

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Firwood High School
Number of pupils in school	218
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	54.1% (whole school) 53.8% (11-16 years old only)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 Year plans are recommended)	2021/2022 to 2024/2025
Date this statement was published	October 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2024
Statement authorised by	Dawn Evans Head of School
Pupil premium lead	Dawn Evans Julie McAllister (DSL)
Governor / Trustee lead	Ashley Mason

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£65,205
Pupil Premium CLA	£18,600
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 76,728
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	£160,533

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is to use pupil premium funding to help us achieve and sustain positive outcomes and narrow the gap between our disadvantaged students and their peers.

Whilst socio-economic disadvantage is not always the primary challenge our students face, we work towards closing the gap to ensure that every student is able to overcome challenges and learn without limits, maximising their outcomes and reaching their full potential.

At Firwood the heart of our approach is high-quality teaching focussed on areas that disadvantaged pupils require it most, targeted support based on robust diagnostic assessment of need, and helping pupils to access a broad and balanced curriculum, adapted to their individual learning needs. The key principles are based on ensuring that our students are able to access an engaging and purposeful learning environment which is conducive to the development of communication, personal, social and independence skills.

Although our strategy is focused on the needs of disadvantaged pupils, it will benefit all pupils in our school where funding is spent on whole-school approaches, such as high-quality teaching. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that outcomes for non-disadvantaged pupils will be improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our strategy will be driven by the needs and strengths of each young person, based on formal and informal assessments, teacher knowledge and understanding of the students and through collaboration with parents and other professionals and stakeholders in the students from our Multi-Agency Team.

This will help us to ensure that we offer them the relevant skills and experience they require to be prepared for adulthood so they are able to gain meaningful and purposeful college placements and a smooth transition into Adult Services.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Firwood is a school for students with Severe, Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities and Complex Needs, all the students at Firwood have an EHCP and are individual in their presentation and learning needs .
2	Our assessments and observations show that disadvantaged students are likely to have less, social opportunities to apply their communication skills.
3	Our observations, assessments and discussions with families show that disadvantaged students are likely to face greater challenges accessing cultural capital outside of the school provision impacting further on the development of social and independence skills.
4	Through discussions with families and our wider MDT stakeholders there is an increased need for pastoral and parental support for our disadvantaged students through enhanced parental engagement.
5	Some of our disadvantaged students have challenging sensory needs which require further assessment and support in order to regulate their behaviour to minimise the impact on their learning.
6	Through our observations and discussions with students and families our disadvantaged students require additional support with their health needs requiring specialist equipment to access different learning environments and engage in learning opportunities outside the classroom. E.g., Home Reach Provision and Outdoor Learning opportunities.
7	Our observations and assessments demonstrate that our disadvantaged students require access to enhanced sensory services to enhance their learning opportunities and provide specialist interventions and therapies.
8	Through discussions with families, wider MDT partners and students our findings are that many of our disadvantaged pupils are impacted to a greater extent than other students. Access to community support systems and facilities are limited. E.g., Hydrotherapy and rebound.

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
<p>Academic Attainment Improved attainment in Communication through a Total Communication approach.</p>	<p>Firwood assessment to show on average that disadvantaged pupils are working in line with their peers. An increased number of students accessing their learning, which will positively impact on progress and individual potential.</p> <p>Development and implantation of AAC communication strategies.</p> <p>Increased Staff Training and cascading of information for staff. Staff to indicate increased confidence and ability to implement their practice.</p> <p>Improved attainment in Communication and progress in Communication skills.</p> <p>Through observations and discussions with pupils and their families.</p>
<p>Enrichment Students have access to Enrichment activities and WOW days to enable them to develop and use their social skills in a wider setting.</p>	<p>To access a range of enrichment activities over the course of the academic year involving music, theatre and school led WOW days (MFL World Children's Day, MFL Chinese New Year, World Book Day, Sporting events and Multicultural celebrations)</p> <p>For disadvantaged students to show progress in Communication skills</p> <p>To demonstrate opportunities for students to make and implement choices.</p> <p>Developing learning opportunities within different environments to support engagement of learning in different contexts.</p>

	<p>Provide opportunities for applied speaking and listening activities</p> <p>Develop social skills in group settings</p> <p>Training and cascading of information for staff</p> <p>Decreased level of behaviour incidents.</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>To provide opportunities for physical activities and cross curricular learning.</p> <p>To provide learning opportunities for students with complex medical needs outside the school.</p> <p>To provide an enhanced curriculum which supports the development of mindfulness.</p> <p>Providing students with Magic Breakfast to ensure all students have access to a nutritionally balanced meal at the start of the day.</p> <p>Home reach model developed and implemented with students with complex medical needs.</p> <p>To develop the track and learning activities on the field to support physical development and health.</p>	<p>Increased attainment of life and social skills.</p> <p>Students demonstrate skills in mindfulness and relaxation which impacts behaviour and a sense of wellbeing.</p> <p>Students with complex medical needs are able to access purposeful and meaningful education.</p> <p>Increased concentration and attention and impact on learning attainment through having breakfast.</p> <p>Staff skills and experience are shared with other professionals maximising the outcomes for students.</p> <p>Impact on student's physical health and opportunities to engage in exercise.</p> <p>Observe increased self-esteem and independence.</p>
<p>Therapies</p> <p>To enhance the quality of provision and experiences for students.</p>	<p>Increase numbers of disadvantaged students accessing the hydrotherapy and rebound facilities.</p> <p>Improve the quality of hydrotherapy and rebound delivered to students by facilitating additional support.</p>

	<p>Enhance the experience of hydrotherapy and increase the duration of time spent in the pool.</p> <p>Offer additional opportunities to students without a physical need to experience the hydrotherapy suite.</p> <p>Offer disadvantaged students' opportunities to engage with a Therapy dog. To raise self confidence and self esteem when engaging with an animal.</p>
<p>Cultural Capital To provide opportunities for disadvantaged students to participate in outward bounds activities and experience a residential holiday with their peers.</p> <p>DofE Bronze to provide students on the DofE courses with a residential opportunity to achieve their accreditation</p>	<p>Increase self-esteem and independence and personal, social skills.</p> <p>Increase number of disadvantaged students accessing residential opportunities.</p> <p>Develop social skills and opportunities to apply learning in a new setting</p> <p>To develop the skills to achieve a Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award</p> <p>To increase opportunities to use skills in the outdoors and local rural landscape.</p>
<p>Sensory To provide school, families and carers with sensory information to support individual students in all areas of life.</p> <p>To create a sensory environment within the school community where learning can be facilitated in an immersive environment.</p>	<p>School staff trained and supported in the implementation of sensory diets</p> <p>Attainment through sensory 'Thrive' pathway data.</p> <p>Increased engagement through implementation of sensory diets.</p> <p>For staff knowledge and pedagogical skills to increase through collaboration with external providers.</p> <p>Increased health and wellbeing of students with sensory diets</p>

	<p>Reduction in behaviour incidents through implementation of sensory diets.</p> <p>Disadvantaged students accessing the light room for communication and literacy sessions</p>
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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: £10,362.09

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of 1 days of a team who are trained in sensory profiling/ sensory assessments	For Students with complex learning difficulties and sensory integration issues a sensory diet allows for regulation of the sensory systems which allows access to learning and improves outcomes for students.	5, 7
CPD for staff on Sign-along	Staff are able to support a TOTAL communication environment and provide students with a visual mode of communication modelled accurately to promote independence and deepen their understanding of social communication.	2, 3
CPD for teaching staff throughout Firwood to develop pedagogical understanding	Having a well-thought-out pedagogy can improve the quality of your teaching and the way students learn, helping them gain a deeper grasp of fundamental material. Being mindful of the way you teach can help you better understand how to help students achieve deeper learning.	1-8
Purchase of time and specialist training for a Middle Leader with responsibility for Total Communication across the school. To complete Eklan	Communication The ability to communicate is fundamental to human experience and learning and to participation and achievement in all curriculum areas. It is essential for having one's needs and wishes met and for influencing others. All children have the right to develop the necessary skills to be part of a social world	2 1, 3, 4, 5, 6,7, 8

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

Budgeted cost: 76,864.11

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of 1 day a week of a skilled and experienced Teacher trained in the Engagement Model and complex Needs	Students with high medical needs require specialist teaching through the Home Reach Model	1, 5, 6
Five hours a week of a Teaching Assistant to support the maintenance and development of hydro resources for therapies	Hydrotherapy provision supports the physical and mental health of students allowing for better life outcomes through the implementation of regular water therapy.	7, 8
Purchase of 1 week of a trained TA3 to support students in Hydrotherapy sessions.	Hydrotherapy provision supports the physical and mental health of students allowing for better life outcomes through the implementation of regular water therapy.	2, 7, 8
Purchase of half a week of a trained TA3 to support students in Rebound therapy	Rebound Therapy is a form of physiotherapy. It promotes physical activity, motor skills and enjoyment.	2, 7, 8
Purchase of time for parental engagement Leader and pastoral support	Parental involvement is essential for student development and offers many benefits. It can also impact student behaviour and support health needs through MDT working. Having parents and teachers communicate more helps students feel more motivated in their classes; their self-esteem and outcomes improve	4, 6, 7, 8
Purchase of interpreting services	Interpreting plays a crucial role in the communication process by facilitating communication between parents and teachers. Interpreting helps to fill the language gap, making it easier	4, 8

	for parents and teachers to understand each other, build relationships, and communicate effectively.	
DofE offer and Residential opportunities	Through school residential students will develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-belief and self-confidence - A sense of identity - Initiative and a sense of responsibility - A real awareness of their strengths - New talents and abilities - The ability to plan and use time effectively - Learning from and giving to others in the community - Forming new friendships - Problem solving, presentation and communication skills - Leadership and teamworking skills. DofE students will also achieve accreditation in an internationally recognised award.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8

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

Budgeted cost: 54,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Enhanced Curriculum and WOW days implemented throughout the year	Cultural capital gives a student power . It helps them achieve goals, become successful, and rise up the social ladder without necessarily having wealth or financial capital. Cultural capital is having assets that give students the ability to socialise and reach their potential.	1-8
Enterprise curriculum opportunities throughout the year	Through entrepreneurship activities, learners can gain key entrepreneurial skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, risk-taking and teamwork.	2, 3
Targeted small group behaviour and social and emotional	Small group tuition has an impact by providing additional support that is targeted at pupil needs.	1, 2, 7

interventions E.g., Attention Autism.		
Enhancing the sensory regulation equipment of students with enhance sensory needs	Sensory equipment and resources such as mattresses, lap pads, weighted jackets, smells, additional proprioceptive equipment and access to a gym can be effective as part of a sensory diets for our students.	4, 5
Enhancing the outdoor learning experience through the purchase of an outdoor learning classroom for our sensory garden.	Outdoor classrooms offer an exceptional chance for students to learn and have fun in a natural environment. Being in nature can reduce stress and increase happiness. Exposure to natural light can also regulate sleep patterns, which can positively impact children's mental health. Outdoor classrooms can have a major impact on the learning and development of students, from enhancing problem solving skills to communication and resilience.	1-8
Further adaptations to Firwood's flat to provide a real 'living experience' for the students at Firwood.	To develop independent learners and provide an experiential learning environment where life skills can be taught, developed and implemented.	1-8
Development of the Firwood Gym for physical activities and exercise	Your physical health includes staying active and healthy eating. Staying healthy physically is proven to make you feel better about yourself, giving you more energy, confidence and brain power. To develop social skills by socialising with students from other classes/ key stages.	1-8
Supplement breakfast to support Magic Breakfast implementation	Eating a good breakfast in the morning wakes up the brain, improves concentration, reduces irritability, and gives a child a stable routine for the rest of the day. We provide opportunities for the students to make small choices within their day	2, 4, 5
Purchase of resources and training for our school Therapy dog Merlin.	The benefits of Therapy Dogs range from improvement in general health and wellbeing, increased confidence levels, improved and controlled movement to improved communication skills. To provide students with a focus and a calm	3, 4, 5, 7

	environment. To give social opportunities	
Haircuts and desensitisation	Research has shown that many children with Autism and sensory processing disorders tend to demonstrate unusual sensory responses (e.g., over-response or under-response) to touch and auditory stimulation. Desensitisation is used to modify how sensitive an area is to particular stimuli. This technique is used to decrease, or normalise, the body's response to particular sensations. Grooming is important for good mental wellbeing.	7, 8

Total budgeted cost: £ 141.761.20

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 2022 to 2023 academic year.

Pupil Premium (PPG) is allocated to schools to provide support to eligible pupils to ensure that their progress and attainment is in line with that of their peers. The provision provided by Firwood High School was tailored to the needs of the individual pupils and came in the form of targeted pastoral support through the pandemic to support students to get back to a position where they were able to learn effectively.

Pupil premium funding was spent addressing barriers to learning and narrowing the gap to ensure all students achieved their full potential and maximised their outcomes. The identified barriers to learning for our students include;

- Disability and learning needs – all students at Firwood High School have Severe Learning Disabilities and/ or Autistic Spectrum Conditions and many have increased medical, sensory, physical and behaviour needs.
- Communication difficulties
- Reduced access to social and community opportunities
- Increased need for pastoral support and parental engagement
- Less access to enrichment activities and social provision

For the academic year 2022/2023, Firwood High School's allocation was used to raise attainment through the following ways;

- To provide nutritious breakfasts for students living with food insecurity, enabling us to give ability to our students the opportunity to succeed throughout the school day.
- To use Commando Joe's to enhance the curriculum provision and impact core learning including Discovery.
- To provide fully qualified hydrotherapy and rebound therapy staff, and maintain the high standards of these facilities to ensure our students have access to a quality therapeutic experience.
- To provide sensory assessments, sensory training, sensory profiles and sensory equipment to promote behaviour for learning and the development of
- To provide specialist communication training for selected staff and through this further development of our Total Communication Approach for students in school and whole staff training.
- To provide a 'Home Reach' offer to our high needs medical students who are unable to access school on site.
- To organise parent groups, to improve parental engagement and provide informal support and opportunities for families to interact with each other and form friendships.

- To run the Duke of Edinburgh; the benefits of DofE are endless, some of these include, boosting self-belief, self-confidence, instilling a real awareness of students own strengths. The opportunity to learn from and give to others in the community.
- To provide our families with EAL the necessary means to communicate with school and multi-agencies to enable them to have the appropriate support and guidance for their child.
- To provide the opportunity for our KS4 students to experience a residential holiday with their peers. A residential creates a nurturing environment whereby students learn to adapt to a new setting, together. A transferable skill when moving on to our sixth form.
- To provide a high-tech sensory room for thrive students to promote touch, increasing concentration, develop fine motor skills and encourage language skills.
- The renovation of our school flat to provide a quality home learning environment to develop independence skills.
- To provide our dog mentor programme, studies have found that children with animal companions have higher self-esteem, greater empathy, more engagement with peers and promotes social behaviour.
- To provide haircuts and desensitisation services to our families and young people.

The data suggests that students in receipt of PPG are making more progress than those who are non-PPG in every strand of learning.

In key stage 3 and 4, 41% of PPG student targets are classed as having exceeded progress, 41% of PPG student targets are classed as having expected progress and 18% of PPG student targets are classed as having developing progress. 82% of PPG student targets are therefore making at least expected progress across all areas of the curriculum. The data shows that 79% of non-PPG students are making at least expected progress across all areas of the curriculum – therefore PPG students are making marginally more progress with a difference of 3%.

In the sixth form pupil premium students have performed better than non-pupil premium students. Students that are pupil premium are developing in 19% of targets, making expected progress in 33% and exceeding in 48%. Students that are non-pupil premium are developing in 26% of targets, making expected progress in 33% and are exceeding in 41%.

Further information (optional)

Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activity that we are not funding through the pupil premium or recovery premium. This will include:

- Working in partnership with our primary feeders to provide opportunities such as a Transition Week and Fir-Fest – a festival which celebrates transition and forms strong relationships with Y6 families to ensure a positive and purposeful start to Firwood.
- Working in partnership with our MDT partners to prepare our students for adulthood within our local community, engaging with health and social care professionals to ensure our students are able to reach their potential and access their adult placements effectively.
- Working with colleges and adult social care facilities to ensure our older students are able to transition successfully to their next placement with accredited qualifications and a breadth of experiences.
- Continued Professional Development whole school and personalised to meet the needs and support the progress and development of students.