

Alumwell Infant School Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2025-26

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	270
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	41.5%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	June 2026
Statement authorised by	Carole Hammond, Head Teacher
Pupil Premium lead	Damian Evans, Deputy Head Teacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Adnan Mallick + Debo Adesina, Link Governors for Pupil Premium

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£172,710.00
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£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>	£172,710.00

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already attaining highly.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. Quality first teaching 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.

At Alumwell Infant School, we consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker and young carers. The activities we have outlined in this statement are also intended to support these children's needs too, regardless of disadvantage or not. We provide high standards of pastoral care to build children's resilience and give them the best chance to achieve their potential.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges as well as individual needs. The approaches we have adopted are multi-faceted, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment and evidenced in successful application - not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils thrive. To ensure their efficacy, we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve

In March 2024, Ofsted recognised that at Alumwell Infant School, *"The school is aspirational for all its pupils...The school's curriculum is ambitious and designed with the needs of pupils in mind."*

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>According to the English Indices of Deprivation 2025, the Alumwell neighbourhood is more deprived than most neighbourhoods in Walsall and within the 8% most deprived areas affecting children in the country. The 2025 Index of Multiple Deprivation now ranks Walsall as the 28th most deprived English local authority (out of 296 lower-tier local authorities, by IMD score), placing Walsall just within the most deprived 10% of districts in the country (25th in 2019, 33rd in 2015, 30th in 2010 and 45th in 2007).</p>
2	<p>The domains of deprivation referenced above are income deprivation; education and skills; crime; employment deprivation; health & disability and; living deprivation (measures such as the standard of housing, access to private outdoor space, pollution and traffic hazards). According to Government statistics, in June 2025, 25.7% of all children are entitled to Free School Meals. At Alumwell Infant School, around 42% of our pupils come under this category. The Education Policy Institute's 2025 annual report affirms, <i>"It is well established that economic disadvantage can negatively influence children's learning in a variety of ways and cause disadvantaged children to fall behind their peers as they progress through education... Disadvantaged pupils tend to have lower attainment than other pupils even on starting school and this gap widens as pupils progress through their education."</i></p>
3	<p>Walsall Safeguarding Partnership's Strategic Plan 2025-2028 identifies Child Neglect and Child Sexual Abuse as two of its 4 development priorities for the borough. Experience of neglect in childhood can have significant and long-term consequences, affecting many areas of a child's development and their life into adulthood. School's internal Safeguarding monitoring records show that our disadvantaged pupils are overly represented in these figures accounting for over 60% of all cases. Many of these children are being directly and adversely affected by these deprivation factors and being further supported by outside agencies including Walsall Children's Services. In the year 2024-25, a higher percentage of disadvantaged learners (61%) were judged to be Persistently Absent from school (22% more than non-disadvantaged pupils).</p>
4	<p>Mirroring the findings of the Education Policy's Institute's findings, in school data is showing a marked difference in the proportion of disadvantaged children meeting their age related expectations when compared to their peers. For example, at the end of the Foundation Stage in 2025, 29% fewer Pupil Premium pupils achieved a Good Level of Development when compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. For both groups, Literacy (specifically Writing) was identified as the lowest attaining specific area of learning. The proportions of children passing the Year 1 Phonics Screening check were relatively even but in the exiting Year 2 cohort, there was a 10% disparity in the proportion of children achieving the Expected Standard in the combined areas of Reading, Writing and Mathematics when compared to their peers. At</p>

	the Greater Depth Standard, there were twice as many non-Pupil Premium children achieving this compared to their disadvantaged counterparts.
5	According to Speech & Language UK, <i>“In some low-income areas, as many as 50% of children start school with language difficulties. Children who grow up in these areas are more than twice as likely to be identified as having speech and language challenges.”</i> Currently, 24.4% of all children at Alumwell Infant School have an identified Special Educational Need. For the vast majority of these pupils (56%) the primary specific need is Speech, Language and Communication. When looking more specifically at Pupil Premium children, 18.4% of all such pupils have a Speech, Language and Communication difficulty compared with just 10.3% of non-disadvantaged learners.
6	Nationally, 18.3% of all primary aged pupils have a Special Need or Disability - 6% less than the current demographics of our school. 50% (an increase of 6% from the previous year) of our SEND children are also identified as being disadvantaged compared with 39.7% of non-Pupil Premium children. Overall, 12.2% of this school’s population are “double disadvantaged” – not only identified as Pupil Premium, but also with an additional learning need or disability.

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
An improvement in the attainment levels of all pupils’ literacy and numeracy and diminish any differences in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils	Gaps in learning identified through analysis of assessment evidence. Analysis has directly informed adjustments to the curricular provision to better meet the needs of the pupils and raise attainment.
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and on-going formative assessment.
Improved attendance of disadvantaged pupils, so that they attend school more regularly and fewer are persistently absent from school.	In school systems regularly track the attendance of pupils and show improved school attendance. Interventions in place, including Family Support Worker, to particularly support those identified as persistently absent and diminish any attendance levels between them and their peers.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2025/26 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils and their families
To build children's resilience to manage barriers to learning and increase parental engagement in the support of children's learning.	The emotional needs of disadvantaged pupils are supported in a stimulating and nurturing environment and pupils are able to play and approach learning tasks reflectively, confidently and demonstrate resilience (qualitative data from surveys and teacher observations report increased pupil confidence, self-esteem and happiness).
To develop outstanding practice in school in regards to developing resilience and independence.	Children are confident, articulate and mentally healthy and become caring, active citizens who are ready to engage with the challenges of the next stage of their school and public life.

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: £47,388.76

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Appoint a Reading Lead Teacher (60%) to provide ongoing CPD in phonics delivery to staff. To design and implement targeted, intensive phonics interventions for pupils who need additional support, delivered through small groups or one-to-one sessions alongside the main classroom programme.	<p>The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research reports that studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive similar or slightly greater benefit from phonics interventions and approaches compared to other pupils.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</p> <p>The effects of teaching small groups of children can lead to a +4 month gain in pupil progress with much higher effects (+8 months) of one to one intervention.</p>	2,4,5,6

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

Budgeted cost: £112,541.21

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Employ Teaching Assistants with specialist skills to deliver targeted interventions including RWI and oral language development programmes such as Word First and Fast Track Tutoring as part of the RWI scheme.</p>	<p>The FFT evidences that when TAs are being used in this way to deliver targeted interventions, particularly those out of class, that the impact on children can be a +4months gain in progress.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</p>	<p>2, 4, 5, 6</p>
<p>Purchase additional support sessions from SALT to provide early intervention in/with/for children with a recognised speech and language difficulty as well as to empower staff to deliver programs of support.</p>	<p>The company Speech Link which provided EEF with school data found that of the 50,000 four and five year olds starting school in September, an extra 20-25% of them needed help with language skills compared to the previous year. 7% of children aged about five years have specific speech and language impairment and a further 1.8% have speech, language and communication needs linked to other conditions such as learning disability, cerebral palsy, autism spectrum disorders. In some socially deprived areas upwards of half of children may start school with impoverished speech, language and communication skills. https://www.rcslt.org/wp-content/uploads/media/Project/RCSLT/rcslt-what-is-slt-factsheet.pdf</p> <p>The https://www.rcslt.org/speech-and-language-therapy/ website attests to the many benefits of Speech And Language Therapy that extend beyond language gains and include improvements in social skills, peer relationships, self-confidence and literacy.</p>	<p>1, 4, 5, 6</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £12,780.03

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number (s) addressed
<p>Employ Family Support Worker to address the non-academic issues, including attendance and support with pastoral issues. Work with external providers, including consultants and those from the charity sector, to up-skill families to gain more work-based competencies and practical ideas for supporting their children's basic literacy and numeracy skills.</p>	<p>The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research affirms that positive parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. This work must be adaptive and part of a multi-component intervention in order to meet different family circumstances and barriers to progress.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement</p> <p>Alumwell Infant School seeks to provide opportunities to involve families in their children's learning be this through attendance at workshops, assisting learning at home or providing opportunities to up-skill parents and improve their work-based competences and increase their chances of securing higher-skilled employment</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 6</p>
<p>Play Therapist to deliver training to staff on the concepts of nurture and developing children's resilience following trauma. To provide vulnerable children with</p>	<p>Many of our pupils, particularly those recognised as disadvantaged, have been subject to additional adverse childhood experiences and trauma which have affected their brain organisation, structure and development (Riggs 2006, Fishbein 2007). Research evidence into the impact of intervention from a Play Therapist shows how this work helps children to link cerebral pathways and strengthen structures which in turn leads to increasing their ability to manage strong feelings and stress later in life – skills that are vital for socio-economic success (Hariri 2000, Pennebaker 1993, Fossati 2003).</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 6</p>

<p>greater resilience to managing their personal circumstances and make more progress in school.</p>		
<p>Reading comprehension interventions including the purchase of additional resources - termly story books for Reception and Coram Beanstalk volunteer reading organisation.</p>	<p>The EEF website shows how a focus on reading comprehension along with collaborative learning techniques and phonic activities can have a positive +7 month gain in children's progress. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 5, 6</p>
<p>Improve the quality of social and emotional (SEL) learning. SEL approaches will be embedded into routine educational practices and supported by professional development and training for staff. Deploy Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) to deliver an EP led intervention that promotes emotional wellbeing.</p>	<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). The average impact of successful SEL interventions is an additional three months' progress over the course of a year. Alongside academic outcomes, SEL interventions have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

Total budgeted cost: £172,710.00

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Intended Outcome 2: An improvement in the attainment levels of all pupils' literacy and numeracy and diminish any differences in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils

From their starting point where no children were on track to achieve a Good Level of Development, by the end of the Foundation Stage, 46% of the disadvantaged pupils achieved a Good Level of Development. Obviously, there is quite a disparity between this group and the 75% of non-Pupil premium children who did reach this standard. However, 38.4% of these Pupil Premium pupils also have an identified Special Educational Need or Disability (compared to just 10% of non-disadvantaged pupils) – a third of whom have an EHCP.

In Year 1, 80% of Pupil Premium children passed the Phonics Screening Check – just 4% less than their non-disadvantaged peers and a 9% increase on the previous year. For the Year 2 re-takes, 91% of Pupil Premium children passed the Phonics check in comparison to 69% their peers. This also represents a 12% increase on the previous year and evidences the impact of the school's renewed and rigorous approach to delivering phonics teaching. When combined, 3% more disadvantaged children (83%) passed the Phonics Screening Check than non-Pupil Premium children.

Summary of the end of Key Stage 1 results in 2025:

Subject	Reading EXS	Reading GDS	Writing EXS	Writing GDS	Maths EXS	Maths GDS	Combined EXS	Combined GDS
All	79%	16%	62%	7%	78%	20%	61%	5%
National	71%	19%	64%	9%	73%	17%	59%	6%
Pupil Premium	63%	8%	51%	2%	61%	10%	52%	2%
Non-Pupil Premium	65%	12%	62%	7%	66%	13%	67%	6%

As can be seen from the above chart, the school overall has some pleasing results such as the proportion of children achieving the Expected Standard in all 3 core subjects combined is greater than National. For the Pupil Premium group specifically there is roughly a 10% deficit when compared to their peers, but school remains committed to raising standards and diminishing these attainment gaps.

Intended Outcome 2: Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.

Communication and Language skills are an essential pre-requisite to developing children's writing. To this end, using Pupil Premium Funding to purchase additional sessions from Speech & Language Specialists has resulted in more timely assessments, early identification and the opportunity for children with such difficulties to receive support from trained

professionals as well as specialist school staff. Monies were designated for a specialist teaching assistant to deliver the evidence-based 'Word First' strategy to children in Reception and throughout Key Stage 1. This intervention has shown to help children make an additional 4 to 6 months progress in their language skills so this was developed further by having all reception practitioners lead whole class Word First activities. From their starting point when no children on entry were on track to reach their age related expectations, 61% of all disadvantaged children went on to meet the Early Learning Goals in Speaking (However, this was 25% less when compared to their peers).

Intended Outcome 3: Improved attendance of disadvantaged pupils, so that they attend school more regularly and fewer are persistently absent from school.

In the year 2024-25, there was a 3.9% deficit in the attendance of Pupil Premium children when compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. The school has realigned its attendance figures and the next term has already shown signs of improvement, raising all children's attendance by 1% (0.2% for Pupil Premium children). Within this data set are a number of "outliers" whose individual circumstances such as waiting specialist provision, supporting transition etc are contributing to the apparent low levels of attendance. Without these cases, Pupil Premium children's attendance figures would be raised further and reduce the gap between their absence levels and that of their peers.

Intended Outcome 4: To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.

Through robust Safeguarding procedures, monitoring and diligence, it is recognised that all staff at Alumwell Infant School are committed to supporting children's well-being and personal development. *"The arrangements for safeguarding are effective"* (Ofsted Inspection Report March 2024). The impact of this was reflected in parental surveys where almost all respondents have said that their child is safe and happy in a school with well-behaved pupils. Parents state that school supports children's wider development, that children do well here and that most parents would recommend this school to another parent.

This level of satisfaction was mirrored in the most recent Pupil Survey, where the highest level of agreement with the pupil survey's statements showed that: children feel safe and looked after in this school; that children are taught well, and; that they make good progress.

Intended Outcome 5: To build children's resilience to manage barriers to learning and increase parental engagement in the support of children's learning.

The Pupil Premium children in this school are overly represented in the school's safeguarding monitoring lists with children facing a number of key issues in their lives including attachment difficulties, managing trauma and familial relationship, particularly when domestic abuse in the family home has been a common theme. The appointment of the Play Therapist has enabled such children to access specialist support that has enabled them and their families to create a more positive and emotionally healthy way of interacting with themselves and the world around them. The Play Therapist has also delivered training to staff and parents, particularly in the area of attachment, communication and child development in order to provide staff with greater knowledge and practical strategies for supporting our most vulnerable pupils.

Intended Outcome 6: To develop outstanding practice in school in regards to developing resilience and independence.

The School has a designated Senior Mental Health Lead and a wellbeing working party which consists of representatives from across the staffing body. Together, plans have been created to sustain a strategic, whole school approach to promoting good mental health and wellbeing for both children and staff. One notable impact of this work was in the school becoming recognised as an Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed School. As a part of this, the school's Behaviour Policy and management system was developed in order to adopt an approach that better accounted for the needs and behaviours of children with attachment difficulties.

School also has a trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistant who is able to support children individually or in groups with a range of issues including social skills, friendships, emotions, bereavement, anger management, self-esteem and solution focused counselling skills.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
Play Therapy – A highly qualified therapist leads sessions where children can explore their thoughts and feelings in creative and dynamic ways, without having to use words to articulate themselves.	Play Therapy UK contact@ptukorg.com

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<i>For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year</i>
N/A
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
N/A