Pupil premium strategy statement – Thistle Hill Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

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

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	348
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	47.4% (157)
Date this statement was published	Sept '26
Date on which it will be reviewed	Sept '26
Statement authorised by	Rebecca Handebeaux
Pupil premium lead	Rebecca Handebeaux
Governor / Trustee lead	Simon O'Keefe

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£237, 855
Total budget for this academic year	£237, 855

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Thistle Hill Academy, we recognise the importance of addressing the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils, particularly considering our context where 51% of our pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium. We are dedicated to removing barriers to learning created by poverty, family circumstances, and background. Our commitment includes:

- **Narrowing the Attainment Gaps**: We strive to close the attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged counterparts, both within our school and on a national level.
- **Ensuring Reading Proficiency**: We ensure that all pupils can read fluently and with good understanding, enabling them to access the full breadth of the curriculum.
- **Developing Communication Skills**: We focus on developing pupils' confidence in their ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of contexts, which is essential for their academic and social success.
- **Promoting Social and Emotional Wellbeing**: We enable pupils to take care of their social and emotional wellbeing, fostering resilience, and improving attendance.
- **Providing Diverse Learning Opportunities**: We offer a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world, preparing them for future success

Our context:

IMD Rank 74 indicates the school has a high level of deprivation with 43% of pupils being eligible for Pupil Premium Funding in comparison to 24% nationally.

Achieving our objectives:

Tier 1 – High quality teaching

1. **Implementing Evidence-Based Teaching Strategies**: Utilise high-quality instructional strategies such as explicit teaching and formative assessment to enhance learning outcomes for all pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021)
2. **Adapted Instruction**: Tailor lessons to meet the diverse needs of pupils, ensuring that all learners, including those with SEND, receive appropriate support and challenge. (Tomlinson, 2017)
3. **Professional Development for Staff**: Invest in ongoing professional development focused on inclusive teaching practises and the use of technology to support personalised learning. (Ofsted, 2023)
4. **Regular Feedback Mechanisms**: Establish a system for providing regular, constructive feedback to pupils, helping them understand their progress and areas for improvement

Tier 2 - Targeted academic support

1. **Small Group Interventions**: Implement targeted small group interventions for pupils who are falling behind, focusing on literacy and numeracy skills to help close the attainment gap. (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021)
2. **Speech and Language Support**: Integrate speech and language therapy services to support pupils in developing their communication skills, particularly for those with identified needs. (Bercow Review, 2018)
3. **Parental Engagement Programmes**: Develop programmes that engage parents in their children's learning, providing them with strategies to support literacy and numeracy at home. (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021)

Tier 3 - Wider strategies

1. **Attendance Monitoring and Support**: Establish a robust attendance monitoring system that identifies pupils at risk of poor attendance and provides tailored support, such as mentoring or family outreach. (Ofsted, 2023)
2. **Extracurricular Activities**: Offer a diverse range of extracurricular activities that promote social interaction and communication skills, ensuring that all pupils have access regardless of financial barriers. (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021)
3. **Mental Health and Wellbeing Initiatives**: Implement programmes focused on mental health and wellbeing to support pupils' social-emotional development, which is essential for academic success. (Public Health England, 2020)
4. **Community Partnerships**: Foster partnerships with local organisations to provide additional resources and opportunities for pupils, such as workshops, mentorship programmes, and career exploration activities. (Ofsted, 2023)

Conclusion

By implementing these evidence-based strategies across the three tiers, Thistle Hill Academy can effectively address the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils. This comprehensive approach not only aligns with our vision of nurturing and inclusive education but also ensures that every pupil has the opportunity to shine brightly. Through collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to high-quality teaching, we can create an environment where all pupils thrive and achieve their full potential.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Barriers that cause low attendance – 84% of persistent absentees are disadvantaged and 68% are SEND.
2	Number of pupils with complex needs – 36% PP SEND, 45% SEND and 23 children 15% with an EHCP
3	The prime areas of Communication and Language and PSED is low on entry into Reception – 10% of the cohort are PP and of those 33% have a speech or language need.
4	High mobility of pupils within the academic year provides SEND and safeguarding challenges
5	Lack of Cultural Capital for those who have limited life experiences and opportunities to join in enrichment opportunities.
6	Poor retention and application of early number skills particularly with vulnerable groups

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
Progress in Reading	Achieve national average progress score in KS2 Reading (0)
Progress in Writing	Achieve national average progress score in KS2 Writing (0)
Progress in Maths	Achieve national average progress score in KS2 Maths (0)
Phonics (year 1 and year 2)	Achieve at least national average expected standard
GLD - EYFS	Improve Reception year quality and achieve at least national average GLD
Improve attendance	Improve attendance of disadvantaged pupils and reduce the % of persistent absentees by 3%

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)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Communication and Language • Communication and language development underpins Early Years and Year 1 practice so that the vocabulary gap closes, and speech and language barriers are removed. • Speech and Language link • HLTA focused on speech and language in Reception provision	A well-balanced approach to developing early Literacy skills which gives pupils' opportunities to enjoy a language rich environment in the indoor and outdoor provision. **(EFF Early Literacy approaches)** Speech and Language Link assessments identify barriers to Communication and Language 1,2 & 3 **(EFF Early years Intervention)**	1,2,3 and 5
<u>Reading</u> • Continue to embed Little Wandle Letter and Sounds Phonics (programme) • Keep Staff CPD on Little Wandle up to date • Use ecollins phonetically decodable books for home readers • SEND pathway resources for Little Wandle Rapid Catch-Up resources	DFE Validation of a Systematic, Synthetic, Phonics Programme (SSP) Improving young children's communication and language development in early years settings and reducing the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers and built on CLPE's evidence-based Power of Reading programme with its emphasis on quality texts (The power of Reading Early Years Report 2023)	1,2,3 and 5

• 5 a day diet for listening to stories and poems • The power of Reading embedded in all year groups • Reading squads used for high quality reading sessions	Social reading experiences of a wide range of quality texts at home and in school increases children's enthusiasm and motivation as independent readers. **(The power of Reading Early Years Report 2023)**	
Writing • Continue to embed the use of the power of reading, to ensure a rich writing diet • Ensure an immersive approach to writing to build fluency over genres	Teachers reported pupils increased confidence in expressing and understanding and a willingness to challenge ideas through the work with picture books and illustrators. **(The power of pictures Research Evaluation report RSA/EEF 2021)**	2, 3
The PSA, Safeguarding and well-being Lead remove barriers that affect the hardest to reach parents and their ability to get their children to school on a regular basis.	Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. **(Working together to improve school attendance)** Boosting Early years support for families, particularly those most vulnerable to expand access to early education and quality Early Years settings. **(The opportunity mission)** Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special	1,2, 4 and 5

	educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. **(Working together to improve school attendance)**	
To use the 'Shrec' approach to encourage shared attention and back and forth conversation.	Language provides the foundation of thinking and learning and should be prioritised. High quality adult-child interactions are important and sometimes described as talking with children rather than just talking to children. Adults have a vital role to play in modelling effective language and communication. Use a wide range of approaches including shared reading, storytelling, and explicitly extending children's vocabulary. **EFF Early Literacy approaches)**	4

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

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Switch-on reading intervention in Year 3 and Year 4	This is an intensive 10-week intervention that is based on a one-to one basis who have been trained in this approach. The focus is on closing the reading achievement gap for vulnerable children working below age expected. (EEF – Switch-on Reading intervention)	2,3
First class @ Number maths intervention for Reception and KS1.	Develops targeted children's early number and calculation ability and their mathematical understanding, communication and reasoning skills. Entry and exit data will be is tracked throughout the 10-week programme	6

Dynamo Maths intervention for Ks2 children	**Dynamo Maths** is a research and evidence-based resource to support pupils with dyscalculia and those struggling with maths and not meeting age-related expectations.	6
Little Wandle Catch up, Rapid and SEND pathway	The Rapid Catch-up programme provides urgent targeted support for children in Year 2 and above who are not reading at age-related expectations. The aim is to equip children with the reading skills they need to access the curriculum and enjoy reading as soon as possible. Little Wandle SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) is a complete programme that mirrors the main Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics programme but with adaptations and support in place that make it possible for schools, special schools and providers to meet the needs of all their learners.	3
Becoming first class @number	Becoming1st Class@Number for children who need further support to secure the Early Learning Goal for Number. 1st Class@Number 1: for children who need further support at the level of the Year 1 curriculum. 1st Class@Number 2: for children who need further support at the level of the Year 2 curriculum.	6
Doodle Maths	Doodle Maths builds the maths confidence of your 4-14 year old with a work programme tailored to their strengths and weaknesses. Using Proxima™, the award-winning technology that analyses and intelligently designs a unique learning programme for your child.	6

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

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
The PSA, Wellbeing lead and Safeguarding Lead remove barriers that affect the hardest to reach parents and their ability to get their children to school on a regular basis.	With home issues and Safeguarding being the most important drive in our school, the last year has seen the need to extend our safeguarding team to deal with an increase in Social Services involvement and referrals to outside agencies	
Enabling environments to improve engagement and address low level behaviour that hinders learning. Children attendance will improve as the classrooms and approaches continue to focus on social and emotion learning, removing barriers and self-regulation.	***(Collaborative learning EFF toolkit Moderate impact for low cost)*** **(EFF *Metacognition and self-regulation*** ***High impact for low cost**)*	
Cultural Capital experiences are embedded in the wider curriculum through a carefully planned LTP. Subsidise PP families for trips	***(EFF toolkit Digital technology Moderate impact for moderate cost)*** ***EFF – outdoor adventure learning shows positive benefits to academic learning and self- confidence.*** ***Ofsted Research (2019) places emphasis on developing cultural capital, particularly for disadvantaged pupils to level the playing field.***	

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

GLD

% Good Level Development (GLD)	2023-2024	2024-2025
School	74%	67%
National	68%	68%

Year 1 and 2 Phonics

	National 2022-2023	School 2023-2024	National 2023-2024	School 2024-2025	National 2024-2025
Year 1	79%	77%	80%	74%	80%
Year 2 (re-takes)	58%	46%	55%	45%	50%

KS2 Expected

Subject	National 2022-2023	School 2023-2024	National 2023-2024	School 2024-2025	National 2024-2025
Combined	60%	62%	61%	32%	62%
Reading	73%	79%	74%	43%	75%
Writing	72%	66%	72%	61%	72%
Maths	73%	69%	73%	46%	74%
EGPS	30%	66%	72%	32%	73%

KS2 Greater Depth

Subject	National 2022-2023	School 2023-2024	National 2023-2024	School 2024-2025	National 2024-2025
Combined	8%	7%	8%	0%	8%
Reading	29%	35%	28%	29%	33%
Writing	13%	7%	13%	0%	13%
Maths	24%	7%	24%	0%	26%
EGPS	30%	14%	32%	0%	29%