Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the progress 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. In essence, we use the money to create activities and interventions within and around the school day which are designed to accelerate the progress of our Disadvantaged pupils.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Downham Market Academy
Number of pupils in school	1,250
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	26%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3 year plans are recommended)**	2025/6– 2028/9
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026 ✓ November 2027
Statement authorised by	Natalie Paine, Head of School
Pupil premium lead	Jake Baywood Senior Deputy Head
Governor / Trustee lead	Amanda Dawson, Lead Governor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£379, 475
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
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	£379,475

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, regardless of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and meet their potential across the curriculum. The purpose of pupil premium funding is to ensure that schools offer additional support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds in realising their potential. The school spends this money to ensure that pupil premium students benefit from high quality teaching, a broad curriculum, extensive pastoral support and enhanced opportunities for extracurricular activities such as clubs, fixtures and trips. Our pupil premium strategy focuses on targeted interventions for pupil premium students to ensure that they receive additional support that enhances their academic progress whilst providing them with a range of extra-curricular opportunities. We aim to eliminate inequalities in academic outcomes, attendance, behaviour points and enrichment between pupil premium students and non-pupil premium students.

Educational research shows that high-quality teaching is the most effective strategy in closing the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students. This is at the centre of our approach and is the foundation of how we will support pupil premium students in achieving their potential.

In order to achieve our aim of closing the game between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students, we will:

- Develop our staff to ensure that they understand the needs of our pupil premium students and can deliver outstanding lessons that support progress of these students.
- Support pupil premium students with targeted academic interventions to accelerate their progress and maximise their outcomes.
- Support pupil premium students and their families to ensure that they meet the academy attendance target.
- Ensure that our pastoral support for pupil premium students is thorough and bespoke to the individual challenges that students may face.
- Provide pupil premium students with the same opportunities for cultural capital by enhancing their attendance to clubs, fixtures and trips.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Pupil premium students, on average, have lower academic outcomes than non-pupil premium students.
2	Pupil premium students have a significantly lower average attendance compared with non-pupil premium students.
3	Pupil premium students account for a disproportionate number of behaviour sanctions when compared with non-pupil premium students.
4	Pupil premium students attend extra-curricular activities such as clubs, fixtures and trips less than non-pupil premium students.
5	Pupil premium students sometimes lack ambition and aspiration due to a lack of understanding of future careers and pathways.
6	Pupil premium families may face some financial barriers that sometimes means the students have less opportunity. For example, lacking necessary equipment such as pens, pencils and scientific calculators or being less able to contribute towards extra-curricular activities such as sports clubs, music lessons or school trips.

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 accelerate the progress of pupil premium students to ensure that they achieve academic outcomes in line with non-pupil premium students.	• Pupil premium students make progress in line with their potential grades. • There is no gap between the attainment of pupil premium and non-pupil premium students.

To improve the average attendance of pupil premium students so that there is no gap between the attendance of pupil premium and non-pupil premium students.	• Pupil premium students in each year group have an average attendance in line with non-pupil premium students. • There is a significant reduction of pupil premium students who are persistently absent.
To improve the behavioural support in place for our pupil premium students to reduce the number of sanctions received by pupil premium students.	• Pupil premium students number of behaviour sanctions is in line with the percentage of pupil premium students at the academy. • Pupil premium students will account for less suspensions.
To increase the attendance of pupil premium students at extra-curricular clubs and trips, enhancing their cultural capital.	• Pupil premium students attending clubs will increase so that it is in line with non-pupil premium students. • Pupil premium students attending trips will increase so that it is in line with non-pupil premium students.
To improve the aspirations of pupil premium students so that they value their learning and progress and achieve improved academic outcomes.	• Pupil premium students aspire to achieve improved academic outcomes and apply for aspirational post 16 courses. • Pupil premium students have an improved progress 8 and attainment 8 score.
To ensure that pupil premium students have equal opportunities to non-pupil premium students, irrespective of their background.	• Pupil premium students have the correct equipment. • Pupil premium students attend clubs and trips in line with non-pupil premium students. • Pupil premium students take part in extra-curricular activities such as music lessons and fixtures.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **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
Quality first teaching that overcomes potential barriers for pupil premium students and enhances progress.	The Education Endowment Foundation's Guide to Pupil Premium	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
An extensive CPD programme which supports staff with strategies on how to overcome potential barriers faced by pupil premium students and accelerate their progress.	The Key's Pupil Premium: How to Spend it Wisely, recommends a dedicated member of the Senior Leadership Team be appointed to supervise Pupil Premium students.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
iPad scheme which engages students in lessons and allows access to learning 24/7.	Studies consistently find that technology is associated with moderate learning gains, on average an additional four months progress.	1, 5, 6

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

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted academic intervention for pupil premium students in key subjects (English, Maths & Science) to support academic outcomes.	Case studies in the Education Endowment Foundation's Guide to Pupil Premium demonstrate the effectiveness of small-group interventions. The Education Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning Toolkit shows that structured, small-group intervention can lead to up to 4 months' progress, particularly linked to literacy and numeracy levels in secondary schools.	1, 5

Period 7 sessions for KS4 students targeted to include pupil premium students.	Case studies in the Education Endowment Foundation's Guide to Pupil Premium demonstrate the effectiveness of small-group interventions.	1, 5
Reading & Literacy intervention for pupil premium students with a below expected reading age.	The Education Endowment Foundation states that reading comprehension support can have on average +6 months impact on progress.	1, 6
'Prep club' which enables students to stay after school to complete their prep work with support from staff.	The Education Endowment Foundation states that completion of homework can have +5 months positive impact on students progress.	1, 4, 5, 6
Contributions towards revision guides and key texts for key stage 4 students.	The Department for Education note that schools may need to use Pupil Premium funding to provide key equipment for Disadvantaged students.	1, 5, 6

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

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
The attendance team following up on the absence of pupil premium students each day. Support being provided by the attendance team to overcome barriers to attendance for pupil premium students.	The Department for Education's guidance on Improving School Attendance. The Key – Pupil Premium: How to Spend it Wisely, section 'Improve behaviour, attendance, and social and emotional needs' Pupil premium: how to spend it wisely | The Key Leaders (thekeysupport.com)	2
Proactive behaviour interventions for pupil premium students to support improved behaviour.	The Education Endowment Foundation's Guide to Pupil Premium shows that behaviour can negatively impact students' academic progress. Teach First's Pupil Premium Report contains a case study that highlights the success a school in Southampton had in targeted behaviour support for Disadvantaged students.	1, 2, 3, 5, 6

Support for pupil premium families in purchasing the correct school uniform.	Research from The Children's Society has highlighted the impact that costly school uniform can have on children and their education.	6
Contributions towards school trips and other visits for pupil premium students.	Case studies from the educational charity A New Direction highlight the importance of develop pupils' cultural capital through enrichment opportunities.	4, 5, 6
Contributions towards necessary equipment such as pens, pencils, rulers, scientific calculators.	The Department for Education note that schools may need to use Pupil Premium funding to provide key equipment for Disadvantaged students.	1, 6
Contributions towards music lessons to support pupil premium students in curricular and extra-curricular activities.	The Education Endowment Foundation states that participation in arts such as music can increase academic outcomes in other areas of the curriculum.	1, 4, 5, 6
Free breakfast provided for our pupil premium students.	Studies show that breakfast consumption positively affects learning, behaviour and cognitive performance.	6
Late buses provided for students to access after school curricular and extra-curricular activities such as period 7s, clubs, fixtures and prep club.	The Education Endowment Foundation states that participation in arts such as music can increase academic outcomes in other areas of the curriculum. The Education Endowment Foundation states that on average participation in physical activity can increase progress by 1 month. It also shows that it can increase pupil attendance.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

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 2025 to 2026 academic year.

Analysis of our 2025-2026 cohort demonstrates several strengths in our provision. Progress measures in several subjects including History, R.S., French show progress outcomes equalling or exceeding, those of their non-disadvantaged peers. In addition, disadvantaged students also achieved Grade 9 outcomes in various subjects, including English Language, Mathematics, Science and Geography.

Likewise vocational qualifications demonstrated positive residuals (averaging around +0.3). These show that the curriculum pathways and the provisions outlined above, are enabling students to make positive progress.

This is a multi-year strategy, but when coupled with the 24-25 results, evidence suggest that the approach and provisions are already yielding positive effects. While there will continue to be areas for improvement, many of our students are now regularly accessing extra-curricular clubs and trips, and gaining positive progress.

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year
Service children face unique challenges, including frequent relocations, academic continuity, and wellbeing issues related to parental deployment. Therefore, our support have focused on the following provisions:

- Targeted pastoral care: a designated staff member to act as a key contact for service children intending to teach strategies to manage anxiety and uncertainty.
- Counselling services: access to school wellbeing services or external support to help process deployment or relocation stress.
- Academic intervention: offering attendance at homework clubs or additional tutoring sessions.

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

Children with a parent in the military may experience anxiety, stress or feelings of isolation. Providing a key person who is able to help listen and address concerns, signposting as necessary, helps to address this challenge.

The frequent moves or disrupted schooling can also affect attainment. Therefore having an offer of academic interventions can help catch up those who have missed parts of the curriculum.