



Heart of the Forest Community Special School - Pupil premium strategy statement

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	Heart of the Forest Special School
Number of pupils in school	144
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	37.5%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2022 to 2025
Date this statement was published	Dec 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025
Statement authorised by	Lyn Dance & Lucyna Mansfield, Co-Headteachers
Pupil premium lead	Lizzie Spowart Pastoral Lead
Governor / Trustee lead	Derek Cross

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£81,160
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£16,120
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	£97,280



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 across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal.

We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. 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 and supported 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

Challenges

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



Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Mental health and well-being of students post pandemic and continued anxiety and possible non-attendance, or reduced attendance, due to this having an impact on pupil's academic and personal progress.
2	All pupils have an EHCP these include a varied range of need including; severe or profound learning disabilities, challenging behaviour, physical disabilities and/or complex medical issues, Autism, specific genetic syndromes, sensory impairment, difficulties with engagement with learning and concentration, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, anxiety and/or behaviour issues which impact on learning, attachment disorder and attention deficit disorder. This therefore requires the implementation of a broad and balanced curriculum which is accessible and appropriate for all pupils.
3	Challenging behaviours, as a consequence of SEND leading to behaviour incidents which can impact the academic and personal progress for a small percentage of pupils.
4	Communication difficulties; non- verbal pupils, pupils with limited language, pupils who require the use of assistive technology or specialist input in addition to the NHS provision and pupils with social communication difficulties. This can be an identified barrier to achieving desired outcomes across the curriculum.
5	Significant medical and health issues (including mobility difficulties) for a small percentage of pupils, some of which are life limiting and require access to therapies.
6	A percentage of pupils not being able to access enrichment activities at home due to, for example, lack of support from families or funding available. Actions from some families not fostering independence in their child.
7	Disadvantaged pupils often require additional support with self-esteem and social, emotional, mental health to improve readiness to learn.
8	Sensory processing difficulties can impact on pupils ability to access curriculum.+



Intended outcomes

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

Intended outcome	Success criteria
<p>Pupils will feel happy, safe and secure within Heart of the Forest School. They will have made progress with their social and emotional development and feel ready to learn. Pupils will in turn have improved mental health and well-being.</p>	<p>Pupils will have greater awareness of their feelings and emotions and will more readily be able to express their feelings.</p> <p>Pupils will feel safe and secure in their environment therefore, will be ready to access learning.</p> <p>Pupils will be making good progress against their individual EHCP intentions</p> <p>Pupil attendance will increase</p>
<p>Pupils will have access to an engaging curriculum which enables progress appropriate to individual need. Pupils will have access to enriching learning experiences through specialist environments and resources.</p>	<p>Pupils will access an engaging curriculum, inclusive of pathway focussed learning opportunities.</p> <p>Pupils will be supported to make good progress in through engaging in enriching learning opportunities.</p> <p>Staff will be provided with training and relevant CPD to enable support strategies to effectively enrich learning across the school.</p> <p>Specialist environments and resources will be available across the school.</p> <p>Pupils will have access to therapies through their curriculum provision.</p> <p>A purpose built SEMH provision will be established to provide wider support for Primary aged pupils.</p>
<p>Embed high quality education through trained specialist provision, promoting an aspirational culture in which pupils thrive to enable lifelong learning.</p>	<p>Teaching staff have greater knowledge and pedagogy to support them in meeting pupil need.</p> <p>Specialist training and CPD forms part of a comprehensive inset training program tailored to the needs of staff and pupils.</p> <p>All staff strive to maintain a high level of quality education within an aspirational school setting.</p>



	<p>Pupils will have made at least expected progress in core subjects.</p>
<p>Parental and pupil engagement with school will continue to increase with school based activities.</p>	<p>Increased attendance to parental conversation meetings, EHCP review meetings etc.</p> <p>Parents/carers will engage with workshops, showcases of learning, transition events and other whole school events and training.</p> <p>Multi-agency teams work closely with school and home to provide a collaborative and consistent approach for supporting pupils.</p> <p>Effective communication networks are imbedded.</p>



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: **£48,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Delivery of individualised learning across the curriculum, including developing the therapeutic curriculum.</p> <p>To provide 1:1 support for those that require additional support to access their therapeutic curriculum to meet their physical needs.</p>	<p><i>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)</i> “On average, individualised instruction has a positive effect on learners”</p> <p>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) “Physical development improves communication and academic learning.”</p>	1, 2,4, 5,7
<p>To provide staff with increased level of CPD to ensure they can provide an engaging curriculum.</p>	<p>July 2016 DfE Standard for teachers’ “professional development state that: Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership”</p>	2, 4, 7
<p>To make at least expected progress in reading through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated phonics resources • Staff training • Provide 1:1 support for PP pupils to close the gap with reading. 	<p><i>July 2016 DfE Standard for teachers’</i> “professional development state that: Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership”</p> <p>Closure in the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils within reading progress. (SOLAR data)</p>	2,4,
<p>To ensure the newly allocated Early Years provision is fully resourced with adequately trained staff.</p>		1, 2 , 4 , 7



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

Budgeted cost: £20.000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>To implement the following support strategies to assist with meeting the needs of pupils;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key staff trained to undertake intervention and support strategies. • Sensory OT input • Team Teach <p>Training</p>	<p><i>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)</i> Meta-cognition and self-regulation techniques provide pupils with an additional 7+ months progress</p> <p>School ethos focused on supporting pupils to understand their own behaviours and find positive ways to effectively manage them.</p>	<p>1, 2,3, 4,5, 8</p>
<p>To continue to provide 1:1 and small group intervention sessions with class teacher to support individual gaps in learning. Literacy/Numeracy Resources purchased as identified/required.</p>	<p><i>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)</i> “Meta-cognition and self regulation approaches have consistently high levels of impact, with pupils making an average of eight months’ additional progress. The evidence indicates that teaching these strategies can be particularly effective for low achieving and older pupils”</p> <p>Pupil Premium pupils make at least as good progress as their peers. Targeted interventions for reading, writing and numeracy are having a positive impact.</p>	<p>2, 7</p>



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

Budgeted cost: **£29.280**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>To increase parental engagement through the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home learning support • EHCP meetings • Social Media Platforms • School Website • Showcases to parents • Transition events (signage, prospectus, pamphlets) • Parent workshops and information sessions 	<p><i>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) 'Positive Impact of specialist teaching'</i></p> <p>Historically parental engagement has been low and moving forward we would like to establish a greater working relationships with the families we support.</p>	6
<p>To provide pupils with breakfast on arrival to school.</p> <p>To have established after school club activities for all pupils.</p>	<p><i>Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) "evidence indicates that, on average, disadvantaged pupils make close to three additional months' progress per year from extended school time through the targeted use of before and after school programmes. There are also often wider benefits for low-income students, such as increased attendance at school, improved behaviour, and better relationships with peers"</i></p> <p>Overall attendance for pupils eligible for pupil premium to improve to the school target of 90%.</p>	1, 6, 7
<p>To establish greater links to support pupils, their families and the community of Heart of the Forest School;</p>	<p>Heart of the Forest School is located within an isolated setting in a rural community. Greater links with local schools,</p>	6



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multi-agency professional's meetings• Careers• To employ a TA, one day per week to increase pupil access to careers advice and work experience.	providers and networks to enable us to develop partnerships are advantageous for all stakeholders.	
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Total budgeted cost: £97,280



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 2023 to 2024 academic year.

1, Pupils will feel happy, safe and secure within Heart of the Forest School. They will have made progress with their social and emotional development and feel ready to learn. Pupils will in turn have improved mental health and well-being.

The pastoral team have continued to offer intervention where appropriate to support the mental health and well-being of pupils across the school.

An increased enrichment offer across all pathways has supported the social, emotional development of pupils and supported increased engagement in classroom learning.

Continuing to offer breakfast for all pupils to access has supported readiness for learning.

The creation of the Forum for Post 16 and KS4 has provided the pupils with an age appropriate area to socialise during breaktimes. The introduction of iPods has been a favourite.

2, Pupils will have access to an engaging curriculum which enables progress appropriate to individual need. Pupils will have access to enriching learning experiences through specialist environments and resources.

The development of the Forum for KS4 and Post 16 has provided a specialist environment for encouraging and promoting reading for pleasure as well as being an area to pupils that require a space to complete phonic intervention.

Outside providers have enriched the opportunities for all pupils, these have included, Music works, Music space, Art space and circus skills and Boogie Bounce.

The summer Yurt project was a particular success, creating an exciting space to enrich the learning environment. This was used to enhance and promote reading for pleasure and for music and art projects across all ages and phases.

KS3 have accessed regular swimming sessions and Adventure sports as part of their PE provision.

3, Embed high quality education through trained specialist provision, promoting an aspirational culture in which pupils thrive to enable lifelong learning



Specific interventions and small group support enable pupils to have targeted high quality learning opportunities.

Support has been provided to staff and appropriate resources purchased to support the sensory integration needs of pupils.

4, Parental and pupil engagement with school will continue to increase with school based activities.

The continuation of increased family liaison has enabled further support to families and enabled access to early help in a timely manner. This has provided increased opportunities for parent engagement.

The introduction of parent consultation meetings has enabled an increase in engagement.

Learning Fayres have been introduced to enable pupils to share their learning with parents and carers.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

Measure	Details



Further information (optional)

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