

# Pupil premium strategy statement – Bennett Memorial Diocesan School

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	1497
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	7.3% (109 PP students)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	2023-2024 2024-2025 2025-2026
Date this statement was published	November 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2024
Statement authorised by	
Pupil premium lead	Mrs C Bingham
Governor / Trustee lead	

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£108,675
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£31,740
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years ( <i>enter £0 if not applicable</i> )  *Recovery premium received in academic year 2021 to 2022 can be carried forward to academic year 2022 to 2023. Recovery premium received in academic year 2022 to 2023 cannot be carried forward to 2023 to 2024.	£0
<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>	£140,415

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

Bennett Memorial Diocesan School is a large Church of England school of 1497 in years 7 – 11. We also have a large Sixth Form with 400 students. We have a relatively small number of students who are identified as pupil premium. However, we recognise that there are other students who are disadvantaged but do not specifically qualify as pupil premium. For example, we have 10 Ukrainian refugees as well as other students leaving unsafe countries. All of our disadvantaged students benefit from the very best teaching, which is the overriding aim of our strategy.

Our main objective is to eliminate, wherever possible, the gap between disadvantaged students and their peers. Covid-19 will have disproportionately affected our most disadvantaged students. Those currently in year 7 will have been in years 3 and 4 during the pandemic, and the impact of school closures will still have been significant. This is not just due to lack of technology. The increased disadvantage could also have been caused by a lack of quiet space to work at home, lack of resources such as books, and not as much support from adults at home.

Our disadvantaged Year 11 cohort for 2022 – 2023 had a strongly positive Progress 8 score of +0.5, which is significantly above the national mean for non-disadvantaged students at +0.17. The disadvantaged student had an average A8 score of 46.1 compared to 58 for their peers. In addition, 41.13% of their grades were 9-5 compared to their non-disadvantaged peers who achieved 71.95%. Our disadvantaged students' attainment gap got smaller during their time in KS3 and KS4, which runs against the national trend for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, we remain committed to reducing our in-school attainment and progress gaps, to the point where they are eliminated.

On entry to Bennett, our current year 7 students have an average reading comprehension age of 14 years, with a standardised score of 110. Our disadvantaged students have an average reading comprehension of 12 years, with a standardised score of 106. The age difference of two years is significant. 13% of those who are disadvantaged have a reading age below their chronological age, compared to 21% of the rest of the cohort. 41% of our disadvantaged students have a spelling age lower than their chronological age, compared to 32% of our non-disadvantaged students.

For the new year 7 cohort, there is an attainment gap from their KS2 data for mathematics. The disadvantaged students average KS2 maths level is 100.3, compared to 103.5 for the rest of the cohort. This indicates a difference of 3.2.

It is clear from this mathematics and reading data that there is a prior attainment gap to students starting at Bennett. We must continue to focus our efforts on closing this gap. Quality first teaching, high expectations of all students, and ensuring that no one gets left behind will all contribute to addressing this.

Therefore, our plan focuses on further developing high quality teaching through professional development for all teachers. This has to be the main drive of our plan, because the evidence

demonstrates (EEF) that this is the single most important factor in helping to close the gap, particularly for our most vulnerable students. The EEF are clear that improving teacher quality, through the impact of effective professional development, leads to more improvement than structural changes. What happens in the classroom is of the utmost importance.

Typically, disadvantaged students tend to be those with weaker vocabulary and attendant word knowledge, we have a focus within the school improvement plan to improve staff knowledge of how to teach literacy in their discipline.

We will also be leading further professional development to help staff to improve their knowledge of how to adapt their teaching to respond better to children who are disadvantaged, including knowledge of attachment, ADHD and ASC.

Whilst the attendance of our disadvantaged students is very strong compared to national patterns of attendance, our disadvantaged students continue to have lower attendance rates than our non-disadvantaged students, particularly in year 11. Improving whole school attendance is a whole school priority, but particularly supporting disadvantaged students so that their attendance is at least in line with the rest of the school. It involves closely monitoring the attendance of our disadvantaged students particularly carefully, and prioritising them in attendance interventions.

As well as academic support, we will be working hard to support disadvantaged students in other areas such as emotional health and wellbeing, and attendance. This support will be delivered through a variety of strategies including our PACE programme, tutor and welfare team support, regular student induction, increased attendance monitoring and continued high expectations of all behaviour including a zero tolerance of bullying.

Increasing attendance to clubs and other co-curricular activities is another focus in our plan, and this will support our work to support students with their emotional development. Strategies to support this include extra-curricular surveys of disadvantaged students and 1:1 conversations with a member of staff to encourage and engage students in the wide range of extra-curricular activities available.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Continue to close the gap in GCSE attainment, including increasing the percentage of grades 5-9 for disadvantaged students.
2	Ensuring that attendance of those disadvantaged students is at least in line with their peers.
3	Supporting disadvantaged students with their social, emotional and mental health issues, and recognising the impact this has on their motivation and aspirations.

4	Supporting disadvantaged students with attending clubs and other co-curricular activities, particularly in music and PE
5	Ensuring those students with a lower reading age, particularly those who are disadvantaged, are making progress in line with their peers.
6	Ensuring those students with a lower standardised score from KS2 data, particularly those who are disadvantaged, are making progress in line with their peers.

## 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
Standards of literacy in KS3 are the same for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.	Disadvantaged students who have a reading age below their chronological age close the gap by having a reading age at least in line with their chronological age by the end of KS3.
Standards of numeracy in KS3 are the same for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.	Disadvantaged students will demonstrate that they are performing at least in line with their non-disadvantaged peers by the end of KS3.
GCSE attainment levels for PP students continue to improve.	The percentage of disadvantaged students attaining grades 5-9 increases.
Attendance rates for PP students to improve further.	Attendance for all PP students to meet or exceed 95%. Reduce persistent absence among PP students.
Greater levels of aspiration with more Y11 students staying on at Bennett to study in the 6 <sup>th</sup> form.	The same proportion of disadvantaged students as non-disadvantaged students choose to remain at Bennett and study courses to at least level 3 and beyond.
Increased uptake on co-curricular activities including trips and clubs.	As many disadvantaged students as possible join clubs and take part in trips alongside their non-disadvantaged peers.

## 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: £ 56,166

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Rigorous CPD programme based on the Ambition Institute Powerful Action Steps and Step-lab.	Cordingley, P., Higgins, S., Greany, T., Buckler, N., Coles-Jordan, D., Crisp, B., Saunders, L., Coe, R. Developing Great Teaching: Lessons from the international reviews into effective professional development. Teacher Development Trust, 2015.	All
Direct support for teachers to meet the learning needs of disadvantaged students.	ECF: Adaptive teaching approaches benefit all students including those who are disadvantaged who tend to be most vulnerable to poor teaching.	All

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

Budgeted cost: £ 56,166

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Accelerated Reader programme, 1:1 reading	Small group intervention with EA or teacher – ensuring best quality approach with an emphasis on a high level of teacher feedback, to maximise results in line with EEF findings. These particular interventions are also based on our positive outcomes from previous years which demonstrate they do work.	5
Intensive withdrawal groups for literacy, mathematics and Lexia.	Small group intervention with EA or teacher – ensuring best quality approach with an emphasis on a high level of teacher feedback, to maximise results in line with EEF findings.	5, 6
Growth of homework club across KS3 and KS4, including adding additional staffing.	EEF findings indicate that FSM students typically receive additional benefits from homework, but they are less likely to have a quiet working space, access to a device, parental support, reliable internet connection, and as a result not develop as effective learning habits; all of these may contribute to the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils.	All
Increase awareness of the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable students through a learning	The EEF framework guides schools to target their resources towards the individual needs of eligible students, so that they can flourish. Having an interview with eligible students, and then a conversation with parents, will	All

profile for each student following an interview.	enable us to create learning profiles to then share with teachers so that they are able to meet their students' needs.	
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## Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £ 28,083

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ongoing support of the welfare team for vulnerable students (including ongoing professional development appropriate to the welfare team and the most prevalent SEMH needs)	According to EEF research, evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have weaker social and emotional skills at all ages compared to their peers. These lower social and emotional skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment.	3, with a view to addressing all challenges
Structured induction for all students returning to school at the start of each term, with a particular focus at the start of the academic year.	According to EEF research, evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have weaker social and emotional skills at all ages compared to their peers. These lower social and emotional skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment.	3
Structured interventions for attendance related concerns including in-school systems and outside agencies.	EEF research on attendance interventions is ongoing, with many current studies based in the US. Based on advice of specialist teachers and Educational Psychologists. A recent Children's Commissioners report found a significant link between attendance and GCSE results.	2
Support vulnerable students' attendance on trips (not just material support, may require SEMH support to go on trip)	School trips that particularly involve outdoor adventure learning provide opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to participate in activities that they may not otherwise have been able to access. Through taking part in these physically and emotionally challenging activities, pupils can develop their resilience, self-confidence and motivation. This in turn may have a positive effect on academic outcomes.	4
Monitor attendance to extra-curricular activities, ensuring the disadvantaged students	As above. It is particularly about equal opportunities and ensuring that all	4

attend and maintain attendance (including support with accessing food at lunch where appropriate)	students are able to participate fully in any club.	
Enhanced transition for new year 7 students.	EEF research regarding transition highlights that it is particularly important for pupils with SEND and from disadvantaged backgrounds.	2, 3, 5, 6
Global Café – inclusive support group for EAL students support by Bennett staff and students	The DfE has identified 'a sense of belonging' as a protective factor that affects student mental health.	4

**Total budgeted cost: £ 140,415**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Our disadvantaged Year 11 cohort for 2022 – 2023 had a strongly positive Progress 8 score of +0.5, which is significantly above the national mean for non-disadvantaged students at +0.17. The disadvantaged student had an average A8 score of 46.1 compared to 58 for their peers. In addition, 41.13% of their grades were 9-5 compared to their non-disadvantaged peers who achieved 71.95%. Our disadvantaged students' attainment gap got smaller during their time in KS3 and KS4, which runs against the national trend for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, we remain committed to reducing our in-school attainment and progress gaps, to the point where they are eliminated.

For attendance, the LMT member responsible for attendance led training to the welfare team in how to have difficult conversations with parents, and implemented a structure for school staff to follow in supporting families with increasing attendance. Constant attendance monitoring in the form of fortnightly reports, ensured that procedures and interventions were implemented. LMT were kept informed of weekly attendance as this was, and continues to be, a whole school priority. As a result, our disadvantaged students' attendance at 91% was above the national mean for 2022-2023 which was 90.4% for all students.

Using interventions such as Lexia, Wordshark, and 1:1 reading has meant that the Year 7 cohort for 2022-2023 reduced the number of students with reading ages below 10 from 22 to 7. One of those students made 5 years 6 months progress and, on average, the students made 4 years progress within 9 months.

At the end of KS3, all students take standardised tests in English and mathematics. In the Year 9 English data for the end of 2022-2023, disadvantaged students were performing slightly under their peers at 58% compared to the rest of the cohort at 64%. In the Year 9 mathematics data for the end of 2022-2023, disadvantaged students were performing slightly under their peers at 40%, compared to the rest of the cohort at 48%.

Both these sets of results indicate a need to continue to focus on closing the gap for literacy and mathematics before students start in KS4, as indicated in our targeted academic support strategies.

During term 6, we ran a very successful summer school provision for the new year 7 cohort. Students were either highlighted by primary school staff, or selected by ourselves because of the information given to us. Students came in for an additional induction day where they took part in lessons in PE, maths and food. They were able to begin the process of becoming familiar with Bennett and key staff, making the transition into year 7 more manageable, particularly for any disadvantaged students.

Eight out of thirteen PP students have returned to our 6<sup>th</sup> form from the Year 11 cohort 2022 – 2023, demonstrating their sense of belonging and aspirations for learning. This meant that 62% of our PP students returned for 6<sup>th</sup> form, compared to 71% of the whole cohort.

Of the 17 disadvantaged students completing their 6<sup>th</sup> form studies with us in 2023, 12 continued into higher education, going on to study at universities such as Kings College London, Manchester, and Nottingham.