



Axbridge C of E Academy

Together We Inspire, Thrive & Excel

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2024 to 2025 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our pupils who have pupil premium funding.

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 funding had within our school.

School overview for 2025/26

Detail	Data
School name	Axbridge Academy
Number of pupils in school	139 (+ 38 in Nursery)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	17.4 % (24 out of 139)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2024- 2027 (Year 2 of 3 year plan)
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2027
Statement authorised by	Local Partnership Board
Pupil premium lead	D Shillabeer Head teacher
Governor / Trustee lead	S Newland Pupil Premium link partner

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£37,015
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	£37,015

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Axbridge C of E Academy, we are collectively committed to fostering a sense of belonging for every pupil and family in our school community. It is our intention that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve highly across all subjects and aspects of school life. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support pupils who experience disadvantage to achieve in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. Expectations are high for all pupils.

The trend over the time at Axbridge has seen a gradual year-on-year increase in the number of Pupil Premium (PP) pupils as a percentage of the school's demographic. Despite this, the percentage number of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (18%) is below the national average (24%). Our school is located within a small, rural town with the majority of children living within the catchment or in nearby villages.

We consider the individual challenges faced by our disadvantaged pupils and their families. We understand the challenge of growing up as a child facing disadvantage, so we strive to ensure all pupils in our school have access to high quality teaching and language skills. The provision we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support each child's needs, regardless of whether they face disadvantage or not.

Our strategy aligns with our school's values and our school's ethos of Inspire, Thrive and Excel. Through our three-tiered approach, quality-first teaching is at the heart of our strategy, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. Curriculum equity is prioritized. All pupils have an equitable access to a rich, broad and balanced curriculum where interventions are strategically selected to target key issues. 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 alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

We are committed to targeting our interventions to combat the barriers to all pupil's learning and therefore, wider success. Our approach will be responsive to individual needs and challenges, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment. Assessment not assumptions drives our strategy identifying tightly focused improvement priorities. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel and thrive. To ensure they are effective we will:

- prioritise our pupils' emotional needs, first and foremost, so that they have the right attitudes for learning (self-esteem, resilience, positive relationship building)
- adopt a whole school approach which will consider the teaching and learning, academic intervention and wider approaches to support pupils.
- set clear outcomes for the impact of disadvantaged strategies and monitor progress and quality of teaching using robust and pragmatic measures
- rigorously monitor pupil progress to ensure provision is effective

- Involve parents in their child’s learning and progress so we can work in partnership to build positive relationships and ultimately accelerate learning and well-being for our pupils.
- Ensure that all staff take responsibility for pupil’s outcomes, particularly those who experience or face disadvantage.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Attainment in Writing, Reading and Maths</p> <p>Assessment data from 2025-2025 indicates that attainment is lower among pupil premium and disadvantaged pupils in comparison to their peers. Observations, moderation of work and internal assessment and monitoring indicate that the key barriers across KS1 and KS2 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting and fine-motor development • Spelling of Common Exception Words (CEW) • Sustaining grammatical accuracy in independent work • Arithmetic and Multiplication knowledge • Comprehension skills - retrieval, inference and summarizing • Sustaining rapid progress in phonic knowledge and application.
2	<p>Poverty of language</p> <p>Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills, vocabulary gaps and poor written communication skill among many disadvantaged pupils. These are evident from nursery through to KS2 and in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils than their peers.</p>
3	<p>Developing cultural capital</p> <p>Axbridge is a rural Somerset school, with most pupils coming from the town or surrounding villages. We wish to ensure our disadvantaged learners have exposure to a variety of different cultures, beliefs, experiences, viewpoints and opportunities, that would otherwise be out of reach. All of our pupils, including our most disadvantaged, must experience a rich, varied and inspirational school offer, which includes greater participation in clubs and extra-curricular opportunities.</p>
4	<p>Supporting wellbeing and promoting positive mental health</p> <p>Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified various SEMH issues across the school, that have an impact on the pupil’s wellbeing, engagement, social skills and levels of happiness. These challenges particularly affect our disadvantaged pupils. We will develop further SEMH support pathways, through Nurture groups, ELSA and Drawing and Talking therapies.</p>

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
Improved attainment in writing, writing and mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes show that all pupils make good progress from their starting points, with an increase of those in receipt of Pupil Premium funding making Age Related Expectations (ARE) in all areas • Interventions will have supported good overall progress. • PP Lead uses data termly to evaluate success/effectiveness of strategies • Systematic delivery of precision spelling and handwriting intervention will ensure a greater proportion of pupils meet spelling and handwriting expectations. • Regular writing moderation is carried out within the school and WLT • Feedback Policy enables pupils to respond to feedback with more immediacy and with greater impact. • Testbase and NCETM end of unit assessments show progress in line with peers. • Arithmetic interventions show measurable improvement over time.
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments and observations indicate improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence; including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny, outcomes from SLC focus tasks and ongoing formative assessment. • 80% of disadvantaged pupils make ARE in Reading by the end of Year 4. • Knowledge organisers are used effectively to revisit and embed 'expert language'. These are used as part of pre-topic teaching and activating prior learning, to develop language acquisition and enhance understanding. • Regular quizzes/recaps/games are used to improve meta cognition and move learning from short to long term memory in all areas of the curriculum.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children will be exposed to opportunities to use presentation / appropriate speech and language skills, eg celebration assembly, showing, 'Time to Shine', poetry performances • Classroom displays include 'expert language' which is referred to in lesson time and used at home during conversations about learning. • PP and non-PP pupils use the same breadth of language/vocabulary, evident in their written and spoken responses. • Early Talkboost to be fully embedded in Nursery, supporting transition to Reception. • To begin implementing Voice 21 work within the school, to assist in speech and language development for all learners.
<p>Developing 'Cultural Capital' for our pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry curriculum to explicitly address 'actions' to develop pupil's independence and understanding of the world. • To become a Rights Respecting School and a place whereby children are empowered to address inequality and understand their rights. • Enhancing curriculum delivery to ensure greater exposure to the 'global dimensions' and experiences, with these set out explicitly in curriculum plans. • A curriculum map, that sets out clearly all events, experiences, visitors, learning hooks and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. • Greater participation in after school clubs, music lessons and extra-curricular opportunities. • Detailed tracking informs engagement of disadvantaged pupils (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural - SMSC, PP Tracker)
<p>To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children understand that they thrive, do well and are cared for at the school, with attendance of all children at least 95%. • Morning welcomes help develop relationships between the school and families. Parental engagement is high and parent voice demonstrates this. • Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by: • Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • A significant improvement in structures and routines at home • A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils • Strong relationships are built between home and school and the families of our disadvantaged pupils, demonstrated by:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies and advice shared and used by pupils and/or their families • A timetable of regular check-ins is established • The development of quiet zones within the school and in the playground, to help ensure our learners are supported to remain regulated during structured and unstructured times of the school day. • Where relevant, children will be monitored via the school's SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) assessments • Pupils benefit from the schools Emotional Literacy tiered response to improve their personal outcomes and school engagement, which includes Trusted Adults, Thrive Groups and Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA). • The Emotional Toolkit, which mirrors and builds upon the Zones of Regulation, supports all learners to better understand and manage their emotions.
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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.

Quality First Teaching

Budgeted cost: £14,850

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Build strong relationships in class (pastoral care), eliminating unconscious bias, establishing individual pupil interests, welcoming pupils positively every morning.	<p>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).</p> <p>Professional, personal and an effective relationship built between staff member and PP child to listen to their needs, provide encouragement and advice</p> <p>EEF Social and Emotional Learning Supporting-the-attainment-of-disadvantaged-pupils DfE</p>	3, 4
To embed conferencing as a part of our new Feedback Policy.	Education Endowment Foundation indicates effective feedback (verbal or written) can make gains of 8 months progress for a pupil and will enable children to articulate their successes and next steps	1, 2, 3

	<p>clearly, drawing upon their metacognition skills to find pathways of success.</p> <p>EEF Feedback Supporting-the-attainment-of-disadvantaged-pupils DfE</p> <p>Revisiting and repetition strengthens neural pathways.</p> <p>EEF Metacognition Supporting-the-attainment-of-disadvantaged-pupils DfE</p>	
<p>Use standardized diagnostic assessments (eg. Phonics. MTC, Salford Reading Age and Testbase)</p> <p>Train staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly.</p>	<p>Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction:</p> <p>EEF Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Supporting-the-attainment-of-disadvantaged-pupils DfE</p>	1, 2,
<p>Pre-topic teaching materials are composed to support pupils access to the curriculum and combat language acquisition barriers</p>	<p>EEF suggests that oral language interventions aim to support learners' articulation of ideas and spoken expression. Oral language interventions therefore have some similarity to approaches based on Metacognition which make talk about learning explicit in classrooms.</p>	2
<p>Teachers and Support Staff are trained to use adaptive teaching as part of everyday teaching and learning</p>	<p>Adapting to different learning styles and needs supports learning through effective professional development. Effective Professional Development EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) WLT Focus - to teachers and support staff (CPD)</p>	1, 4
<p>Twinkl Phonics Training for all staff</p>	<p>Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children's outcomes. Research tells us that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap.</p>	1,2
<p>Embed our school Learning Skills (attitudes to learning) through whole school assemblies, rewards and classroom expectations.</p>	<p>Behaviour interventions seek to improve attainment by reducing challenging behaviour. This entry covers interventions aimed at reducing a variety of behaviours, from low-level disruption to aggression, violence, bullying, substance abuse and general antisocial activities</p> <p>EEF Behaviour interventions</p>	1, 3
<p>Explicit Whole Class Reading provision, targeting reading skills</p>	<p>The explicit teaching of comprehension strategies can support pupils who have gaps or have</p>	1, 2

and comprehension - Year 2 onwards Explicit EYFS - Year 1 Reading skills, dialogic talk and Immersive Reading Twinkl 'Pawsome Gang' embedded	experienced barriers to learning to catch up. There is also strong evidence that interactive reading can improve language and communication in the early years. EEF Communication and Language (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
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Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £10,350

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Use Phonics/Reading intervention programs to improve phonetical knowledge and understanding/ fluency in reading for pupils who are falling significantly behind the expected standard for their age phase. Immediate phonics intervention sessions targeted at pupils who require further phonics support following daily SSP sessions.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: EEF Phonics	1, 2
TA deployment to support in class - support planned by the class teacher	When intervention is targeted to support next steps it will accelerate progress. Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,2 , 4
Use Talkboost intervention for EYFS and KS1 pupils to enable children to develop their SLC skills	Talk Boost is a structured and robustly evidenced programme that can boost a child's communication by an average of 18 months after 10 weeks of intervention. Language delay can significantly impact children's attainment. Many of these children have the potential to catch up but only if they receive timely intervention. Talk Boost - Integrated Treatment Services	1, 2, 4

<p>Provide staff with relevant CPD, including:</p> <p>Twinkl Phonics Number Sense PP Lead Network Talk Boost ELSA NCETM Mastery Curriculum Number Detectives ILI IDL* Drawing and Talking*</p>	<p>When staff gain expertise and are well informed in how to deliver a new approach or program, then pupils will benefit.</p> <p>Supporting-the-attainment-of-disadvantaged-pupils DfE NFER - High Quality Teaching for All / Deploying Staff Effectively</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>
<p>Review specific 'pupil need' every term (x3) through school identification and recording systems, including Pupil Need Overviews, Graduated Response Provision Maps and 'Provision Map' (part of Edukey), to ensure provision is effective and meaningful.</p> <p>These records will be reviewed by SLT and SENDCO and be communicated regularly with parents.</p>	<p>The average impact of the Parental engagement approaches is about an additional four months' progress over the course of a year. There are also higher impacts for pupils with low prior attainment.</p> <p>EEF Parental Engagement</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>

Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £8,200

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Contribute towards: school uniform school, essential resources, opportunity to attend 1x enrichment club or 1x musical tuition per term, school trips (including outdoor adventure learning and sport) and transport.	<p>Give wider opportunities to children with limited experience. (Moderate impact for moderate cost EEF)</p> <p>To ensure pupils are ready to learn and are well supported for schooling.</p> <p>(Moderate impact for moderate cost EEF)</p>	3, 4
To train a school Mental Health First Aider, to support pupils and staff social and emotional wellbeing	EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit suggests that effective SEL can lead to learning gains of +4 months over the course of a year	3, 4,
Train TAs in the delivery of Lego Therapy	A play-based intervention that promotes social interaction, communication, and problem-solving through structured building activities On average, the studies of play that measure impact found that play-based learning approaches improve learning outcomes by approximately four additional months. (EEF +4 months)	2, 4
Purchase dual language Ukrainian reading texts	Access to books will enable child to have the opportunity to practise and extend their understanding of English, whilst maintaining their mother tongue Homework (EEF +5 months)	2,3
<p>Ensure Pastoral Curriculum is relevant.</p> <p>JIGSAW PSHE program is engaging, relevant and purposeful.</p> <p>Development of outdoor learning opportunities for all</p>	<p>The benefits of the outdoor classroom are clearly not confined to students. Teachers noted improved relationships with students, personal development in the teaching and curriculum benefits."</p> <p>Dillon et al, 2005, Engaging and Learning with the Outdoors: The Final Report of the Outdoor Classroom in a Rural Context Action Research Project, Reading, NFER.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4,

years and throughout the year.	Forest School provision to be provided to all children in Reception Class, with the opportunity for further pupils to become 'leaders' and support these sessions. <u>Benefits of Teaching Outdoors & Outdoor Learning Teach Outdoors</u>	
Wellbeing welcomes for all PP pupils	Social & emotional learning interventions are shown to improve Social, Emotional Literacy skills and are therefore likely to support disadvantaged pupils to understand and engage in healthy relationships with peers and emotional self regulation, both of which may subsequently increase academic attainment. Has an average impact of +6 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-andemotional-learning	4, 5
Contingency fund for acute issues. (For example, cost of vital counselling session, glasses, shoes)	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. These can include the purchase of glasses, trainers, food or counselling.	All

Total budgeted cost: £37, 015

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.

Desired Action	Outcome
Improved progress among disadvantaged pupils.	Internal assessments indicate that PP and Disadvantaged learners make greater progress in Reading and Mathematics, compared to non-PP pupils. They make the same level of progress in writing. Migration of data systems in June 2025 did not allow for progress data comparisons in 2024-25.*
Improved attendance for PP and disadvantaged groups	Those in receipt of PP funding, attendance for 2023/24: 95.6% 2024/25: 96.1% Those not in receipt of PP funding, attendance for 2023/24: 96.6% 2025/25: 96.9% PP attendance greatly improved from the level of 91.7% in 2022/23.
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Early Talkboost deployed effectively in Nursery and children identified upon transition into Reception, reducing time between communication and language support commencing. Knowledge Organisers used across the curriculum to specifically teach key language, evidenced in verbal responses and end of unit assessments. Further training around receptive and expressive language skills interventions to support our disadvantaged learners required.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Pupils in receipt of PP funding accessed at least one after school club. All Year 4 pupils undertook brass instrument lessons. All children accessing school trips and residential are offered to have the costs covered by the school, through the PP funding. Pupil voice groups to further evidence this impact.

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
Twinkl	Numbersense
IDL	ELSA
Edukey	Digi maps
Talkboost	Early Talkboost

Drawing and Talking	TTRS
Arithmekit	Literacy Shed+