



GRACE ACADEMY

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	823
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	48%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2024 – 2027
Date this statement was published	December '24
Date on which it will be reviewed	September '25
Statement authorised by	Darren Gelder
Pupil premium lead	Andrew Cox
Governor / Trustee lead	Dave Boden

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£413,700
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£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>	£413,700

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Grace Academy Solihull we ensure all students achieve their potential through high quality curriculum leadership, effective teaching & learning and personalised pastoral care. The academy ensures that disadvantaged students have the best possible education through achieving each of the four aims below.

- **Access** – All pupils are given equal opportunities and individual circumstances do not hinder educational chances.
 - **Aspirations** - All students have high expectations of themselves and their future, and are in education, employment or training.
 - **Achievement** - All students are supported to achieve outstanding academic success.
 - **Experience** - All students leave with a wealth of experience to support them in the wider world.
- Pupil premium funding will be utilised to best achieve these four aims as well as to tackle the four challenges identified in this report, to ensure that no pupil is left behind in their learning. To achieve these objectives, and ensure all funding is used effectively, we carefully consider the individual needs of our students, and to achieve this we follow the DfEs 'menu of approaches' and review national research including that conducted by the EEF. We systematically review provision to ensure our interventions are both cost effective and impactful on our students.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 progress	The progress of disadvantaged students continues to be a key area of focus for the academy as, nationally, disadvantaged students tend to perform worse than their non-disadvantaged peers. The academy has had success in ensuring disadvantaged students achieve in line or above other disadvantaged students nationally, however this still remains a priority as some disadvantaged students perform below non-disadvantaged students in certain areas and especially in EBACC subjects. Despite the impact of pupil premium funding in closing the gap in the last academic year, the latest Progress 8 estimate for disadvantaged students was -0.20 compared to -0.09 for all students (2023-2024).
2 Literacy levels	Nationally low-level literacy skills, particularly in DA students, can act as a barrier to accessing all parts of the curriculum. Some DA students on entry into the academy are identified as having low levels of literacy skills, which they will need to be supported with to ensure they make progress through our broad and balanced curriculum. For instance, for the new intake of year 7 students in

	September 2024, based upon internal diagnostic testing the overall reading age of DA pupils is 0.1 years below their non-DA peers.
3 attendance	In the last academic year (23-24), attendance among disadvantaged students (84.3%) was lower than for non-disadvantaged students (91.7%) and lower than DA students nationally (85.4%). Also in the 2023-2024 academic year, persistent absenteeism in the cohort of DA students, although in line with national at 45%, was significantly above the comparable school figure of 22% for their non-DA peers. Despite the attendance of DA students in year 11 being 3.0% higher than national DA (based on FFT estimates), the attendance of disadvantaged students across the whole school and the level of persistent absence of disadvantaged students continues to be a key focus for us at Grace Academy Solihull. In addition to the well-evidenced impact of attendance on students' academic attainment, attendance is also key to students' safety, social and emotional development, extra-curricular opportunities, cultural capital, careers education and development as well-rounded individuals.
4 exclusions	Nationally, the permanent exclusion and fixed term exclusion rates for disadvantaged students are around five times that of their non-disadvantaged peers. The academy will focus on reducing overall suspensions as well as closing the gap between more advantaged and disadvantaged students.

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
The progress and attainment of DA students will improve across KS3/4.	A closing of the attainment gap between DA and non-DA students in Y11 and 13 external data and Y7-10 and 12 internal assessment data. This will be examined across 1-3 years so that 2026/27 KS4 outcomes demonstrate that disadvantaged (DA) students achieve an average Progress 8 score of at least 0.
Improved reading and spelling ages for DA students in Y7.	Reading and spelling tests will demonstrate improved comprehension skills amongst disadvantaged students, especially during the key year of year Y7. Teachers should also have recognised this improvement of students through engagement in lessons, increased student communication, confidence and fluency of reading and in the quality of student work, evidenced through classroom observation.
Sustained and improved attendance for DA students.	Sustained high attendance over the 3 year period to 2026/27 will be demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall attendance rate for all students being above the national average (and above 95% in the 2026/2027 academic year). • The attendance gap between disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers being

	<p>reduced by a further 1% (from a gap of 5.5% in the 2023-24 academic year for KS3/4 students).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of DA students who are persistently absent being below the national average for all students.
<p>Reducing suspensions for disadvantaged students.</p>	<p>Attitudes to learning, class observations and behaviour tracking will suggest disadvantaged students are more able to monitor and regulate their own learning and this will support a reduction in suspensions. Restorative justice, targeted mentoring and behaviour intervention, specialist provision will ensure disadvantaged students have low levels of suspension and there is no gap with their more advantaged peers.</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: £226,047.80

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Continue to support DA students through ensuring a high quality of teaching and learning which gives all students access to consistently good teaching. This is supported by the use of bespoke CPD and instructional coaching to support continuous improvement in teaching quality, and the reduction of class sizes to enable more personalised in-lesson support.</p>	<p>The quality of teaching has a significant impact on the progress of all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils. A report conducted by the Sutton Trust found that “the effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds: over a school year, these pupils gain 1.5 years’ worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers. In other words, for [disadvantaged] pupils the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher is a whole year’s learning.” Furthermore, the report reveals that with an effective teacher, pupils gain 40% more in their learning than they would with a poorly performing teacher in the same subject. Alongside instructional coaching, a method of frequent low stake observation and targeted feedback for teachers utilising the WalkThru program, a reduction in class sizes enables teachers to provide more support to all pupils, especially benefitting DA pupils.</p> <p>Teacher impact report Sutton Trust Class sizes EEF</p> <p>Development of consistent, high-quality teaching supported by internal and external CPD in response to academy priorities, and informed by a quality assurance and monitoring process which ensures that all teachers receive bespoke CPD targeted at improving the quality of teaching in all classrooms, and hence outcomes for all. This CPD is deeply rooted in the whole academy priorities of utilising metacognitive and self-regulation strategies to unleash students’ potential. Research indicates that strategies to support metacognition and self-regulation are amongst the most impactful interventions to support DA</p>	<p>1, 2, 3 & 4</p>

	students, with an average impact of +7 months learning according to the EEF. Metacognition and self-regulation EEF	
Intervention strategies and planning with all HoDs to support improvement, especially in EBACC subjects.	HODs will ensure that their staff are well equipped to support DA pupils. The EEF states that “great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve DA pupil attainment.” HODs and staff will deliver subject-specific intervention strategies to improve pupil attainment. High Quality Teaching EEF	1 & 2

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

Budgeted cost: £70, 838.40

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Technology led strategy to increase homework engagement, and provide effective feedback.	The EEF toolkit refers to low cost and improved progress for students by improving their engagement rates in homework. The school will continue with the use of specialised programmes, such as Sparx Maths and Satchel One to provide accessible and effective homework opportunities, as well as launching Sparx Reader to support pupils in their reading and literacy. Key findings from the EEF suggest that “feedback delivered by digital technology also has positive effects” in addition to teacher feedback, and these programmes provide immediate feedback to students, in some cases with specific areas for improvement and directed further study. Ensuring all pupils have access to IT resources will allow pupils better opportunities to access online resources. Homework EEF Feedback EEF Using digital technology to improve learning EEF	1 & 2
Intervention support for targeted students across	The EEF suggests that intervention support for targeted students requiring additional support alongside	1 & 2

<p>the whole school with a special focus on PP/DA.</p>	<p>high-quality teaching “can be effectively targeted at pupils from DA backgrounds, and should be considered as part of a school’s PP strategy”. Furthermore, “pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive additional benefits from small group tuition” on top of the average impact of an additional four months of learning. EEF - Small group tuition</p>	
<p>Effective utilisation of Teaching Assistants to support students within lessons or in targeted interventions.</p>	<p>The EEF details that “teaching assistants can provide a large positive impact on learning outcomes” when deployed effectively to support high quality teaching. Research shows that when teaching assistants provide one-to-one or small group targeted interventions there is a significant positive impact on pupil attainment. When deployed in classrooms, teaching assistants have also been shown to improve student attitudes. Teaching assistants will be carefully deployed to support students, whilst not limiting the number of interactions between the student and teacher or affecting their access to high quality teaching.</p> <p>Use of teaching assistants EEF</p>	<p>1, 2 & 3</p>
<p>Recruitment of an English literacy lead and literacy intervention coordinator to support literacy progress and reading comprehension strategies across the academy, including accelerated reader, particularly with DA students.</p>	<p>According to the Education Policy Institute, on average, disadvantaged students are 9.4 months behind in primary school in terms of their reading age. Internal data shows the need to support some DA students who enter the academy with lower levels of literacy, reading and comprehension.</p> <p>Phonics interventions for students with reading ages significantly below their chronological age can have a high impact for a low cost, according to strong evidence from the EEF. A targeted phonics program will be launched with the year 7 cohort in the current academic year, with the intention of rolling this out more widely following an analysis of the in-school impact.</p> <p>Phonics EEF</p> <p>The EEF reports reading comprehension strategies have a high impact on average</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>

	<p>(+6 months). Alongside phonics, it is a crucial component of early reading instruction. In addition to this it is reported to develop students' metacognition and self-regulation which may have a positive impact on reducing the exclusion rate amongst DA students.</p> <p>Reading comprehension strategies EEF Metacognition and self-regulation EEF One to one tuition EEF Small group tuition EEF</p>	
<p>Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance. We will fund professional development to support the development of literacy across the curriculum.</p>	<p>Utilising NGRT testing to identify students' specific areas of weaknesses, and intervene as appropriate Professional development and training of staff to effectively utilise this data to support students in lessons.</p> <p>Post 16 academic mentoring of Y7/8 and Y11 students in previous years have contributed to improved progress and attainment of targeted disadvantaged students.</p> <p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English: word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)</p>	<p>2</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £116, 813.80

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Improving DA attendance through mentoring and support. Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE's Improving School Attendance advice. The attendance officer will be used to deliver attendance mentoring and minibus collection interventions.</p>	<p>Internal data suggests that the attendance officer improves the attendance of those they work with through effective use of mini-bus provision, mentoring and parental engagement. These strategies will be rolled out to a larger number of students to further improve attendance. Evidence will be tracked through weekly attendance reviews and impact tracking documents.</p> <p>The DfE guidance supports our approach and has been shown to significantly reduce persistent absence levels.</p> <p>Improving School Attendance DfE Mentoring EEF</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Recruitment of Attendance Transformation and Improvement Lead to support improvements in students' attendance.</p>	<p>To address the attendance disparity between DA and non DA pupils at GAS, we have appointed an Attendance Transformation and Improvement Lead. This role is dedicated to creating, developing and monitoring strategies to enhance student attendance. Our approach aligns with the DfE's 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' guidance.</p> <p>Department for Education 'Working together to improve attendance guidance'</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Support students' social, emotional and behavioural needs through mentoring, research informed behavioural interventions, the Assisted Restorative Centre (ARC) and the Grace Alternative Provision (GAP).</p>	<p>The EEF describes that behavioural mentoring can have "positive impacts for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds" especially on "non-academic outcomes such as attitudes to school, attendance and behaviour." This approach has been proved internally to be effective and the mentoring approach will be widened to support more pupils.</p> <p>The Assisted Restorative Centre (ARC) and Grace Alternative Provision (GAP) will enable the school to support</p>	<p>3, 4</p>

	<p>students to learn the self-management skills needed to flourish in the classroom. The EEF supports this, detailing that of all behavioural interventions the “highest impact is for approaches that focus on self-management or role-play and rehearsal.”</p> <p>Mentoring EEF Behavioural interventions EEF</p>	
<p>Targeted attendance, academic and behavioural interventions informed by the effective use of diagnostic testing (GL Pass).</p>	<p>The EEF states that diagnostic testing informs interventions that improve students’ decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly on academic or cognitive elements of learning.</p> <p>Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average of 5 months additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year. Outcomes from SEL interventions tend to have a positive impact on both literacy (+4 months) and mathematics (+3 months).</p> <p>Diagnostic testing will enable all staff to utilise robust data that goes beyond students’ academic attainment, to reduce suspensions and improve attendance for pupils through timely intervention and support.</p> <p>SEL intervention EEF EEF Attendance interventions</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

Total budgeted cost: £413,700

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Challenge 1: KS4 Outcomes

Initial unvalidated progress 8 estimates generated by Go4schools identified DA students achieved -0.20 in the 23-24 academic year, compared to a national average for 22-23 of -0.60 for DA students. This was an improvement in the progress of DA students from the previous academic year of 0.2. This shows the impact the academy has on the outcomes of students, but is still not inline with non-DA at the academy (+0.06) and remains an area the academy will focus on. Analysis of the link between attendance and progress shows that DA students with 90%+ attendance achieved an average estimated P8 score of +0.3, compared to -0.5 for students with less than 90% attendance. This shows that in school strategies, curriculum and teaching are having an impact on students academic performance when they are in the academy, but as mentioned below getting more DA students to have above 90% attendance is a key priority and continues to be a focus of funding in this next academic year. All students at the academy have access to the EBACC pathway, and work is being undertaken to engage disadvantaged students in MFL to support an increase in entry. In the last academic year, the number of DA students accessing the EBacc increased by 25%. Last year entry from DA students was 13% compared to 27% for non-pupil premium, with the only limiting subject being MFL.

Challenge 2: Literacy

Effective use of the literacy mentor, paired reading alongside greater diagnostic testing (introduction of NGRT testing) has continued to improve the literacy of all students, but especially the most disadvantaged. This was also supported by high quality curriculum and teaching to ensure a rapid improvement in reading and spelling ages of students after they started the academy. Students who worked with the literacy mentor, improved their reading ages by an average of 19 months in the last 6 months. Students who undertook paired reading made 22 months progress in the last 6 months. Following highly effective intervention, data identifies that our targeted DA students made more than 1.7 years progress in their reading ages. An external review by the trust reading consultant also identified that...

"It is clear that literacy skills are very much embedded across the curriculum, which will ultimately support all students being given the opportunity to overcome barriers to success... There is clear evidence of a very strong reading culture that flows from the executive principal through to all staff. This is evident from the detailed whole school action plan that incorporates a clear and well structured set of actions to support and enhance the provision... The school should be incredibly proud of the work it does to support students"

This work supports the above national DA progress figure in KS4 as discussed above, but work to continue to close the literacy gap remains a key focus of the academy.

Challenge 3: Attendance

Attendance remains a key priority for the academy for all students. The academy utilised funding to support the improvements in attendance of DA students to ensure they benefit from the consistent high quality of curriculum, teaching and learning and improved outcomes as discussed above. FFT national analysis identifies that the gap between the attendance of DA

students and non-DA continues to be a priority to close. Significant work was implemented with year 11 students to ensure they understood the importance of attending, through careers education, mentoring as well as across cohort incentives and this led to year 11 DA performing 3.0% better than national DA (based on FFT estimates). The approaches trialled with year 11 to improve attendance will be utilised in more year groups to draw upon this success; the academy is utilising PP funding to support the new role of Attendance Transformation and Improvement Lead at the academy to oversee this.

Challenge 4: Reducing Suspensions

National data finds that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to be suspended than their non-disadvantaged peers. For disadvantaged pupils this can impact their learning, increasing the attainment gap between them and their non-disadvantaged peers. The academy is using pupil premium funding to facilitate the Assisted Recovery Centre (ARC) and Grace Alternative Provision (GAP), which teaches pupils to self-regulate their behaviour, and reflect on how to manage in the school environment. Pupil premium funding is used on interventions for pupils who need extra support in managing their social, emotional, behavioural and wellbeing needs by employing the Shine mentoring program. This work has had an impact on the suspensions of disadvantaged pupils at GAS, as the suspensions rate is 4.1% compared to the national average which is 6.4%, and repeat suspensions rate at GAS is 5% lower than national average. Despite this success, this work remains a focal point in the next academic year.

Summary:

The academy continues to focus on the intended outcomes, to ensure the best outcomes for all pupils. Attendance continues to be the most challenging area, and is under review by the academy in the current academic year.

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
Interactive maths learning platform	SPARX Maths
SEND teaching and learning platform	Twinkle

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

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

Service pupil premium funding was utilised to support high quality teaching and learning.

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

Grace academy Solihull has one pupil that is a recipient of service pupil premium funding. Through the academy's focus on high quality teaching, this pupil is currently on or above target in all of their subjects.

Further information (optional)

Key Four Aims

The academy's four aims will be met through a variety of ways but these include...

Aim	Key Areas of Focus
<p>Access Individual personal circumstances do not hinder educational chances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poverty proofing provision identifying and removing any individual barriers. - Positive Attitudes and Learning Behaviours supported by the Grace Academy <i>Behaviour Toolkit</i>. - High expectations of attendance supported by robust monitoring and mentoring. - Strong partnership with parents with targeted support and training where necessary
<p>Aspiration All students have high expectations of themselves and of their future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High quality career advice for both students and parents. - Wide range of experiences within school <i>Unleashing student potential</i>. - Developing self-esteem and interpersonal skills through the curriculum and mentoring. - High expectations on behaviour and attendance, supporting students in achieving this.
<p>Achievement All students achieve outstanding academic success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High quality teaching and learning delivered through the academies <i>Grace 5</i>. - High quality curriculum delivered through the <i>Curriculum 4</i>. - Literacy, Oracy and Numeracy a core part of the curriculum, supported by specific and targeted intervention. - Robust progress tracking and intervention including academic mentoring and support - Developing student ownership of their own learning.
<p>Experience (Cultural Capital) All students leave with a wealth of experience to support them in the wider world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broad and balanced curriculum giving students access to the best which has been thought and said. - Carefully selected Enrichment activities giving students opportunities they may not otherwise have. - A <i>"cultural capital curriculum"</i> mapping out all experience's students will be offered at the academy, with the access to funding to ensure wealth is not a barrier to access.

Additional activity

Our pupil premium strategy will continue to be supplemented by other activities that are not funded by pupil premium or recovery premium. These include:

- Providing a pre-school breakfast club to ensure DA students start the day not only well nourished and ready to learn but have the opportunity to discuss concerns around lost learning and students' anxieties.
- Offering a wide range of high-quality extracurricular activities to boost wellbeing, behaviour, attendance, and aspiration. Disadvantaged students will be encouraged and supported to participate in these, with participation tracked to monitor impact. This includes supporting students with the opportunity for them to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh award.
- With support from outside agencies and the local Mental Health Support Team, and school trained mental health first aiders; continue to support students with mild to moderate mental health and wellbeing issues, many of whom are disadvantaged.
- Continue to refine and improve our careers provision to ensure all students, but particularly DA students, are well educated in career opportunities and have life experiences that raise aspirations for their futures.

- Maintaining and improving the learning and social environments around the school, through refurbishment of key learning spaces, updating of technology and site improvements. This is a key contributor to students' social and emotional well-being within the school.

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

Each year as part of the cycle of the pupil premium strategy, we evaluate all activities/interventions that are used to support DA students. These are reviewed and successful interventions that show strong impact are continued.

Throughout the review a variety of evidence is triangulated from sources such as in-school data, departmental learning reviews, school action plans, student assessments, engagement and work scrutinies, in order to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged students.

We looked at a number of reports and studies about effective use of pupil premium, the impact of disadvantage on education outcomes and how to address challenges to learning presented by socio-economic disadvantage. We also looked at a number of studies about the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged students to inform our planning and interventions.

We used the [EEF's implementation guidance](#) to help us develop our strategy and will continue to use it through the implementation of our activities.

We have put a robust evaluation framework in place for the duration of our three-year approach which is also reviewed annually and will be adjusted when needed based on regular re-evaluation to secure better outcomes for students.