

Pupil premium strategy strategy–December 2025

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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Howbridge Infant School
Number of pupils in school	263
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	24%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024-2025 2025–2026 2026-2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Anna Conley, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Hannah Appleton, Deputy Headteacher Ellie Willshire SLT
Governors	Stacey Prior and Rachel Millar

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£99,856
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£52,874
Total budget for this academic year	£152,730

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Howbridge Infant School we believe that the highest possible standards can only be achieved by having the highest expectations of all learners irrespective of their background or the challenges they face. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers.

To better support our disadvantaged pupils, Essex County Council has drawn together a set of key principles which we implement when planning our school-, phase- and subject-specific strategies for tackling educational disadvantage. The principles are rooted in evidence and national best practice and follow an effective tiered approach to pupil premium spending.

One element of this approach is linked to high quality teaching and learning including the continuing professional development of staff. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

A second focus area follows evidence that consistently shows the positive impact that targeted support can have. We implement a range of targeted interventions in line with our data and observations of the children. These interventions provide support where it is most needed and it can be a structured 1:1 task or small group intervention.

The final key principle is linked to wider pastoral approaches that relate to the most significant non-academic barriers to success and this includes attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support.

Our strategy is also integral to our wider school plans for educational recovery following a prolonged period of disrupted learning for all. Additional targeted support through the School-Led Tutoring Programme will provide pupils whose education has been worst affected to make better progress and this will include some non-disadvantaged children.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of the disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective 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

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1.	Oracy and vocabulary Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate under-developed oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils from Reception to Year 2 and in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils. We know that children's vulnerabilities can be enhanced through their inability to communicate.
2	Phonics/Early Reading Our Little Wandle phonics assessments identify additional support is needed to ensure expected progress and a secure knowledge of early phonics. Autumn 1 data (EYFS 2025) indicates that 69% of the PPG children are below age related expectations in word reading.
3	Writing End of year data (summer 2025) indicates that 61% of the year 2 children met the expected standard in writing, 63% of the year 1 children and 54% of the EYFS children met the expected standard and this significantly below the non- PPG children.
4	Maths End of year data (summer 2025) indicates that 71% of the year 2 children met the expected standard in maths, 78% of the year 1 children and 92% of the EYFS children met the expected standard and this significantly below the non- PPG children.
5	Mental well-being Some of the children require support with their SEMH needs specifically in relation to their lack of resilience, low self-esteem and their underdeveloped social skills preventing a number of them from fully engaging in their learning.
6	Parental support Some of our families require additional support in building strong relationships with the school, supporting their child with their learning needs and developing positive mental health and well-being strategies.
7	Attendance Not all families prioritise attendance. Children and parents' physical and mental health, taking holidays, altitudinal reasons and punctuality are all contributing factors. This results in their development being delayed and academic achievement impeded.

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 oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. Children can access vocabulary rich curriculum. Children effectively communicate with their peers, staff and families. Evidence can be seen through engagement in lessons and ongoing formative assessment.
All PPG children make good progress in reading and meet the targets set.	Improved reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils. KS1 reading outcomes in 2025/26 will show that 74% of disadvantaged pupils will meet the expected standard. Rigorous three weekly assessments in line with the Little Wandle Scheme. Gaps in knowledge have been clearly identified and teaching has addressed these.
All PPG children make good progress in writing and meet the targets set.	Improved writing attainment among disadvantaged pupils. KS1 writing outcomes in 2025/26 will show that 68% of disadvantaged pupils will meet the expected standard. Gaps in knowledge have been clearly identified and teaching has addressed these.
All PPG children make good progress in maths and meet the targets set.	Improved maths attainment among disadvantaged pupils. KS1 maths outcomes in 2025/26 will show that 77% of disadvantaged pupils will meet the expected standard. Gaps in knowledge have been clearly identified and teaching has addressed these.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils.	Children have opportunities to broaden their experiences through clubs, workshops, educational activities and extra curricular activities such as music, dance, sport and drama. Children use taught strategies to self regulate and support their emotional wellbeing. Children are happy, confident and are able to learn with increased independence and resilience.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance from 2025/2026 demonstrated by: - the overall absence rate for all pupils being no more than 4%. - the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced to 4%. Barriers to attendance are identified and removed by working with families, so that attendance increases.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £52,874

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Enhancement of our English and Maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE and EEF guidance. We will fund a subject expert to embed key elements through CPD.	Guidance has been produced by the EEF that draws on evidence based approaches. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/early-maths Engagement with Maths and English hubs.	2,3,4
CPD in Early Language for teachers and TAs to support early language development.	Engagement with English hubs. Specific needs are identified and support is delivered. Outcomes are regularly reviewed. Use of Widgit throughout the school.	1
Staff give targeted support and early intervention in the core curriculum areas and emotional wellbeing.	Evidence based DfE approved programmes accelerate progress and have improved through these. Additional Welfare Assistants support social and emotional needs in class. https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk https://whiteroseeducation.com/ https://axis.nced.org.uk/	1-5
Teachers and TAs to support disadvantaged children with complex needs to improve learning and support closing gaps between PPG and non-PPG.	Teachers and TAs are trained in TPP so that pupils are well supported in their emotional wellbeing and are able to access the curriculum.	5

Strategies that support recruitment and retention.	Staff have access to wider services which have been well utilised. Staff wellbeing is a priority meaning that staff absence is low and stability is high. Witham Collaborative Partnership offers a range of CPD to support all children but with a particular focus on disadvantaged. Local SENCo cluster meetings provide research based knowledge on supporting disadvantaged children. The Early Years' Network offers CPD on emerging themes coming from pre-school settings so that the children are well supported when they start school.	1-5
PRICE training (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment) for staff to reinforce our positive response to behaviours of concern.	To reduce risks associated with behaviours of concern, aggression and violence.	5

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

Budgeted cost: £15,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional specialist support to implement a high number of group interventions.	There is strong evidence to suggest that small group tuition is more likely to be effective if it is targeted to a pupil's specific needs. Small group tuition has an average impact of four months' of additional progress over a year. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition	1,2,3,4
New resources to be used in targeted reading interventions.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils. Structure phonics sessions using specific resources tailored to each lesson have been consistently found to be effective in supporting younger pupils to master the basics of reading, with an average impact of an additional five months' progress. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics	2
Mindfulness coach employed one day a week.	To equip the children with good learning behaviours, e.g. resilience, self-motivation and emotional self-regulation.	5,6,7

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

Budgeted cost: £84,856

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embedding principles of good attendance practice set out in the DfE's Improving School Attendance (Aug 2024) advice. This involves training and implementing new procedures to improve attendance. To utilise the support of an attendance specialist to work with disadvantaged families.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/leadership-and-planning/supporting-attendance	7
Outdoor and specialist learning activity areas to promote speech and language development by explicitly extending pupil's spoken vocabulary and other skills like following instructions and comprehension.	Activities that emphasise the importance of spoken language support the learners use of vocabulary, articulation of ideas and spoken expression. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions Independent speech and language therapist to support groups of children with a specific focus area.	1
Whole staff training on behaviour management approaches with the aim of developing our school ethos and improving behaviour across the school. TPP /PRICE/ESSET	Whole school approaches and targeted/specific interventions can have positive effects on behaviour. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	5
Lunchtime and after school clubs on a wide range of activities.	Increased engagement in clubs and lessons and an increase in attendance.	5, 7
Experience workshops and days linked to topics/learning (e.g. Bring a Stick to School Day, and educational visits funding.	Widening of the child's experiences and increased engagement and enthusiasm with learning. Also an increase in attendance.	5, 7
Parent workshops in	Increase in parental knowledge and engagement in their child's learning. A	6

English, maths and assessment	strengthening of parental engagement with the school.	
Pre loved uniform sale for all families.	Building a culture of community and belonging for families that impacts positively on learning and wellbeing. Increased attendance.	6, 7

Total budgeted cost: £152,730

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.

Teacher assessments – Results July 2025

- GLD Reception July 2025
Whole Cohort: 81% Pupil Premium: 39%
- Phonics Screening Check Year 1 June 2025
Whole Cohort: 81% Pupil Premium: 74%

Year 2 Teacher Assessments – Percentage of children meeting Age Related Expectations

Percentage of children making at least expected progress in green

Subject	All children	PPG children	Non-PPG children
Reading	85% 90%	82% 89%	87% 91%
Writing	72% 75%	61% 74%	77% 76%
Maths	83% 86%	89% 89%	89% 84%

At Howbridge Infant School all staff ensure there is an inclusive ethos throughout the school and that day-to day teaching meets the needs of every learner. We continue to maintain a high-quality curriculum and classroom practice, which was aided by the school working with local English and maths hubs. The school has also embedded a systematic synthetic phonics programme called Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised and this follows a structured programme of group and individual interventions to support those children falling behind and this, alongside other rapid catch up interventions and precision teaching (daily 10 minute 1:1 intervention), has a positive impact on attainment and progress.

We have employed 3 Welfare Assistants to support school readiness and basic skills. This has enabled the class teachers and TAs to focus on classroom learning.

Our overall attendance for 2024/2025 was higher than in previous years at 94% (this is in line with national data). Attendance among the disadvantaged group was lower than the non-disadvantaged at 91% (compared to 95% non disadvantaged).

Attendance is still a focus for the school as outlined in the School Development Plan.

As always, we aim to provide exceptional pastoral support to pupils and families and all staff have had or are currently involved in Trauma Perceptive Practice training (TPP).

The school employs a Mindfulness coach one day a week to work with all children in KS1 and signpost them to relevant organisations. She also delivers workshops to parents to support a variety of issues, e.g. anxiety. The school also employs a Sports Coach, dance and drama/singing teacher to promote confidence, resilience, language and interaction. The Sports Coach also delivers a weekly Energy club (motor skills intervention) and also a lunchtime club.

The Disadvantaged Champion (Deputy head) and head teacher attend all relevant training and all staff continue to strive to ensure all children have the best outcomes.

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
Speech and language support	Speech and Language Link
Widgit Online	Widgit Software
Trauma Perceptive Practice	Essex County Council
Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised	Little Wandle
Jigsaw PSHE Programme	Jigsaw
Music and DT Scheme	Kapow Primary
Get Set for PE	The PE Train
Creative Arts	Braintree Cultural Partnership
Drama and singing	Stand Up Education
Sport and physical activity	Sport Coaching Specialist
Dance, movement and performance	Project Dance

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	N/A
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	

Further information (optional)