

Pupil premium strategy statement – John Mason 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	863 (Yr7-11)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	23.2%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	June 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2025
Statement authorised by	Alastair West
Pupil premium lead	Andrew Stanger
Governor / Trustee lead	Ian Thompson

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 194,000
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£ 0
Total budget for this academic year <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>	£ 194,000

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At John Mason School, our vision is to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment where every pupil, regardless of their socio-economic background, can thrive and achieve their full potential. The Pupil Premium funding is a crucial resource that allows us to provide additional support and targeted interventions to our disadvantaged pupils, ensuring they have the same opportunities for success as their peers, and are able to realise them.

Our primary aim is to ensure that all students are able to reap the benefit of a well taught, broad, academic curriculum, so that all students make good progress, regardless of any disadvantage they may have.

We are committed to using the Pupil Premium funding to:

Support continuous professional development: To equip our staff with the knowledge and skills to ensure high quality wave one teaching for all students Ensuring that all staff are able to astutely check the understanding of their students and address any gaps in their learning or misconceptions. Capturing student attention by making the purpose of learning clear and retaining attention with consistent techniques.

Provide targeted, high-quality early interventions: To ensure impactful literacy interventions for students in KS3, so that all students develop functional literacy. Implementing impactful academic and pastoral interventions, tailored to specific needs, to ensure that all students are equipped to maximise learning in lessons and improve academic achievement.

Enhance wellbeing and support: To recognise the importance of mental health and emotional wellbeing, we will implement pastoral support, mentoring programs, and extracurricular activities to promote a positive school experience for all pupils.

Foster inclusivity and engagement: To promote high levels of attendance to school and good behavioural conduct by all students. By developing a strong personal understanding of the students and their needs and ensuring high expectations for students of all backgrounds. Working to remove barriers to learning by addressing specific needs, such as access to technology, equipment or uniform.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1 Progress & Attainment	<p>The attainment and progress of disadvantaged students has been lower than their peers and lower than national rates of progress historically.</p> <p>The progress gap between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers has grown in recent years.</p>
2 Literacy	<p>Baseline assessments taken in year 7 show that, on average, disadvantaged students have a lower reading age than peers who do not (46% of disadvantaged students had a reading age below 9 ½, with 32% below 8 years, compared to 27% and 12% for peers).</p> <p>Low literacy can be a challenge to further learning in lessons.</p>
3 Attendance	<p>Disadvantaged students attend less well than their peers. In 2023-24 attendance of disadvantaged students was lower than peers. In 2024-25 to date, disadvantaged students account for 54% of severely absent students and 39% of persistently absent students. Low attendance of disadvantaged students is an obstacle to success.</p>
4 Behaviour & Connectedness	<p>Evidence shows that our disadvantaged students receive a higher proportion of classroom level sanctions (44% of sanctions) and a higher proportion of suspensions (66% of suspensions) than their peers. Disadvantaged students are more likely to receive repeat suspensions. Disadvantaged students also have a higher proportion of recorded internal truancy incidents.</p> <p>Disadvantaged students receive recognition points at a similar rate to peers.</p>
5 Social and Emotional Wellbeing	<p>Our pastoral data, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem. These challenges particularly affect vulnerable learners who as a consequence can struggle to regulate emotions, attend school regularly and can find school overwhelming. This can impact attendance, behaviour and overall attainment.</p>
6 Access to resources	<p>For some students access to stationery, equipment and uniform creates a barrier to accessing education. For some students there is a financial barrier to participation in extra-curricular events.</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
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils	All students show decreased rates of absence overall, moving towards and then exceeding national rates of attendance to school (92.9% in 2023-24). Disadvantaged students have attendance in line with peers.
All students demonstrate positive behaviours in line with school values and are committed to learning.	Behaviour records show that the number of behaviour incidents involving disadvantaged students is proportional to the number of students in school. Suspension rates across the school are reduced, the proportion of suspensions involving disadvantaged students is proportional to peers. Incidents of repeated suspensions decrease.
Improved levels of language and literacy, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.	All students in KS3 show reading age gains compared to starting points. By the end of year 8 the proportion of students with a reading age gap of more than 2 years has decreased.
Improved attainment and progress among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum.	Internal tracking shows that disadvantaged students maintain or improve upon their band throughout KS3. Progress 8 (P8) of disadvantaged students rapidly rises year on year to exceed national P8 (-0.57) and make progress towards P8 of 0. Close gap to peers to less than national gap (0.73). Increase in the proportion of disadvantaged students achieving grade 5+ in English and Maths grades 5+, towards 46% (the 2019 figure for all students nationally).
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	Sustained high levels of student wellbeing by the end of the strategy plan in 2026-2027. Evident through: Student and parent survey responses, including from PP students, reporting a greater sense of belonging to the school community. Student voice, learning walks and observations show students are more able to regulate their own learning and behaviours.

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: £ 35,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Ensure that every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching. CPD on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptive teaching (FCAE) - Explicit instruction and checking for understanding - Motivational and metacognitive strategies 	<p>The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment EEF High quality teaching</p> <p>Raising the quality of the 'universal offer' can act as a 'pull factor' to raise attendance EEF Supporting school attendance - Improve universal provision</p>	<p>1</p> <p>3</p>
Whole school DEAR time programme	<p>The Faster Read project summarises the finding from recent research that listening to texts being read can boost reading age for struggling readers. Faster Read</p>	2, 1
Support teachers to understand individual pupil's learning needs, produce Student Progress Plans and engage with SAP processes	<p>Evidence shows that disadvantaged students, including those with SEND, benefit when teachers understand the barriers to their learning and work to mitigate against them. EEF Special educational needs in mainstream schools</p>	1, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £ 55,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
KS3 Literacy intervention “Literacy Gold” to address gaps in literacy from entry for students in Year 7 and 8.	Providing high quality, targeted literacy interventions is necessary for students who enter school with low literacy skills EEF Improving literacy in secondary schools	2,1
KS4 English and maths interventions. Small group tuition from specialist teachers	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: EEF Evidence one to one tuition Small group tuition EEF Evidence small group tuition	1

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

Budgeted cost: £ 104,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Make use of high quality providers and in house Alternative Provision to</p> <p>1) support students who are persistently or severely absent to re-engage successfully with education</p> <p>2) Support improvement of behaviour for students at risk of permanent exclusion</p> <p>3) Increasing the provision in our Inclusion base especially to support SEMH interventions</p>	<p>Guidance from the EEF – Supporting school attendance suggests that some students will need highly personalised interventions to tackle challenging causes of absence EEF Deliver targeted interventions</p> <p>The EEF is investigating the use of internal Alternative Provision to support students at risk of persistent absenteeism and permanent exclusion EEF Project Internal Alternative Provision</p>	3, 4, 5
<p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in DFE's "Working together to improve school attendance"</p>	<p>The statutory guidance within DFEs Working together to improve school attendance is further supported by guidance from EEF on the best strategies for improving attendance EEF Supporting school attendance</p>	1, 4
<p>Non-teaching student managers in each year group who provide ongoing, and individualised support especially for vulnerable students.</p>	<p>Research demonstrates that having the support of trusted adults can reduce harmful outcomes for those affected by adversity. Supportive relationships with trusted adults...</p>	1, 4, 5
<p>Provide financial support for access to trips, school equipment, uniform and Revision guides (etc)</p>	<p>Participation in extracurricular provision is not equal with disparities in children's participation rates depending on their social background. Subsidising this provision is one recommendation of this research. In addition to this evidence shows that positive impact of extracurricular activity on mental health and wellbeing Social Mobility Commission: An unequal playing field</p>	1, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost: £ 194,000

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This review provides a summary of outcomes for the former strategy and serves as a baseline for future progress.

Academic Progress

Attainment 8 predictions indicate that both disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged peers will attain more highly this year. Whilst there is still more progress to be made, the gap between the attainment 8 of disadvantaged students at John Mason and disadvantaged students in a nationally representative sample is predicted to decrease (from 7.8 to 3.9).

We are predicting an increase in the proportion of students achieving grades 5+ in English and maths this year, moving towards our target.

* The average expected A8 gap (from KS2 SATs) for 2021-2024 is 9.8.

	2024 Results			2025 Predictions		
	Disadvantaged students	Non-disadvantaged students	Gap	Disadvantaged students	Non-disadvantaged students	Gap
Progress 8	-1.01	-0.40	-0.61	-0.56	+0.46	-1.02
Attainment 8	29.72	43.49	-13.77	33.58	48.11	-14.53
English 5+	27.6%	50.7%	-23.1%	30.3%	50.3%	-20.0%
Maths 5+	24.1%	45.7%	-21.6	18.2%	48.3%	-30.1%
English & Maths 5+	13.8%	36.4%	-22.6%	18.2%	39.3%	-21.1%

Further analysis of the 2023-24 results shows that disadvantaged students with an attendance of 95-100% made much better progress ($P8 = 0.05$) and with a smaller gap to peers (-0.21).

Attendance

2023-24 Whole school attendance 89.0%, disadvantaged students 80.7 %

2024-25 to date Whole school attendance 87.6%, disadvantaged students 74.0%

Whole school attendance has decreased compared to 2023-24 and the gap between disadvantaged students and their peers has increased.

The low attendance of PP students in 2024-25 is contributed to by the high rates of persistent absence (50% of PP students) and severe absence (22% of PP students).

Reading

The average reading age of students in year 8 has increased by 14 months in the 8 months since their baseline was recorded. The increase for disadvantaged students in this time frame has been 15 months.

Behaviour

2024-2025 to date disadvantaged students and peers are receiving recognition points for positive behaviours at a similar per pupil rate.

Disadvantaged students are accumulating R3 behaviours (lesson removal) at about twice the per pupil rate of peers.

The rate at which disadvantaged students are suspended is about three times that of peers. Within this, a significant number come from repeat suspensions for a minority of students.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Bedrock	Bedrock
Sparks	Sparks
Literacy Gold	Engaging Eyes