

# Pupil premium strategy statement – Fir Tree Junior School

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	231
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	19.04% (National = 26%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	Autumn 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	Summer 2026
Statement authorised by	Mr M Knight
Pupil premium lead	Miss S Lloyd
Governor / Trustee lead	Mrs J Novell

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£56,665
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£5,785
<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>	£62,450

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

Our aim is to use pupil premium funding to help us improve and sustain higher attainment for disadvantaged pupils at our school which is comparable with that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. During this three-year period, we will focus on the key challenges we that are preventing pupils from achieving higher attainment. The approach will be responsive to both common challenges and our pupils' individual needs, and will not be based on assumptions about the impact disadvantage can have on learners.

At Fir Tree, we favour a whole school approach in which all colleagues take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and have the highest expectations of what all students can achieve.

It is our aim that all pupils will be able to access powerful knowledge through our broad and balanced curriculum, irrespective of their background. No student's learning will be capped due to challenges to learning they might have, such as a vocabulary deficit and less developed early reading skills.

All pupils will develop a greater awareness of their learning and their personal strengths and weaknesses. They will be able to think deeply about their learning and become comfortable and familiar with the metacognitive elements of learning, to the point where this becomes the norm.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Our assessments highlight self-confidence issues for more of our disadvantaged pupils than non-disadvantaged pupils
2	Our assessments, discussions and observations have identified that a significant proportion of our disadvantaged pupils lack skills to support their self-regulation - this provides a challenge when it comes to planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning.
3	Our assessments and observations show that our Pupil premium pupils are more likely to have <u>low prior attainment in reading</u> that may be preventing them from accessing certain parts of the curriculum.
4	At present some of our disadvantaged pupils are at risk of falling into the ' <u>persistent absenteeism</u> ' category.

5	Discussions coupled with assessment work have identified that some disadvantaged pupils lack background knowledge of the world around them and as a result have less clarity around how education can shape their future lives. It is not accurate to say these pupils are not ambitious, but for many, what they believe is possible is limited due to their life experience to date.
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## 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
Higher attendance for all disadvantaged pupils	94%+ attendance
Improve reading outcomes of our disadvantaged pupils	Close the disadvantage gap in reading by the end of KS2. In 2025, 86% of non-disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, compared to 63% of disadvantaged pupils. Our aim is that the gap will diminish throughout the period this plan covers. Alongside this, informal and formal assessment work will reveal that pupils are able to use complex vocabulary across subjects in various contexts.
Improve learning behaviours of disadvantaged pupils, with particular reference to self-regulation.	Observations and analysis of attainment information will demonstrate that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pupils will be aware of how they plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning, across all subjects.</li> <li>● Pupils will be able to think deeply about their learning and become comfortable and familiar with the metacognitive elements of learning to the point where it is habitual.</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: £37,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b>Staff professional learning</b></p> <p>Research school blogs</p> <p>Contribution towards the salary of Home School Link Worker</p> <p>Staff engagement with high-quality professional learning content</p> <p>Release time for curriculum leads to ensure curriculum is fit for purpose in the foundation subjects</p> <p>Release time for colleagues to visit settings with highly effective TA deployment strategies</p> <p>Purchasing reading materials on pedagogy as recommended by EEF</p>	<p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development</a></p> <p>Professional learning at Fir Tree is underpinned by these principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing knowledge</li> <li>• The provision of intellectually stimulating material</li> <li>• Embedding practice over sustained periods of time</li> <li>• An emphasis placed on self directed learning</li> </ul>	2/3/5
<p><b>Literacy skills – with particular reference to reading</b></p> <p>Effective delivery of a synthetic phonics programme – with reference to EYFS pupils joining the school community in 2026.</p> <p>Effective diagnosis of reading difficulties, particularly for those with low attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/early-literacy">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/early-literacy</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching</a></li> </ul>	3

Highly effective quality first teaching – a move away from inappropriate and ineffectively delivered interventions		
<p><b>Improving self-regulation/metacognition</b></p> <p>Explicitly teaching pupils how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning</p> <p>Teachers employing metacognitive questioning techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/metacognition">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/metacognition</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://researchschool.org.uk/durrington/event/deep-dive-days">https://researchschool.org.uk/durrington/event/deep-dive-days</a></li> </ul>	2

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

Budgeted cost: £10,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b>Intervention groups</b></p> <p>The intention is that a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils reach the expected standard in core subjects</p> <p>In contrast to previous years, groups will run in year groups other than Y6</p>	<p><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></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This approach is more likely to be effective if it is targeted at specific needs. Diagnostic assessment work will therefore be carried out on entry</li> <li>• Appropriate training will be provided to colleagues to ensure that the opportunities this approach provides are capitalised on</li> </ul>	1/2/3

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

Budgeted cost: £15,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b>Attendance Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home School Link Worker early intervention</li> <li>• Local Authority Attendance team involvement</li> <li>• Positive reinforcement</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School publications tailored towards generating positive conversations around the benefits of regular school attendance</li> </ul>	3/4
<p><b>Wellbeing Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted support from mental health first aider</li> <li>• Effective signposting to external agencies</li> <li>• Renewed focus on play, encompassing the Opal programme</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://www.charlesdickens.southwark.sch.uk/social-intelligence/teaching-emotional-intelligence-and-well-being.php">http://www.charlesdickens.southwark.sch.uk/social-intelligence/teaching-emotional-intelligence-and-well-being.php</a></p> <p>At Fir Tree, via our PSHE curriculum and other approaches, we aim to explicitly teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How children can recognise emotions in themselves and others</li> <li>• How children can understand the causes and consequences of emotions</li> <li>• How children can express emotions appropriately</li> <li>• How children can regulate emotions effectively</li> </ul>	

**Total budgeted cost: £65,000**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

*Outline the performance of your disadvantaged pupils in the previous academic year and explain how it has been assessed. You should draw on:*

- Nationally, in 2024/25, 47% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At Fir Tree during the same period of time, 50% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The target of 50% of disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 24/25 was achieved.
- A significant improvement in the complexity of vocabulary used by pupils in written work was noted during the period September 2024-July 2025. Evidenced by work scrutiny and other monitoring activities, this work continues as part of the school's drive to continue raising standards in writing.
- The target of limiting overall absence to 3% during the academic year 2023/24 was not achieved. Overall absence for 2024/25 stood at 4.5%
- During this period, the attendance of pupils identified as disadvantaged was identical to national data. Attendance remains a challenge and this is reflected in the emphasis placed upon it in the updated strategy.
- Year on year, a greater number of pupils, including those said to be disadvantaged, attended extracurricular clubs.
- Year on year, a comparable number of pupils accessed informal Mental Health First Aider sessions. A comparable number of pupils were signposted to CAHMS.

## 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.*