Pupil premium strategy statement – Ercall Wood Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	278
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	27.6%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers.	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	N.Murphy (Principal)
Pupil premium leads	S.Orford & M. Castro
Governor / Trustee lead	D. James (Governor)

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 255,560
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*	£ 255,560

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Ercall Wood Academy, our mission is to provide the highest quality of education for all our students, regardless of their starting point. This ensures that students can be happy, successful and make a positive contribution to our community and future generations through embodying the 'Ercall Way'.

We firmly believe that for our disadvantaged students to thrive, they must achieve at least a grade 4 in their core academic programme, including English and Maths. This equips our students with the best opportunity to progress onto their desired pathway in education, employment, or training; with the majority aiming for level 3 provision.

Our intervention strategy begins early in Year 7 to address and narrow gaps before they widen. We employ formative assessment and feedback to address gaps as they arise in lessons. Prioritising CPD and quality-first teaching allows us to respond effectively to the needs of all students, particularly vulnerable learners. Additionally, summative assessments help us track student progress and implement timely, evidence-based interventions for individuals, small groups, or classes, with a focus on Pupil Premium students. Moreover, staff training ensures these interventions are delivered to a high standard.

Beyond academic support, our Mountain Rescue and pastoral teams address barriers outside of the classroom. This approach enables staff to understand the barriers that individual students face rather than making sweeping assumptions; thus, adapting their teaching accordingly to meet those individual needs.

Furthermore, we aim to develop students holistically through a plethora of enrichment activities. These experiences develop our student's cultural capital and character by providing them with the skills and knowledge to thrive in diverse social and professional environments. By gaining a broader understanding of the world and their place in it, students receive a well-rounded education that extends beyond the classroom, fostering personal growth and preparing them to contribute meaningfully to society. Throughout all these initiatives, our Pupil Premium students remain our top priority, ensuring they receive the support and opportunities necessary to succeed.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	*Lower attainment and progress compared to non-disadvantaged students.*
2	*Disengagement influenced by lack of aspiration and the perceived lack of value of education.*
3	*Lower literacy levels upon entry to secondary school impacting progress.*
4	*Lack of exposure to a range of rich and diverse experiences which have led to a reduced cultural capital.*
5	*Lower attendance levels for disadvantaged students compared to non-disadvantaged students.*
6	*Greater risk of ACEs for disadvantaged students and consequently a greater impact on SEMH.*

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
To improve attainment for disadvantaged students across the curriculum by the end of KS4.	• Closing the gap between PP and non-disadvantaged achievement in summative assessments • PP students identified and directed to appropriate interventions after each termly data drop to help close any gaps in knowledge.
To improve the learning behaviours of all students, including those who are eligible for PP.	• Suspension data for PP students to be in line with or lower than that of non-PP students each half term. • Merit points each half term to be in line with or higher than those students who are not disadvantaged.
Ensure that all students, including those who are disadvantaged, secure a post-16 destination.	• All students, including those who are disadvantaged to have secured a place at sixth form, college or an apprenticeship by their summer GCSE exams.
To improve reading ability for all students, including those who are disadvantaged, across KS3.	• NGRT reading data shows improved reading scores for all students, including those who are disadvantaged.

	• Culture walks, staff observations, book looks, and student voice will demonstrate an improved engagement with reading activities.
Improve all students' cultural capital, particularly those who are PP, and encourage students to fully engage in the school's extracurricular offer.	• PP students to at least be proportionally represented in the engagement of extracurricular clubs on the enrichment attendance tracker. • PP students are at least proportionally represented for all trip opportunities.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all students, including those who are disadvantaged.	• Attendance for PP students to be at or above national figures for non-disadvantaged students. • Persistent absence for students who are PP is at or above national figures for non-disadvantaged students
Improved and sustained wellbeing for all students, including those who are disadvantaged.	• Student voice, parent voice and teacher observations will highlight sustained high levels of wellbeing. • Data from PASS surveys will show an increase in wellbeing for students across the academic year.
Improved and sustained metacognitive and self-regulatory skills for all students, particularly those who are disadvantaged.	• Culture walks, classroom observations and student voice will demonstrate that students (particularly those who are disadvantaged) are participating in metacognitive processes and are able to regulate their learning.

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

Budgeted cost: £ *172,580*

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continued development of a knowledge-rich curriculum for years 7,8 & 9 - *Subject time* - *Coaching allocation* - *Leadership time for culture walks with a focus on implementation of strategies to support vulnerable learners (including those who are PP)*	A range of research that indicates the impact a more knowledge focused curriculum can have on progress. Researchers include: E.D.Hirsch S.Englemann B.Rosenshine	1
Key Stage 4 Tracking - *Key stage 4 Pupil Progress Coordinator to analyse key stage 4 data and work with Raising Standards Lead to close gaps for PP* - *Organised key stage 4 intervention with emphasis on PP attendance* - *Staff prioritise PP books and assessments for marking cycles* - *Target PP cohort as part of mentoring programme.*	EEF mentoring +2Months EEF Extending school day +3months EEF Homework +5months	1, 2
Emersion Programme - *CPD with an emphasis on supporting the learning of vulnerable learners* - *Subject leader time* - *Line management QA* - *Subject Leader Dashboard*	EEF Feedback +6 months EEF Metacognition and self regulatory learning +7 months	1
Assistant Principal in charge of ECF - *CPD for mentors* - *CPD for ECTs* - *Monitoring and tracking of ECTs training programme*	Education inspection framework: overview of research	1,2,3,6
Reduced group sizes for lower attaining students - *Additional teaching group*	EEF Reducing class sizes +2months	1,2
Responding to students needs - *Strategies to support our most vulnerable PP students are on seating plans and actioned regularly throughout lessons* - *Pupil Passports are created and shared with staff for our PP students who have high profile needs*	DFE SEN support: findings from a qualitative study, 2021 EEF social and emotional learning +4 months EEF behaviour interventions +4 months	1, 2, 3 ,4

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

Budgeted cost: £ *39,498*

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Academic tutors *- access provided to tuition through My Tutor and PET-Xi with a focus on PP students attending*	EEF one to one /Small group tuition +5/4 months	1, 2, 3
Academy SEMH worker and trust councillor - *SEMH lead with a focus on prioritising PP students.* - *Trust Counsellor with a focus on prioritising PP students* - *Life Skills curriculum focused on local context relevant matters* - *Creation of wellbeing ambassadors to promote a wellbeing curriculum in tutor time*	EEF Social and emotional learning +4months	5, 6
Targeted support from literacy coordinator in closing gaps reading ages - *GL Assessments used to notify Raising Standards Lead and Assistant Principle so that they can plan how to close gaps for PP* - *Direct instruction* - *Lexia* - *Fresh Star Phonics* - *Form time interventions* - *Breakfast club interventions with a focus on reading or support with homework* - *Development of the school library programme*	EEF reading comprehension strategies +6months	3
Additional interventions to support knowledge gaps from key stage 2. - *Homework club* - *After school interventions which PP student attendance is tracked* - *Out of term time interventions which PP students are supported with attending*	EEF Small group tuition +4months EEF Teaching assistant interventions +4months	1, 2, 5
Stretching our PP HAP students - *The Brilliant Club Scholars Programme* - *Axiom Maths*	EEF Small group tuition +4months 32% more students gaining grades 9-5 in English and Maths for those who participated in the scholar programme compared to those who did not despite having the same attainment score in KS2. https://thebrilliantclub.org/the-scholars-programme/for-schools/the-programme/key-stage-3-4/	2

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

Budgeted cost: £ *43, 482*

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Family liaison Officer - *Works with vulnerable families, particularly those who are PP* - *Develops strategies to ensure attendance amongst PP students is high above national average.* - *Reduce PA amongst PP students.*	The DfE guidance has several examples of engagement programmes with families that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels. EFF parental engagement +4months	5, 6
Contingency fund - *Help support cost of uniform* - *Help support cost of key texts and equipment* - *Transport*	The requirement for all students to wear the academy uniform is to reinforce the academy culture and a sense of belonging that a uniform creates. Evidence includes work by O.Eastwood, 2021. Having key literature texts and calculators allows a greater access of the curriculum and homework. EEF homework +5 months	2,4,5,6
Debating club and competitions	EEF Oracy language intervention +6 months	1, 2
Character Curriculum - *Students work towards a set of criteria throughout their time at EWA to develop their character and interpersonal qualities*	EEF social and emotional learning +4months	2
Rewards system - *Prizes and awards whereby PP students are always nominated* - *Trips which are fully funded for PP students where applicable*	https://researchschool.org.uk/sandringham/news/do-rewards-work	2, 6
Careers team & hubs - *Student Futures Hub at the centre of the academy to support raising aspirations.* - *Targeted PP Careers interviews and activities alongside the standard IAG interviews.* - *Student Futures Lead to coordinate enrichment activities and oversee IAG provision*	Believing in Better, How Aspirations and Academic Self Concept Shape Young People's Outcomes, Sutton Trust	2
Pastoral Year Leads demonstrate a PP first mentality - *PYL is aware of who their PP students are and monitor them closely* - *Phone calls to PP students are made a priority everyday.*	EEF mentoring +2 months	2, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost: £ *255, 560*

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Improve the attainment and progress of our disadvantaged students

At Ercall Wood Academy, we remain committed to ensuring that disadvantaged students achieve strong outcomes and make excellent progress. Our 2026 results demonstrate that disadvantaged students continue to perform well, particularly in English and Mathematics. At Grade 4+, our disadvantaged students performed 19.8 percentage points above the national disadvantaged figure, while at Grade 5+ they performed 10.6 percentage points above the national disadvantaged figure. The gap between disadvantaged students' attainment in 4+ English and Mathematics and that of **all** students nationally has closed rapidly, with the gap now at 1%. The strong outcomes in English and Mathematics demonstrate the positive impact of our strategies, targeted support and high expectations.

Our priority is to sustain the strong performance of disadvantaged students at Grades 4+ and 5+, while further narrowing attainment gaps, particularly at the higher grades and within open basket subjects. This will ensure that disadvantage does not present a barrier to academic success or future opportunities.

Remove the gaps in the Key Performance Indicators of Exclusions/Attendance/Punctuality of our disadvantaged students

Behaviour outcomes for our disadvantaged students continue to compare positively against **all** students nationally. Rates of suspensions and repeated suspensions are significantly lower than the national picture (more than half that of the national average) while no disadvantaged students were permanently excluded from Ercall Wood last year. This reflects the positive impact of our inclusive approach to behaviour, pastoral support and early intervention. Our priority is to build on this success by further reducing suspensions and repeated suspensions, ensuring disadvantaged students remain engaged in their education and have consistent access to high-quality teaching.

We employ five pastoral leaders, assigned to year groups, who work with our students to help reduce the gap in behaviour and attendance of our students. PYLs work with specialists, both in house third party, in targeted support aimed at tackling behavioural and attendance concerns raised through our monitoring of data. One of the pastoral leaders is ELSA trained - the training builds the capacity of schools to support the emotional needs of their pupils from within their own resources. The programme recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed.

Attendance outcomes for disadvantaged students at Ercall Wood Academy continue to compare very positively with both the national and Telford & Wrekin disadvantaged picture. The gap between the attendance of disadvantaged students at Ercall Wood Academy compared to **all** students nationally is 1.6% compared to a national gap between disadvantaged and all students of 5.1%.

The positive difference is even more significant when considering persistent absence. Persistent absence amongst our disadvantaged students is 8 percentage points lower than the national disadvantaged figure and 7 percentage points lower than the Telford & Wrekin disadvantaged figure. This demonstrates the positive impact of our attendance strategies and targeted pastoral support.

Our priority is therefore to build on the strong position against local and national disadvantaged benchmarks, while continuing to close the internal attendance gap and further reduce persistent absence.

The significant majority of disadvantaged students successfully moved on to education, employment or training following Year 11. We are currently providing personalised support for one student who has yet to secure a post-16 destination and are working closely with them to ensure an appropriate placement is identified and sustained.

Support extensive enrichment opportunities to holistically develop our disadvantaged students

Engagement in extracurricular activities amongst our disadvantaged students remains strong - participation amongst disadvantaged students is generally in line with that of non-disadvantaged students, demonstrating that the wider opportunities available at Ercall Wood are being accessed successfully by students regardless of disadvantage.

Alongside our regular extracurricular provision, Year 7 students were given the opportunity to take part in an enrichment session with Exotic Zoo in Telford. Experiences such as this form part of our commitment to broadening opportunities for disadvantaged students, developing confidence and cultural capital, and ensuring they benefit fully from the wider experiences available through school.

Moving forward, our focus will be on building upon these strong levels of engagement and continuing to increase the range of enrichment and extracurricular opportunities accessed by disadvantaged students, ensuring that financial circumstances do not become a barrier to participation.

Ensure that our disadvantages students feel happy and valued at school

Analysis of our PASS survey data indicates that disadvantaged learners are demonstrating stronger and more positive attitudes across a wide range of indicators when compared with their non-disadvantaged peers. In key areas directly linked to learning—such as perceived learning capability, self-regard as a learner, and preparedness for learning—disadvantaged students show notably higher proportions of High Satisfaction, whereas non-disadvantaged learners display larger shares within the moderate band.

Disadvantaged learners also report more positive feelings about school and stronger general work ethic, with over three-quarters expressing high motivation and readiness to engage. Furthermore, in relational categories such as attitudes to teachers and attitudes to attendance, disadvantaged students again show higher satisfaction levels. Even in traditionally more challenging areas, such as confidence in learning and response to curriculum demands, disadvantaged learners display a more favourable

balance, with significantly smaller proportions reporting low confidence or curriculum-related anxiety compared with non-disadvantaged students.

Collectively, these trends suggest that the targeted pastoral, academic, and enrichment strategies are having a clear and measurable impact. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from strong relationships with staff, increased access to support structures, and interventions that build resilience, confidence and self-belief. These structures in place have fostered positive attitudes across emotional, behavioural and learning domains which highlight not only the effectiveness of current provision, but also the importance of sustaining and further developing these approaches to ensure all disadvantaged students continue to thrive.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium (or recovery premium) to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Sparx	Sparxmaths Sparx Limited
Seneca	Seneca
Pet-Xi	Pet-Xi training Limited
Lexia	Lexia Learning Systems LLC

Further information (optional)

Additional activity:

Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activities that are not being funded by pupil premium or recovery premium.

That will include:

- Parental phone calls:

  Parents of all our Pupil Premium students receive a phone call offering them the opportunity to book their preferred time slots for parents' evening. This exclusive booking period is provided a week before the system opens to non-disadvantaged students, ensuring higher engagement and participation during parents' evening.

- Uniform swap scheme:

  We have established a uniform exchange scheme where parents can bring in old uniform and swap them for items we have in stock. This initiative aims to support families during the current financial crisis and promote environmental sustainability. We will regularly highlight this program to our Pupil Premium families, ensuring they are aware of and can benefit from this initiative.

Planning, implementation, and evaluation:

We evaluated the degree of impact that our activities had last year and used these findings to drive the development of our Pupil Premium strategy for the current cycle. To ensure a robust understanding, we triangulated evidence from multiple sources of data, including exam and assessment outcomes, engagement captured through culture walks, and rich qualitative insights from conversations with parents, students, and teachers. This multifaceted approach enabled us to build a clear picture of both the progress made and any barriers faced by our disadvantaged pupils. By identifying patterns across academic attainment, classroom behaviours, attitudes to learning, and wider wellbeing indicators, we were able to pinpoint the specific challenges that remain and shape a more targeted and responsive strategic plan to address them.

The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium (2023), alongside key research such as Addressing Educational Disadvantage and the DFE Using Pupil Premium (2026), played a central role in informing and refining our decision-making. These evidence bases have been instrumental in ensuring that every strand of our strategy is rooted in approaches proven to have meaningful impact, while avoiding less effective practices. Additionally, we utilised the EEF's Implementation Guidance to structure our strategic planning, ensuring clarity of intent, careful sequencing of actions, and a realistic understanding of the conditions required for successful delivery. This guidance continues to shape our approach as we move from planning to implementation, ensuring our activities are monitored, adapted, and embedded effectively throughout

the year. Ultimately, this evidence-informed and reflective process places disadvantaged learners at the heart of our school improvement efforts, enabling us to build a strategy that is both ambitious and grounded in what works.