitor impact, and sustain improvements. We use diagnostic assessments, pupil voice, and attendance data to inform decisions and adjust interventions termly.*
- *Implementation is supported by our Teaching and Learning Team through CPD, instructional coaching, and quality assurance. We utilise the Teach like a Champion strategies monitored through coaching and the step lab model. Impact is evaluated using progress data, reading age assessments, attendance dashboards, and enrichment participation rates. Governors, and trustees receive termly reports (KPI) and contribute to strategic review,*
- *In addition to pupil premium-funded activity, we deliver wider initiatives that benefit disadvantaged pupils, including:*
- *Whole-school culture work: positive routines, relationships, and responses to improve behaviour and belonging.*
- *Family engagement programmes: early help meetings and multi-agency support to address attendance and wellbeing.*
- *Enrichment and careers education: employer partnerships, work experience, and cultural capital opportunities funded through other school budgets and external grants.*
- *This integrated approach ensures that pupil premium funding complements, rather than duplicates, our broader commitment to equity and excellence for all learners.*