Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

New Heights 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
School name	New Heights School
Number of pupils in school	Key Stage 2 – 40 Places Key Stage 3 – 66 Places Key Stage 4 – 70 Places
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	Typically 60-80% See 'further information'
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)**	2025/2026 2026/2027 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	J. Hughes / K. Unsworth
Pupil Premium Lead	Key Stage 2 – E. Fillingham Key Stage 3 – J. Hughes Key Stage 4 – K. Unsworth
Governor / Trustee Lead	Chair of Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£86,148
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*	**£86,148**

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of intent

The pupils at New Heights School have often experienced disrupted education due to exclusions, significant SEMH challenges, and gaps in learning. Many arrive at our school feeling anxious due to previous negative experiences in education. Our objective for pupil premium funding is to address these issues holistically, using an emotionally friendly and trauma-informed approach, to support pupils both academically and socially to ensure they are best prepared for their next phase of education or life.

Our main aims are:

- Progress in curriculum subjects**:** We aim for all students to make progress in their learning and engagement with the curriculum.
- Progress in reading: Many of our students have reading ages below their chronological age, impacting their ability to access learning across subjects. Improving literacy is a key priority.
- Progress in Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)**:** The majority of our students have SEMH needs that affect their ability to build positive relationships and engage in learning. We support students in developing self-regulation strategies to help them manage their SEMH.
- Securing positive destinations**:** This includes supporting students to transition successfully into college, apprenticeships, or special educational settings that meet their long-term needs.
- A key focus of our Pupil Premium strategy is securing positive and sustained post-16 destinations for all pupils and reducing the risk of NEET. Pupil Premium funding supports targeted preparation, guidance and pastoral input to ensure pupils make successful transitions

Our Pupil Premium Strategy Plan is designed with these aims in mind, ensuring that students make progress academically, develop their social and emotional skills, and overcome barriers to learning. A key focus is also on improving attendance, as students must be present to benefit from the support and interventions in place.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Our assessments show that disadvantaged pupils generally arrive at New Heights with lower starting points than their peers. Their prior learning has often been disrupted, which affects early progress after admission. Whilst the types of barriers to learning and the difficulties disadvantaged pupils experience vary, their overall academic progress tends to be lower in most subjects compared to non-disadvantaged pupils.
2	Many disadvantaged pupils join New Heights with significant gaps in knowledge due to disrupted or inconsistent prior schooling. These gaps are greater than those seen in non-disadvantaged pupils.
3	Our observations suggest many lower attaining disadvantaged pupils lack self-regulation strategies when faced with challenging tasks, notably in their engagement in learning.
4	Assessments, observations and discussion with pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils generally have lower levels of reading comprehension than their peers. This impacts their progress in all subjects.
5	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families show that many disadvantaged pupils have significant SEMH needs. These include anxiety, dysregulated behaviour, limited coping strategies and reduced resilience, often linked to trauma, instability or disrupted previous schooling.
6	Our observations and discussions with pupils and families on arrival at New Heights indicate that many of our disadvantaged pupils have below average attendance and a history of persistent absenteeism.
7	Through observations and discussions with pupils and their families, we have identified that disadvantaged pupils generally have fewer opportunities to develop cultural capital outside of school.

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 for disadvantaged pupils in all subjects, relative to their starting points as identified through baseline assessments.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved progress, among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, work scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.
Pupils with SEND will have their needs met through Quality First Teaching and targeted interventions so that they are able to access and enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum and make progress.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved engagement in lessons - evidenced through learning walks, pupil focus groups, parent/carer surveys. Behaviour data - reduction in incidents Improved attainment evidenced through assessments
To achieve and sustain improved mental health and wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils, so that they are 'safe and ready to learn'	Sustained high levels of improved social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing from 2025/26 demonstrated by: ● qualitative data from pupil voice, pupil and parent/carer surveys, pupil focus groups, staff observations and behaviour analysis ● a significant increase in Thrive Approach assessment scores through observational assessments and intervention delivered by Thrive practitioners in school ● a significant increase in participation in interventions and external agency support, e.g. YPAS, ADHD Foundation, School Family Support Worker, Lego therapy, particularly among disadvantaged pupils
Improved self-regulatory skills among all our pupils, in particular our disadvantaged pupils across all subjects.	Teacher reports and class observations suggest disadvantaged pupils are more able to monitor and regulate their own learning. This finding is supported by work scrutiny and behaviour reports across all classes and subjects.

Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils.	Reading comprehension tests demonstrate improved comprehension skills among disadvantaged pupils. Teachers should also have recognised this improvement through engagement in lessons and work scrutiny.
Improved attendance compared to their attendance prior to joining New Heights School and a reduction in persistent absenteeism for all pupils, including our disadvantaged.	Attendance data presents patterns of improved attendance compared to their previous school and reduction in absenteeism for all pupils Attendance data presents evidence of successful achievement of individual pupil and whole school attendance targets
All pupils, including our disadvantaged pupils, have the opportunity to access activities both in and outside of school to develop their cultural capital.	Pupil voice will inform the choice of activities and pupil evaluations of these activities/visits will measure engagement and enjoyment.

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: **£50,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole staff CPD on SEND needs including Creative Education, ADHD, ASC, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and sensory processing from the ADHD Foundation to develop and improve Quality First Teaching across the school to improve engagement and attainment.	EEF summary evidence: The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-improvement-planning/1-high-quality-teaching Quality of instruction which includes knowing each child's needs is also echoed by The Sutton Trust: (Strong evidence of impact on pupil outcomes) Includes elements such as effective questioning and use of assessment by teachers. Specific practices, like reviewing previous learning, providing model responses for pupils, giving adequate time for practice to embed skills securely and progressively introducing new learning (scaffolding) are also elements of high-quality instruction. https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Makes-Great-Teaching-REPORT.pd	1,2,3,4,5

Whole staff CPD on ACES and Trauma Informed practice to support pupils well-being and ability to access a broad and balanced curriculum	Evidence based on research from Research Gate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278636575_Developing_Positive_Relationships_in_Schools A related project in the UK explored the factors that enabled staff and pupils to engage most effectively with teaching and learning (Haddon et al., 2005). This took place in two schools over three years. The researchers found that five aspects of a school were linked to people's capacity to fully engage. These are encapsulated in the acronym CLASI – how Capable, Listened to, Accepted, Safe and Included each person felt. These aspects impacted on the emotional climate of the school, formal and informal communications, day to day practices and the way relationships were experienced. This study also identified factors critical to the development of positive relationships throughout the school for both pupils and staff. Again there is significant overlap between what happens for pupils and what happens for teachers in terms of emotional safety; time, space and permission given by the school for relationship building and the sense of feeling connected not only to friends but to others in the school context. A focus on relationships throughout the school has a positive ripple effect impacting on not only on wellbeing but also the motivation and performance of both pupils and their teachers (Martin & Dowson, 2009). The development of a whole school approach that enhances social capital appears to be effective in many dimensions.	1,2,3,4,5,6

Precision teaching CPD for staff to improve pupils' literacy skills. (KS2)	EEF evidence: Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+6 months). Alongside phonics it is a crucial component of early reading instruction. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies	1,2,3,4
Recruited Sensory Circuit Facilitator to promote improved behaviour and engagement (KS3)	NASEN – Pupil Premium (2014) The Sutton Trust	1,2,3,5
CPD Middle Leaders course for Leader of Maths to develop Maths leadership and Mastery across the school. (KS2 and KS3)	Evidence from What-Makes-Great-Teaching-REPORT.pdf (suttontrust.com) Pedagogical content knowledge (Strong evidence of impact on pupil outcomes) 'The most effective teachers have deep knowledge of the subjects they teach, and when teachers' knowledge falls below a certain level it is a significant impediment to pupils' learning. As well as a strong understanding of the material being taught, teachers must also understand the ways pupils think about the content, be able to evaluate the thinking behind pupils' own methods, and identify pupils' common misconceptions.' Evidence from EEF: The impact of mastery learning approaches is an additional five months progress, on average, over the course of a year. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mastery-learning	1,2,3

Introduction of whole school Maths Mastery to ensure gaps in learning are achieved and reinforced.	Evidence from EEF: The impact of mastery learning approaches is an additional five months progress, on average, over the course of a year. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mastery-learning	1,2,3

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

Budgeted cost: **£16,148**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
KS2 – HLTA-led literacy interventions Targeted daily sessions delivered by our HLTA for pupils who require additional support in phonics, reading fluency, comprehension and precision teaching. These sessions address gaps created by disrupted or inconsistent prior education and ensure pupils can access the wider curriculum more confidently.	The EEF identifies reading comprehension strategies and structured phonics work as high-impact for improving progress, especially for pupils with weaker early literacy. Learning to Read: "The Simple View of Reading" | National Centre on Improving Literacy	1,2,3,4
KS3 – Intervention Practitioner support for literacy and numeracy Structured one-to-one and small-group sessions delivered by our KS3 Intervention Practitioner, focusing on closing gaps in English and Maths. These sessions reinforce class teaching and provide targeted support for pupils whose prior learning has been fragmented or incomplete.	The EEF notes that targeted and well-structured small-group and one-to-one intervention, when aligned with classroom learning, can accelerate progress for pupils who are behind age-related expectations.	1,2,3,4,5
KS4 – Trauma Informed Practitioner interventions KS4 pupils access structured SEMH interventions led by our Trauma Informed Practitioners. These sessions support emotional regulation, confidence, focus and engagement in learning, enabling pupils to access the curriculum more effectively as	Research from the EEF indicates that behaviour and social-emotional interventions can improve both academic progress and engagement when embedded as part of whole-school practice.	1,3,5,6

they work towards qualifications and their next steps. These interventions are designed to strengthen pupils' readiness to learn and support engagement with GCSE and vocational coursework		
Use of specialists to deliver in-house experiential workshops and educational visits to develop cultural capital and love of learning in pupils	Evidence: Ohio University 2014 Pupils who directly participate during a field experience generate a more positive attitude about the subject. Many researchers have investigated knowledge gain and learning that occurred during field trips (Hudak, 2003; Kisiel, 2006a; Mawdsley, 1999; Michie, 1998; Nadelson & Jordan, 2012; Scarce, 1997; Scribner-MacLean & Kennedy, 2007). Research by Cwikla, Lasalle, & Wilner (2009) suggested that eighth grade pupils with an interest in science were significantly more likely to acquire science related careers than pupils with no interest in science. Yet, science is often limited in elementary school curricula despite the recognized importance of early development of science concepts and skills (Fries-Gaither & Lightle, 2011). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1031445.pdf	6,7

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

Budgeted cost: **£20,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Allocation of set hours to our Family Engagement Team to support parents/carers to ensure all pupils attend school as part of our Attendance Policy.	**Evidence from ETINI: Close educational engagement with parents:** seeks to raise awareness of the intrinsic link between attendance and attainment, and especially the importance of building habits of good attendance from the earliest years: both in early years settings and in primary schooling. https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/part-one-attendance-in-schools-eti-good-practice-report_0.PDF And Build respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Make sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/framework-for-securing-full-attendance-actions-for-schools-and-local-authorities	1,2,3,5,6
Introduction of Trauma Informed practices and Emotionally Friendly approaches to support pupils' needs. In conjunction with the use of targeted 1:1 and small group sessions of Zones of Regulation, restorative practice interventions, Lego Therapy, Social Skills and Sensory Processing Circuits	Evidence EEF: The average impact of behaviour interventions is four additional months' progress over the course of a year. Evidence suggests that, on average, behaviour interventions can produce moderate improvements in academic performance along with a decrease in problematic behaviours. However, estimated benefits vary widely across programmes.	1,2,3,5,6

	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	
Introduction of Trauma Informed practices, emotional coaching and ROAR as a whole school approach to supporting the mental health and well-being of our pupils who have been affected by ACEs, trauma or instability. On site provision of Seedlings, ADHD Foundation Therapist, YPAS, We are with You, CELLS and Positive Futures for targeted interventions	Evidence from PHE & DfE: Good mental health is important for helping children and young people to develop and thrive. The Mental Health of Children and Young People in England survey (2020) found 16% (1 in 6) of children aged 5 to 16 years to have a probable mental health disorder, an increase from 1 in 9 in 2017 (11). There is good evidence to support the association between good mental health and education engagement and academic achievement. The benefits to preventing mental health problems in children and young people from arising, and intervening early where they do, can be significant for schools. For example, it may result in improved attainment, attendance, reductions in behavioural problems, as well as happier, more confident and resilient children and young people https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1020249/Promoting_children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_and_wellbeing.pdf	1,2,3,5,6

Total budgeted cost: £86,148

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Our internal assessments during 2024/25 showed that many disadvantaged pupils made progress in their academic, social and emotional development. However, progress was uneven across the cohort. This reflects the highly variable starting points of pupils who join New Heights School throughout the year, often after periods of disrupted schooling or poor attendance in their previous settings.

A significant number of disadvantaged pupils arrived with gaps in core knowledge, limited engagement in learning, high levels of SEMH need and inconsistent attendance histories. These factors had an impact on outcomes despite the targeted support provided.

There were several positive areas of impact. Pupils who accessed literacy intervention made gains in reading accuracy and comprehension. Staff reported improved engagement in lessons, increased participation in class discussion and better stamina for learning. Pupils who received targeted SEMH support, including Thrive, Lego Therapy, Zones of Regulation and intervention from external partners, demonstrated increased confidence, improved relationships with staff and greater ability to regulate emotions. These improvements contributed to a calmer learning environment.

Attendance remained a challenge for a proportion of disadvantaged pupils. Some pupils showed improvement over time, particularly where the Family Engagement Team provided early and sustained support. Nonetheless, the attendance of certain pupils continued to affect the consistency of their progress. Reintegration work with families, external agencies and social care helped to secure more stable routines for some pupils, but barriers remained for others.

Behaviour data showed reductions in repeated incidents for pupils engaged in mentoring, sensory regulation programmes and targeted wellbeing work. Staff noted improvements in pupils' readiness to learn and their ability to resolve conflict with support. These developments helped pupils to access learning more successfully.

Destinations for Year 11 pupils were positive. Most pupils secured places in further education, training or specialist provision that matched their needs and aspirations. Pupil Premium funded careers support and pastoral guidance contributed to these outcomes.

Overall, the impact of Pupil Premium spending during 2024/25 was strongest for pupils who attended regularly and engaged with intervention consistently. The fluctuating nature of PRU placements, combined with late admissions and complex needs, continued to influence the rate of progress for some pupils. These findings have shaped our 2025/26 strategy, which places a stronger emphasis on literacy, attendance, pastoral support and high-quality teaching across all key stages.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Seedling Counselling	CAMHS
Educational Psychology	Liverpool Educational Psychology Service
Therapy	ADHD Foundation therapy sessions
Mental Health	YPAS Wellbeing sessions
Social Needs	CELLS, We are with You, Positive Futures
Food parcels	Fareshare
School Family Support Service	Liverpool City Council

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

Measure	Details
n/a	n/a

Further information (optional)

New Heights School is a short-stay Pupil Referral Unit where pupils join and leave at different points throughout the year, often at short notice. The number of pupils on roll can rise quickly as the year progresses.

Pupil Premium funding is calculated from the October census. Any pupil who arrives after this point, even if they meet the criteria for disadvantage, does not bring additional Pupil Premium funding with them. These pupils still require the same level of academic, pastoral and therapeutic support as those recorded in the census.

Because of this, we use our Pupil Premium allocation to support whole-school provision. This enables us to maintain a consistent offer for all pupils who need it, including those who arrive throughout the year. This approach reflects the reality of a PRU, where the cohort changes frequently and funding must be flexible enough to meet their needs.

Planning, implementation and evaluation

When preparing this strategy, we reviewed the impact of previous work and considered the needs of the current cohort. The short-stay nature of the school means that the profile of the pupil population can change regularly, so our approach must adapt to these changes.

We used the EEF Families of Schools database to compare the performance of pupils in similar settings. We also drew on research about effective use of Pupil Premium, the relationship between disadvantage and SEND, and the impact of disrupted education on academic progress and wellbeing.

We have strengthened expectations around high-quality teaching, including planning, assessment, feedback and collaborative learning. Staff development continues to be a priority. Training in areas such as SEND, Trauma Informed Practice and Emotionally Friendly Schools approaches supports staff in developing specialist skills that improve teaching and pastoral support. These approaches are shared through our Teaching and Learning briefings.

Our strategy follows the EEF guidance on implementation. We have put a clear evaluation framework in place so that we can review the effect of our work, make necessary adjustments and improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils over the three-year period.