

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 26-27



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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School Overview

Detail	Data
School name	Richard De Clare Community Academy
Number of pupils in school (excluding nursery)	347
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	35%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date this statement was reviewed	July 2026
Date on which it will next be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Jodie Evans
Pupil premium lead	Jodie Evans
Governor / Trustee lead	Malcolm Fincken

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	175,140
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	£175,140

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of Intent

At Richard de Clare we will use pupil premium funding to improve the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

We understand that using our pupil premium funding to improve teaching quality is the most effective way to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Additionally, we will identify the specific challenges faced by our disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils, both academic and non-academic.

Our strategy plan will focus on the controllable challenges that are having the most significant adverse impact on our disadvantaged pupils. We will adopt a tiered model, focusing on high-quality teaching first and foremost, alongside targeted academic support and wider strategies. We will consider evidence summaries, including EEF, and seek out proven strategies where context and outcomes match the need of pupils at Richard De Clare Community Academy.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved along-side progress for their disadvantaged peers. Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils suggest disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with reading and writing than their peers. On entry to Reception class in the last three years, between 45% - 90% of our disadvantaged pupils arrive below age-related expectations compared to 25% - 60% of other pupils. This gap narrows but remains significant.

2	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils. These are evident from Reception through to KS2 and in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils than their peers. Our on-entry communication and language assessments indicate that 45%-90% are below ARE compared to 25%- 60% of their peers. Although we are increasingly able to close gaps by the end of KS2, any delay closing gaps in language development has a wider impact on academic progress
3	Assessments, observations, survey responses and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, and difficulties with self-regulation. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment. A large proportion of our disadvantaged pupils require additional support with social and emotional needs, both in and out of the classroom.
4	Our attendance data over the last two years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been between 3 and 5% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. 34% of disadvantaged pupils were 'persistently absent' in 25-26 compared to 21% of their peers during that period. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.

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
High-quality teaching of reading and writing (including foundational skills such as handwriting and spelling), resulting in strong outcomes as standard for all pupils by 2027	Achieve National average attainment at end of KS2 in reading and 65% EXP+ in writing. Achieve strong internal evidence of pupils in other years as being on track to achieve outcomes in line with National Averages at the end of Key Stage 2.
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils both social talk and learning talk.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2026/27 demonstrated by: • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. • disadvantaged pupils put themselves forward for school responsibility and are highly involved with school roles. • Disadvantaged pupils are engaged in wider enrichment experiences such as after school

	clubs. All teaching and learning staff are suitably trained in emotional health and wellbeing. Restorative practice is embedded. As a result, adult-pupil interactions support and develop wellbeing within and beyond the classroom.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Attendance meets 96%+ by 2027. Attendance policy and procedures have been clearly communicated, implemented, and understood. The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 8.2% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 2% lower than their peers. The overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 4%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced by 2%.

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: £54,060

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
We will fund ongoing teacher training and release time. Teachers will work with expert practitioners and senior leaders to develop and embed strategies for high-quality adaptive teaching with a particular focus on language and literacy. Mechanisms of Professional Development planned for and evident. We will fund release for additional members of staff to become certified instructional coaches. Instructional coaching in place for identified practitioners.	There is strong evidence base that suggest quality first teaching has the greatest impact on all learners. EEF research on improving reading highlights the importance of supporting pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities, and teaching reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice. EEF reading-comprehension-strategies EEF literacy-ks2 EEF literacy-ks1 EEF guidance-reports effective-professional-development	1,2

Highly effective, tailored professional development meetings held weekly for all		
Purchase of schemes of learning for handwriting, spelling and phonics catch-up intervention. Work with external consultations to increase professional skills and expertise of classroom staff in the teaching of basic grammar, handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Training of staff in the new schemes of learning including regular monitoring and feedback from senior leadership team.	Academic guidance on teaching spelling explicitly highlights the need to effectively implement a school-wide spelling programme (see <i>The Education Endowment Foundation – Improving Literacy in KS1</i>). EEF – Improving Literacy in KS1 Academic guidance on teaching writing explicitly highlights the importance of teaching writing as a process and not as a single event (see <i>The Education Endowment Foundation – Improving Literacy in KS1</i>). EEF – Improving Literacy in KS1	1,2
Expansion of enrichment in foundation subjects to ensure access to richer learning experiences across the wider curriculum.	EEF life skills The benefits of curriculum enrichment opportunities have a positive impact on both learning and wellbeing.	1,2

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

Budgeted cost: £62,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Fund programme and staff (LSAs, teachers and external tutors) to provide additional interventions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further support. A significant proportion of the pupils who receive tutoring will be disadvantaged, including those who are high attainers. These programmes are detailed below.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind. One to one tuition Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF Positive effects have been found in studies where teaching assistants deliver high-quality structured interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching: Teaching Assistant Interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	1,2
Purchase Lexia reading intervention programme subscription, delivered through computer-based reading programme.	EEF project evaluation – Lexia Core 5 EEF toolkit (+1) EEF high padlock (2+) EEF projects-and-evaluation/projects/lexia https://www.lexiauk.co.uk/proven-results/	1
1:1 and small group intervention and mentoring that targets disadvantaged pupils in nursery and reception who have fallen behind with their language development. WELLCOMM pro-gramme.	There is evidence to show that the rate at which a child develops language is sensitive to the amount of input they receive from the adults and peers around them, and that the quality of this input is likely to be more important than the quantity. This is best achieved through a considered evidence-based approach. EEF – Supporting oral language development	2
Provide specialist Speech and Language Therapy and upskill staff in language development strategies.	We will provide an additional 5 days of speech and language support across the school to identify assess individuals and train staff in appropriate strategies.	2

	EEF toolkit (+6) <u>EEF literacy-ks2</u> Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: <u>Oral language interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</u>	
Provide academic tutoring via a qualified, experienced teacher in reading and writing for underachieving pupils (pupil premium pupils prioritised).	EEF Toolkit (+4)	1
Provide targeted intervention and support for pupils in lower Key Stage 2 who are underperforming in early reading (pupil premium pupils prioritised)	EEF Toolkit (+5) EEF Improving Literacy in KS2 Guidance Report	1

Wider Strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, well-being)

Budgeted cost: £ 59,080

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To implement a pastoral support package to improve wellbeing: 1:1 direct work for identified pupils Small group pastoral intervention for identified pupils. Play therapy for identified pupils. Additional staff members funded to support wellbeing at lunchtimes (via lunchtime club opportunities) Introduce OPAL programme to improve wellbeing at unstructured times	There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers): EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/	3,4
To implement an attendance support package to improve attendance: • Early intervention work with parents and pupils • Use of family support worker and pastoral and safeguarding leads to establish strong relationships and links with key families	The DfE guidance 'improving school attendance' has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.	3,4

• 1:1 direct intervention for identified families		
To ensure access to full enrichment offer, including educational trips and visits: • Forest School provision for all pupils in Reception and Year 1. • Rocksteady music programme for all pupils in Year 3. • Financial support for contributions towards enrichment for disadvantaged families.	<u>EEF life-skills-enrichment</u> The benefits of curriculum enrichment opportunities have a positive impact on both learning and wellbeing. We are committed to ensuring that provision is not limited by children's financial circumstances. <u>Arts participation Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</u>	3,4
Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	All

Total budgeted cost: £ 175,140

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 2024 to 2025 academic year.

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2025/2026 academic year, using Key Stage 1 and 2 performance data, phonics check results and attendance data. Significant improvements to quality of teaching and learning were evidenced alongside accelerated progress for most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

- Disadvantaged pupils performed in line with pupils from who are from non- disadvantaged backgrounds at the end of Key Stage 2 in reading.
- Maths outcomes across Key Stage 2 year groups, for disadvantaged children, are inline with National disadvantaged outcomes in maths.
- Outcomes of disadvantaged pupils for the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check are above the National Average.
- In Year 3 and 4, disadvantaged pupils now perform in line with or better than those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds in reading and maths.
- The attainment gap between disadvantaged and those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds is closing in Year 2 and 5 reading and maths.
- There is sustained improvement for disadvantaged pupils, with a gap of 3.9% in comparison to whole school statutory attendance.
- Persistent absenteeism amongst pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds continues to be reduced.

In addition to outcome and progress data, we have also drawn on school data and observations to assess wider issues impacting disadvantaged pupils' performance, including attendance, behaviour and wellbeing.

Stakeholder voice notes the strong level of pastoral support provided for both our children and their families. A school-wide therapeutic approach to behaviour and emotional health is now well established and restorative practice as a response to antisocial or unsocial behaviour is embedded. Incidents of behaviour, at all levels, have decreased. Parents appreciate the support provided regarding supporting their child's wellbeing and social and emotional needs. Trust reviews at all levels note the strong pastoral support and positive relationships that support and nurture our children. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds benefit from the variety of lunch club provision

Commented [DA1]: Look at last years data sheet and write something about outcomes in specific year groups or statutory measures that is a strength or continues to improve

Commented [DA2]: Look at DfE compare similar schools attendance data and include something about PPG that is a strength/ improving picture

offered by pastoral staff either via quieter indoor options or 1:1 pastoral and wellbeing drop-in sessions.

Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils met expectations in many areas, and we remain on track to meet outcomes by July 2027. Although data does not yet demonstrate that we achieve the progress and attainment outcomes for all disadvantaged pupils, in all year groups, the continued improvements to quality of teaching and learning across the school will improve outcomes and progress significantly over time.

Our evaluation of the approaches delivered last academic year indicates that intervention in relation to academic support, behavioural and emotional regulation and attendance were significantly impactful in improving outcomes and opportunities for disadvantaged pupils.

We have reviewed our strategy plan and made appropriate changes for the coming academic year.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
English Unit KIT	Jonathan Bond
WELLCOMM Speech and Language Programme	WELLCOMM
Speech and language therapy	Speech and language therapist
Oracy for Schools	Tom Bigglestone
OPAL	Outdoor Play and Learn
Essential letters and sounds	Oxford University Press
ELS Progress intervention	Oxford University Press
Lexia Core 5	Lexia Core
Rock Steady Programme	Rock Steady Music Programme
Forest School	Natalie Sutherby – Forest School Practitioner

Further Information (optional)

Additional activity

Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activity that is not being funded by pupil premium or recovery premium. That will include:

- embedding more effective practice around metacognition. EEF evidence demonstrates this has significant benefits for pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils

- utilising Trust funding to develop oral language skills through the 'Mighty Oak programme.'
- utilising Trust funding for EYFS teachers to gain ELKLAN accreditation to support early language and communication.
- embedding more effective practice around oracy and the use of partnered talk in the classroom to improve outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

In planning our new pupil premium strategy, we evaluated why activity undertaken in previous years had not had the degree of impact that we had expected.

We triangulated evidence from multiple sources of data including assessments, engagement in class book scrutiny, conversations with parents, students, and teachers to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils. We shared practice across the Trust to learn from their approach.

We looked at several reports, studies, and research papers 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 used the [EEF's implementation guidance](#) to help us develop our strategy and will continue to use it through the implementation of activities.

We have put a robust evaluation framework in place for the duration of our three-year approach and will adjust our plan over time to secure better outcomes for pupils.