

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2025 to 2026 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	Lotus Academy School
Number of pupils in school	106
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	84 pupils 78.50%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025
Statement authorised by	Chris Evans
Pupil Premium Lead	Carmel Lynch
Academy Council Lead	Abbie Martin

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£81,020.
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Lotus Academy, our intent is to ensure that all pupils, particularly those who are most disadvantaged and those eligible for Pupil Premium funding, receive the
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personalised support, care, and opportunities they need to thrive. With a clear focus on pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, we are committed to removing barriers to learning by providing a safe, nurturing, and highly structured environment that supports both academic progress and emotional wellbeing.

We recognise that our pupils present with a wide range of complex and often overlapping needs. Therefore, our approach is centred on building strong, trusting relationships, promoting emotional regulation, and developing resilience alongside academic learning. Through the strategic use of Pupil Premium funding, we deliver targeted, evidence-informed interventions that are tailored to individual needs. These include bespoke teaching approaches, therapeutic support, and interventions designed to address gaps in literacy, numeracy, communication, and self-regulation, ensuring that all pupils can make meaningful and sustained progress.

Decisions regarding the allocation of Pupil Premium funding are made following a thorough evaluation of the needs of all pupils across the academy. Funding is deployed to achieve maximum impact, both at an individual and whole-school level, ensuring that every pupil benefits from high-quality provision. Our ethos places the child firmly at the centre of every decision, promoting our core values of being safe, trying our best, caring, being kind to each other and engaging with learning.

At Lotus Academy, we place a strong emphasis on understanding each pupil's individual context. We carefully analyse a range of information to support the development of positive relationships, strengthen engagement with familiar adults, and enable pupils and their families to actively participate in school life. Our curriculum is nurturing, personalised, and knowledge-rich, designed not only to re-engage pupils with learning but also to equip them with the skills they need for future success.

Our ambition is to support every pupil in achieving their full potential, both academically and personally. We are committed to developing the whole child, with a particular focus on emotional development, social skills, and readiness for the next stage of education or transition into adulthood.

In line with Department for Education guidance, Pupil Premium funding is used flexibly to benefit all pupils where appropriate. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights the importance of a tiered approach, with a strong emphasis on high-quality teaching as the most effective way to improve outcomes. As such, we prioritise ongoing professional development, staff training, and the recruitment and retention of skilled practitioners who are equipped to meet the needs of pupils with SEMH.

Our Pupil Premium strategy is embedded within our whole-school approach. We recognise that high-quality teaching and a strong relational approach benefit all learners, particularly those who are disadvantaged. Alongside academic support, we place equal importance on addressing non-academic factors such as attendance, behaviour, emotional wellbeing, and family engagement, ensuring a holistic approach to pupil development.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 Attendance	Low attendance, difficulties forming positive relationships with peers and adults, and challenges with trust can reduce pupils' engagement in learning and their sense of belonging within school.
2 Emotional well-being	Pupils may experience difficulties with emotional regulation, behaviour, and mental wellbeing, often linked to trauma or adverse experiences. This can impact their readiness to learn, ability to manage transitions, and engagement in school.
3 Literacy and maths	Many pupils have low starting points due to disrupted education or poor prior experiences, resulting in gaps in core skills that limit access to the wider curriculum and hinder academic progress.
4 Accessing wider curriculum	Disadvantaged pupils may have reduced access to enrichment experiences and face complex family circumstances, which can impact their aspirations, wellbeing, and ability to fully engage with school life.

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 ensure the attendance of pupils in receipt of pupil premium is in line with those of peers, reducing the proportion classed as persistent absentees.	To close the gap between whole school attendance and pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding. Reduce Proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium being classed as persistent absentees.
To ensure that outcomes for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium remain at least in line with those of their peers across the curriculum by securing consistently high-quality teaching and providing targeted, effective interventions To ensure all pupils in receipt of pupil premium, including those with SEND, make expected progress from their starting points.	Increase the progress for a key group of pupils in receipt of pupil premium in reading, writing and maths in line with their identified baseline. The attainment of Pupil Premium (PP) pupils is in line with or above that of non-PP peers across core subjects (reading, writing, maths), measured in internal school assessment points and statutory data. Pupil Premium pupils make expected or better progress from their starting points,

	showing no significant in-school variation compared with non-PP peers. Pupil Premium pupils show strong engagement in lessons (behaviour for learning, participation, homework completion) and equal access to enrichment opportunities.
To ensure the well-being needs of all pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding are effectively met so that they are ready for learning.	Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding demonstrate improved emotional wellbeing and are consistently ready to learn. This is evidenced by improved attendance and punctuality, a reduction in behaviour incidents and time spent out of class, and increased engagement and participation in learning. Pupils build positive relationships with staff and peers and show increased ability to self-regulate, enabling them to access the curriculum more effectively.
To ensure that pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding have equitable access to a wide range of enrichment opportunities and targeted family support, enabling them to develop their aspirations, enhance their wellbeing, and fully engage in all aspects of school life.	Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding actively participate in a broad range of enrichment opportunities and demonstrate increased engagement in school life. This is evidenced by increased uptake of extracurricular activities and trips, improved attendance and participation, and positive pupil voice reflecting raised aspirations and enjoyment of school. Families are more engaged with the school, and pupils show improved wellbeing, confidence, and readiness to learn.

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: £22,952

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Improving the teaching of and implementing higher quality reading across school.	Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that high-quality teaching is the most effective lever for improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. In particular, improving literacy across the curriculum has a significant impact on pupils' ability to access learning in all subjects. EEF guidance reports, including <i>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</i> and <i>Preparing for Literacy</i>, emphasise the importance of explicit teaching of reading strategies, vocabulary development, and disciplinary literacy. These approaches are shown to have a positive impact on both attainment and pupil confidence, particularly for disadvantaged learners who may have weaker literacy skills on entry. Evidence also supports the use of structured reading times, targeted support, and high-quality texts to address gaps in decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Whole-school approaches to reading, where staff are trained to consistently model and support reading strategies, are particularly effective. In addition, research indicates that pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs benefit from carefully scaffolded reading instruction, repetition, and opportunities to develop language and communication skills in a supportive environment. Building a culture of reading, alongside strong relationships and consistent routines, further enhances engagement and progress.	3

Improving and broadening the curriculum offer to include esports as a targeted provision for pupils who are more difficult to engage, thereby increasing motivation, participation, and engagement in learning.	Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that pupil engagement is a critical factor in improving outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged learners and those with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Approaches that increase motivation and provide relevant, interest-based learning opportunities can lead to improved attendance, behaviour, and attainment. Evidence suggests that incorporating pupils' interests into the curriculum can be an effective way to re-engage those who are reluctant learners. Activities such as esports can promote key transferable skills including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and strategic thinking. These skills support both academic progress and personal development. In addition, studies into digital learning indicate that when technology is used purposefully, it can enhance engagement and provide alternative pathways to success for pupils who struggle in more traditional classroom environments. For pupils with SEMH needs, structured and supervised gaming opportunities can also support relationship building, emotional regulation, and resilience when embedded within a clear framework. A broader curriculum offer that includes non-traditional pathways has also been shown to improve pupil voice, confidence, and sense of belonging—factors which are particularly important for disadvantaged pupils who may feel disconnected from school. By increasing engagement through tailored provision, schools can create more inclusive environments that better meet the diverse needs of their learners.	4
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £37,375

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted interventions completed by intervention team in school. Targeted interventions completed by external professionals.	Some pupils may require additional support alongside high-quality teaching in order to make good progress. The evidence indicates that small group and one to one interventions can be a powerful tool for supporting these pupils when they are used carefully EEF research on targeted academic support. 2. Targeted academic support EEF	2

	The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) identifies targeted academic support as a key component of effective Pupil Premium spending. Research shows that well-planned, structured interventions delivered by trained staff can significantly improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, particularly when closely linked to classroom learning and regularly reviewed for impact. For pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, targeted interventions can also improve engagement, emotional regulation, and readiness to learn, enabling more consistent access to the curriculum and supporting longer-term progress.	
Implement a robust early assessment and identification process for Special Educational Needs (SEN), ensuring that pupils' needs are updated throughout their school life at Lotus.	The SEND Code of Practice (2015) emphasises the importance of early identification and assessment of special educational needs to ensure that support is put in place as quickly as possible. Early intervention is widely recognised as key to improving outcomes for pupils with additional needs, particularly in areas such as communication, cognition, and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH). Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that high-quality assessment and timely intervention are essential for reducing learning gaps and ensuring that support is accurately matched to pupil need. Regular review of provision ensures interventions remain effective and responsive. In addition, the statutory requirement to review Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) annually ensures that provision remains appropriate and outcomes are up to date. Using	2 3

	ongoing assessment evidence to inform EHCP reviews strengthens multi-agency working and improves alignment between identified needs, provision, and outcomes for pupils.	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £20,693

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's guidance on working together to improve school attendance. This will involve training and release time for staff to develop and implement new procedures and appointing attendance/support officers to improve attendance.	Strong communication channels will be established with the families of disadvantaged pupils to ensure they fully understand the importance of regular school attendance. This will include regular phone calls, meetings, and attendance-focused newsletters. For families experiencing particular challenges, additional support will be offered, including signposting to community resources and collaboration with external agencies to address underlying barriers. Attendance data will be closely monitored, with pupils showing early signs of poor attendance identified promptly. Early intervention strategies will be implemented, including one-to-one meetings with pupils and their families, to explore barriers to attendance and put appropriate support in place before concerns escalate. The link between regular school attendance and improved academic outcomes is well established in research. Disadvantaged pupils, in particular, benefit from targeted attendance interventions, as they are more likely to face additional barriers to consistent school attendance. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) <i>Attendance Interventions Rapid Evidence Assessment</i> highlights that improving attendance can have a positive impact on both attainment and wider outcomes, particularly when approaches are early, targeted, and relationship-based. Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning EEF EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report.pdf Attendance interventions rapid evidence assessment EEF	1,2,3,4
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Purchase of equipment to allow disadvantaged pupils to participate in wider curriculum activities and lessons. this includes food technology equipment, contribution to school trips, accessing resources to extend the offer outdoor learning.	Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that removing these barriers to learning is an important part of improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Wider strategies within Pupil Premium spending, including ensuring access to essential equipment and resources, can help increase engagement, participation, and readiness to learn. Evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to experience material deprivation, which can limit their ability to fully access lessons and wider curriculum opportunities. Providing necessary equipment ensures that pupils can participate on an equal footing with their peers, reducing barriers to engagement and supporting inclusion. EEF guidance also emphasises that improving access to learning opportunities contributes to stronger attendance, behaviour, and participation. When pupils are fully equipped to take part in practical lessons, enrichment activities, and off-site experiences, they are more likely to develop confidence, motivation, and a sense of belonging within school. In addition, ensuring equitable access to curriculum resources supports the development of cultural capital and broadens pupils' experiences, which is particularly important for disadvantaged learners who may have fewer opportunities outside of school.	1234
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Implement a daily breakfast provision for disadvantaged pupils to ensure their basic needs are met at the start of the school day, supporting improved readiness to learn, emotional regulation, and engagement.	Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that addressing pupils' basic needs is essential to improving readiness to learn and overall educational outcomes. Wider strategies that support wellbeing and engagement, including ensuring pupils are not learning while hungry, can have a positive impact on behaviour, concentration, and attainment. Evidence shows that pupils who experience food insecurity are more likely to struggle with attention, emotional regulation, and engagement in lessons. Providing access to a nurture breakfast helps ensure that all pupils begin the school day having had their basic needs met, supporting improved focus, behaviour, and readiness for learning. EEF research also supports the use of structured, relational interventions that promote a positive start to the school day. Breakfast provision can contribute to improved attendance, punctuality, and engagement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils who may face additional barriers at home. In addition, whole-school approaches to wellbeing and pastoral care are associated with improved outcomes, particularly when they support emotional regulation and establish consistent routines. A nurture breakfast environment also provides opportunities to build positive relationships with staff and peers, further supporting SEMH needs and a sense of belonging in school.	1,2
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Total budgeted cost: £81,020

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 2021 to 2022 academic year.

The initiatives implemented during the 2024–2025 academic year have had a significant and positive impact on pupils across the academy, particularly in relation to engagement, behaviour, and attendance. The targeted strategies designed to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs have contributed to a more settled and supportive learning environment.

There has been a notable increase in pupil engagement across both classroom learning and wider school activities. Pupils are more willing to participate in lessons, access support, and engage positively with staff and peers. This improvement reflects the impact of targeted interventions, strengthened relationships, and a more consistent, nurturing approach across school.

Behaviour across the school has also improved, with a reduction in serious incidents recorded over the academic year. The implementation of relational and therapeutic approaches, alongside early intervention strategies, has supported pupils to better regulate their emotions and respond more positively to challenge and routine.

Attendance has improved from 61.8% in academic year 2023-2024 to 67.4% in academic year 2024-2025, demonstrating the effectiveness of strengthened communication with families, early identification of attendance concerns, and targeted pastoral support. Improved attendance has ensured that more pupils are able to access learning consistently, contributing to their overall progress and engagement.

Overall, these improvements indicate that the academy's Pupil Premium and wider support strategies are having a meaningful impact. By prioritising wellbeing, attendance, and engagement alongside high-quality teaching and targeted interventions, pupils are increasingly able to access learning and make progress in line with their potential.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
Esports	Nexus
Adventure Expeditions	Adventure Expeditions
Children's Psychologists	Unravel
Music Therapy	Nordorff and Robbins
Dyslexia Specialist teachers	Rotherham Specialist and inclusion service
Speech and language therapist	NHS
Educational Psychologist	Educational Psychologist Service