

# Pupil premium strategy statement – Holmer Church of England Academy

This statement details our school’s use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

## School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	416 ( 14/7/25)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	10.3% 19% ( including service premium)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year</b> )	2024 - 2025 2025 - 2026
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Jayne Maund
Pupil premium lead	Anna Keating
Governor / Trustee lead	Sam Lewis

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£96,055
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> <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>	£96,055

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

- At Holmer, we aim to *“Inspire us all to create a better world”*. We hold high expectations and ambitions for every pupil, including those eligible for pupil premium funding. Our ultimate objective is to ensure all disadvantaged pupils achieve outcomes that are at least in line with or exceed national expectations, both academically and in terms of their personal development. This includes closing attainment gaps in GPAS, reading, phonics, and maths; improving attendance; and broadening pupils’ aspirations through wider life experiences.
- Our pupil premium strategy is designed to meet these objectives through a three-tiered approach:
- **High-Quality Teaching** – We invest significantly in staff CPD to deliver consistently excellent teaching. This includes training in phonics (Read Write Inc), oracy (Voice 21), maths fluency (Mastering Number), and spelling (Spelling Shed), ensuring a strong, responsive curriculum built on prior learning and adapted to pupils' needs.
- **Targeted Academic Support** – Where gaps are identified, we provide structured interventions using evidence-based programmes such as IDL, Numicon, Nessy, and Colourful Semantics. We also run small group sessions and 1:1 support, particularly for pupils with speech, language, or EAL needs.
- **Wider Strategies** – We address non-academic barriers such as wellbeing, attendance, and limited life experiences. This includes pastoral support for families, a school counsellor, Coping Cat wellbeing sessions, forest school provision, and efforts to ensure all pupils can access enrichment activities.
- The key principles guiding our strategy include:
- **Early identification and rapid response** to learning gaps.
- **Evidence-informed interventions** that are tracked for impact.
- **Equality of opportunity**, ensuring disadvantaged pupils access the full curriculum and wider experiences.
- **Whole-child focus**, supporting wellbeing, confidence, and motivation alongside academic achievement.
- **Relentless focus on attendance**, recognising its impact on learning and life chances.
- By embedding these principles and approaches, we aim to empower our disadvantaged pupils to thrive both in school and beyond, fulfilling our vision to inspire all to create a better world.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p><b>Oracy</b> – Many of our pupil premium pupils have limited access to high-quality spoken language experiences beyond the classroom, including opportunities to listen actively and to speak for a range of purposes, audiences, and in diverse social contexts. This can affect not only their academic achievement but also their ability to articulate thoughts clearly, engage in dialogue, and express themselves confidently. As effective communication is a key determinant of future success—in education, employment, and wider life—our aim is to explicitly teach and model oracy skills across the curriculum. By doing so, we seek to empower our pupils with the confidence, vocabulary, and communication strategies necessary to navigate the adult world successfully and reduce the disadvantage they may face in competitive situations such as interviews, public speaking, or collaborative work.</p>
2	<p><b>Mathematical Fluency</b> – A key barrier for many of our pupil premium pupils is the lack of automaticity in basic number facts, which can hinder their ability to access more complex mathematical concepts. Without secure fluency, cognitive load increases, limiting their capacity to reason logically, identify patterns, and solve problems efficiently. This may be compounded by limited exposure to number-rich environments outside of school, meaning these foundational skills are not consistently reinforced at home. Our aim is to ensure all pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, develop fluency through frequent, varied, and purposeful practice. By embedding fluency within a broader mastery approach, we enable our pupils to approach mathematical tasks with confidence, resilience, and the depth of understanding required to think critically and apply their knowledge flexibly—essential skills for both academic success and everyday life.</p>
3	<p><b>Fostering a Love of Reading</b> – For many of our pupil premium pupils, a love of reading may not be consistently nurtured at home due to limited access to books, fewer opportunities for shared reading experiences, and a lack of exposure to rich language environments. This can impact their confidence and engagement with reading and spelling. In particular, challenges such as speech and language difficulties, alongside limited reinforcement of spelling patterns and rules, mean that spelling remains an area of weakness. Developing a positive reading culture within school is therefore vital in supporting these pupils to build the foundational skills and enjoyment necessary for long-term literacy success.</p>
4	<p><b>Attendance</b> – Attendance for our pupil premium pupils is, on average, 0.89% lower than that of their non-pupil premium peers, with single-day absences and unauthorised holidays during term time accounting for the majority of missed school days. Persistent absence, even in small increments, can have a cumulative and detrimental effect on learning, wellbeing, and long-term outcomes. For disadvantaged pupils in particular, lost learning time can deepen existing attainment gaps and reduce access to essential enrichment and pastoral support available in school. Our focus is on improving attendance through proactive and personalised approaches, ensuring families understand the importance of consistent attendance and feel supported in overcoming</p>

	barriers. By securing regular attendance, we aim to maximise learning opportunities and ensure that every pupil is fully included in the life of the school.
5	<b>Raising Aspirations through Enriched Life Experiences</b> – Some of our pupil premium pupils have limited opportunities to engage in experiences beyond their immediate locality, often having little or no exposure to environments outside the city. This lack of wider cultural capital can restrict their understanding of the world, narrow their aspirations, and affect their ability to see themselves in diverse roles or pathways in the future. We are committed to broadening horizons by providing enriching, high-quality experiences—such as educational visits, guest speakers, and engagement with further and higher education—that build ambition, self-belief, and real-world understanding. Through carefully planned opportunities, we aim to inspire our pupils to dream bigger, recognise their potential, and make informed, aspirational choices about their futures.

## 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
Improved oracy skills to support confidence and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 100% of pupil premium pupils participate in structured oracy activities across the curriculum</li> <li>- Pre- and post-assessments show improvement in spoken language outcomes</li> <li>- Increased participation in presentations, debates, and performances</li> </ul>
Secure fluency in number facts to support reasoning and problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 60%+ of pupil premium pupils can score 23+ in multiplication test Year 4</li> <li>- 3/5 PP children attain EXP in KS2 SATS</li> <li>- Internal assessments show improved outcomes in internal fluency tests</li> </ul>
Improve reading engagement and attainment for pupil premium pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pupil premium pupils meeting age-related expectations in reading</li> <li>- Pupil voice evidences greater enjoyment of reading</li> <li>- Pupil Premium children given access to borrow texts from learning library weekly</li> </ul>
Improve attendance for pupil premium pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce the attendance gap to less than 0.5% between disadvantaged pupil premium and all pupils</li> <li>- analyse single-day absences</li> <li>- analyse trend in absences</li> <li>- Overall disadvantaged pupil premium attendance reaches 96%+</li> </ul>
Broaden life experiences to raise aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All pupil premium pupils access at least one enrichment experience per term</li> <li>- All KS2 pupils join at least one after school club each term.</li> <li>- Increase in engagement with extracurricular and aspiration-focused events (e.g., university visits, careers workshops)</li> </ul>

## 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: £40,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Embed oracy across the curriculum using Voice 21.</i>	We will continue to train all staff (including support staff) in the use of oracy strategies via Voice 21, ensuring the curriculum remains rich in purposeful discussion. Oracy development supports pupils' confidence, vocabulary acquisition and communication skills, particularly for those with limited spoken language exposure at home. <a href="#">We-need-to-talk-2024.pdf</a>	1,2
Continued use of a specialist speech and language teacher 1 half day per week	Oral language approaches have a high impact on pupils' outcomes (average 6+ months progress). The continued use of a speech and language therapist helps address underlying communication barriers affecting learning, particularly for pupils with speech and language needs. <a href="#">Oral language interventions   EEF</a>	1,2
Ongoing RWI training to ensure strong phonics teaching for all pupils	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on accuracy of word reading particularly for disadvantaged pupils. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</a>	3
Introduce Latin to develop a better understanding of etymology which can be applied to spellings.	Evidence shows that teaching ancient languages such as Latin and Ancient Greek in primary schools can significantly support pupils' spelling and reading development, particularly by enhancing phonics awareness—thanks to Latin's consistent sound-spelling rules—and boosting	3,5

	<p>vocabulary through knowledge of roots and cognates, which in turn improves literacy outcomes, especially for learners with SEND, EAL, or from disadvantaged backgrounds</p> <p><a href="#">Ancient languages in primary schools in England: a literature review</a></p>	
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## Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £36,055

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ongoing purchase of programme IDL and numicon to improve maths and nesy to improve reading and spelling	Tuition targeted to specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support pupils both one to one and in small groups. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition</a> <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition</a>	1,2,3 and 4
Purchase of Maximum Classics subscription to improve spellings and vocabulary	Evidence shows that teaching ancient languages such as Latin and Ancient Greek in primary schools can significantly support pupils' spelling and reading development, particularly by enhancing phonics awareness—thanks to Latin's consistent sound-spelling rules—and boosting vocabulary through knowledge of roots and cognates, which in turn improves literacy outcomes, especially for learners with SEND, EAL, or from disadvantaged backgrounds <a href="#">Ancient languages in primary schools in England: a literature review</a>	3
TA training to facilitate subject expertise within interventions	Maximising the impact of teaching assistants (TAs) improves pupil outcomes when TAs are well-trained and used effectively. EEF research shows TAs have the greatest impact when delivering structured interventions,	1,2,3

	supporting independence, and reinforcing learning. Targeted use of TAs boosts progress, particularly for pupils with SEND and those needing additional support.	
Small group intervention to improve vocabulary, phonic knowledge and spelling	It has a positive impact of plus 5 months and is an important component and is an important component in the development of reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</a>	1 and 2

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

Budgeted cost: £20,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
ARC School training for staff on restorative practices	In the Ofsted research report <i>“Positive environments where children can flourish”</i> (2021), inspectors noted that successful schools often used <b>relational approaches grounded in emotional regulation, consistent adult relationships, and clear routines</b> —core principles of ARC’s trauma-informed model. Furthermore, The DfE promotes <b>attachment- and trauma-aware practice</b> particularly through <b>The Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance (2018, updated 2022)</b> , which encourages schools to consider the impact of early adversity, attachment, and trauma on behaviour.	1,4
Forest Schools Practitioner to run weekly forest school	EEF Teachers toolkit. NEF (New Economics Foundation) showed improved confidence, social skills, motivation, communication, physical skills and knowledge and understanding.	4,5
Peripatetic Music lessons	DfE’s <b>National Plan for Music Education</b> (updated 2022) strongly	4,5

	<p>supports <b>access to instrumental and vocal lessons</b> as part of a broad and inclusive curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It notes that music education contributes to pupils' <b>wellbeing, self-discipline, and teamwork</b>, and has <b>particular value for disadvantaged pupils</b> in raising aspirations and engagement.</li> <li>• The plan urges schools to ensure that PP pupils are not excluded from instrumental tuition opportunities, reinforcing that access to such enrichment supports broader personal development.</li> </ul> <p>"Music helps with mental health and wellbeing, builds confidence, and can be transformational for those facing disadvantage."</p>	
Funded places on school trips and residential	<p>DfE official guidance states that Pupil Premium can be used to remove barriers to participation in extra-curricular activities (including trips), which are linked to improved engagement and outcomes.</p> <p>The DfE's Pupil Premium guidance notes schools should use funding to provide "enrichment activities" that develop social skills, confidence, and aspirations — often facilitated by outdoor learning or trips.</p>	4,5

**Total budgeted cost: £96,055**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have assessed the performance of our disadvantaged pupils using national statutory assessments, school-level summative and formative data, and ongoing teacher assessments. Our internal data provides a clear picture of both improvements and priority areas as we reflect on the final year of our outgoing pupil premium strategy.

#### Attainment and Progress Overview

##### Reading:

Reading outcomes for disadvantaged pupils dipped slightly compared to the previous academic year. While the majority of pupils are working at or near age-related expectations, this remains a key area for development in order to sustain fluency and deepen comprehension skills. Reading continues to be a strategic priority, and interventions remain in place to support targeted progress.

##### Writing:

Writing outcomes have shown a **modest improvement** for disadvantaged pupils, reflecting a positive impact from whole-school strategies focused on sentence structure, vocabulary, and editing skills. Internal assessments indicate that more pupils are reaching the expected standard, and we will continue to consolidate this progress through consistent practice and moderation.

##### Maths:

Although the percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving age-related expectations in maths fell slightly this year, **average scaled scores increased**, suggesting improvements in fluency and conceptual understanding. This is further supported by a **notable 18.7% increase in the number of disadvantaged pupils who scored full marks (25/25) in the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check** compared to the previous year. These gains reflect the impact of structured fluency practice and consistent use of retrieval strategies across the school. While further work is needed to translate fluency into secure overall attainment, especially in reasoning and problem-solving, this progress provides a strong platform for future success.

##### Combined Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM):

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in all three areas has declined slightly. This reflects the small dips in reading and maths outcomes, and underscores the importance of joined-up curriculum planning and support across the core subjects.

##### Phonics

In the 2024–25 Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, **93.4% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard**, compared to **94.7%** the previous year. While slightly lower, this result remains **well above the most recently published national average for disadvantaged pupils**, and is a strong indicator of the impact of our early reading

provision. We will continue to build on this foundation through consistent phonics delivery and early intervention.

### Wider Assessment and Contextual Factors

**Attendance** for disadvantaged pupils has improved significantly, rising to **95.7%**—up from 94.5% last year—and is now **above the national average** for this group (94.5%). This reflects effective partnership work with families, the attendance team, and wider pastoral support.

**Behaviour and wellbeing** remain areas of ongoing focus. Behavioural incidents have decreased slightly, and our provision for emotional wellbeing has continued to evolve. Access to mentoring, targeted SEMH support, and consistent adult relationships has helped to reduce barriers to engagement for many pupils.

## 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
Spelling Shed	Ed Shed
Power of 2	David J Sharp
Toe by Toe	Harry and Kedda Cowling
TTRS	Maths Circle
Designing a Curriculum for Oracy	Voice 21

## 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***

Last academic year, our Service Pupil Premium allocation was used to provide targeted support and enrichment opportunities for our service pupils. This included running weekly 'Little Troopers' after-school sessions, organising dedicated service pupil engagement days, and hosting events that brought together service pupils from across Hereford to foster community and peer support.

In addition, we provided pastoral support to service pupils and their families through our ELSA-trained staff, ensuring their social and emotional wellbeing needs were met throughout the year.

### **The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils**

The spending had a significant positive impact on our service pupil premium eligible pupils. The weekly 'Little Troopers' sessions and service pupil events helped foster a sense of belonging and community, which increased pupils' wellbeing and resilience. Our engagement activities and pastoral support led to improved communication and stronger relationships with service families, enhancing trust and participation in school life. As a result, pupils showed greater confidence, improved engagement in learning, and families reported feeling more connected and supported.

## Further information (optional)

*Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.*