

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2021 to 2022 academic year) 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	The Link Secondary School
Number of pupils in school	66
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	52%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2021/2022 to 2024/2025
Date this statement was published	December 2021
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2022
Statement authorised by	Sandy Turner Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Hannah Wallwork
Governor / Trustee lead	Anita Clay

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£25,785
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£8,120 + £8,988.75
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Recovery premium funding carried over from previous year	£7,736
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	£50,629.75

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim for pupil premium and catch up funding is essentially embedded in our overall school vision and SDP. We have the same ambition for all of our students which is to leave The Link with developed wellbeing, independence, communication and achievement. This vision is what drives the SDP, which for 2021-22 is partly focused on the following areas:

- Implement a literary focus across the curriculum
- Introduce skill based targets in our assessment framework
- The sandwich model of teaching to be implemented by all staff in lessons
- Bespoke behaviour strategies
- Generalise skills through community learning
- Personalised use of additional funding streams

As 52% of our current cohort are eligible for pupil premium, we have a huge duty of care to ensure that all of our students who may be disadvantaged are given every opportunity to overcome their barriers to success and access the school offer in its entirety as their non-disadvantaged peers do.

Our strategy for maximising the impact of this funding is based on a combination of a highly personalised use of funds for individuals but also on whole school incentives which will be to the benefit of all students.

In order to execute this strategy we will make use of our extremely in depth knowledge of our students as individuals; as a school we collate a whole-school audit of all students' individual strengths and barriers to learning and so; every staff member is already geared towards providing bespoke support in a range of ways for all of our students. This experience and well-honed intuition around the needs of our cohort allows for a whole-school level of input in determining how additional funding would be most efficiently used. All staff know who each pupil premium student is and are offered the opportunity to suggest ways in which that money could be spent as a personalised form of support based upon close observation and relationship at all levels across the school.

Our strategy is integral to both wider school plans for education recovery based around the evidence provided by last years' academic data as well as driven by the needs of students as individuals. This will help us to ensure that the support offered is both part of holistic school practice as well as finely tailored to maximise impact for all. This will give both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students the best possible chance at preparing for life after The Link.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families demonstrate that the education, wellbeing and wider aspects of development of many of our disadvantaged pupils have been impacted by the pandemic to a greater extent than for other pupils. These findings are backed up by several national studies.
2	Through observations and conversations with pupils and their families, we find that disadvantaged pupils generally have fewer opportunities to develop cultural capital outside of school.
3	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have shown that our disadvantaged students struggle more with access to the curriculum via technology and use of personal devices.
4	Our assessments, observations and conversations with pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils often require additional support to develop personal skills, e.g., independent travel, budgeting, using shops and services
5	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have shown that our disadvantaged students have fewer opportunities to develop their wellbeing including opportunities to access community events or social experiences. These findings are backed up by several national studies.
6	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have shown that our disadvantaged students have fewer opportunities to access extra-curricular clubs and lessons, often due to a lack of travel arrangements.

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
Disadvantaged pupils have greater confidence and independence to help them engage more with the wider community and prepare for adulthood.	Observations from Link Priority and CWL lessons, travel training, trips as well as Link Priorities assessments will show that students have progressed; particularly in areas involving personal safety, transfer and generalisation of

	skills, social expectations and time and leisure.
Continued positive attainment for disadvantaged students across academic and non-academic assessments	Assessment and progress data will demonstrate that the attainment gap between non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged students will continue to be very slight if not non-existent as it is now.
Disadvantaged students will have experienced several opportunities to access community events and social experience as well as offsite learning intended to familiarise students with everyday essential knowledge such as how to go shopping for groceries.	Through curriculum planning, observations and assessment of Link Priorities. An audit of student choices for CWL will demonstrate the range of options students have capitalised upon to gain off site experiences and work towards developing everyday skills in a variety of settings.
Disadvantaged students can access a range of digital devices both in school and at home if necessary as well as the specific teaching required to make use of this.	Observation and records of school devices and students to whom they are assigned. The digital school external curriculum and ICT curriculum planning will show that students are equipped to use any devices they have been assigned.

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: **£10,285**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Budget to pay for offsite curriculum learning, particularly in the community, learning how to	<p>ED490980.pdf (community based learning, engaging students for success and citizenship; Melville, Berg, Blank)</p> <p>As a result of our extensive audit of every individual's barriers to learning, a set of key priorities was identified, much of which is entrenched in the opportunity to access real life community based</p>	1, 2, 5

access services etc.	scenarios to develop the skills and knowledge required for developing independence, in line with the school vision and SDP.	
Swimming lessons, sports trips/ tournaments, additional curriculum trips.	<p>10 reasons why learning sports for children is more than one big game — Sompting Abbotts</p> <p>School trips for all • SEN Magazine</p> <p>Studies confirm that many disadvantaged students do not have the same opportunities to access leisure facilities or community spaces which build upon cultural capital as well as contributing to a healthy lifestyle. This will allow students to gain experiences which may normally be outside of their sphere of opportunity and will come in line with the Link Priorities personalised curriculum.</p>	1, 2, 5, 6
Careers trips and fairs in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks.	<p>Case study: Careers and SEN pupils (sec-ed.co.uk)</p> <p>A broad and balanced careers curriculum including access to employers is statutory for all students in the UK. SEN students in particular need opportunities to develop this knowledge and skill set as the world of work is far hard to access for young people with additional needs. We provide money for trips to meet with employers as well as paying for employers and advisors to come into school as well as access for our post 16 students to attend a local college once per week to begin adapting to a new form of learning after The Link.</p>	2, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £11,844.75

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional 1:1 support outside of EHCP entitlement, extra tutoring, particularly in Maths, and the creation of a HLTA role to provide	<p>Maths guidance KS 1 and 2.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Teaching mathematics at key stage 3 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>SEN Support (also known as the 'graduated approach') - SEN help (sen-help.org.uk)</p> <p>Some students profile of needs changes rapidly and does not allow enough time for parents to apply and be processed for additional 1:1 funding for their child. In the</p>	1, 4

additional support.	meantime this student may need to access 1:1 support to be able to learn effectively and feel secure at school. The HLTA role has allowed for extra teaching groups- which means they stay few in number- particularly for the teaching of RSE and community based learning. Some students have been identified as benefiting from extra maths tuition after having looked at their progress data from last year.	
The purchasing of devices for individual students to use in school and at home as well as specialist ICT sessions from an external provider for individual students.	Using Digital Technology to Improve Learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Studies have shown that disadvantaged students do not have access to the technology and therefore often the technology industry based careers that their non-disadvantaged peers have access to. As part of our tailored curriculum for all individual needs and the special interests of our students, we pay for specialist additional ICT education on top of the ICT core curriculum.	1, 3
Travel training for targeted students to ensure safe access to the community.	Department for Education (publishing.service.gov.uk) In line with our vision for developed independence for all students, being able to safely access the curriculum is vital. Disadvantaged students in particular often rely far more on public transport and so need to be fully equipped to use this as safely as possible	4

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

Budgeted cost: **£28,500**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Canine assisted learning, additional therapy, counselling.	Canine-assisted reading programs for children with special educational needs: rationale and recommendations for the use of dogs in assisting learning: Educational Review: Vol 69, No 4 (tandfonline.com) Students with special educational needs in the inclusive classroom: social integration and self-concept: European Journal of	4

	<p>Special Needs Education: Vol 18, No 2 (tandfonline.com)</p> <p>All students at The Link are eligible for additional support and therapy ranging from SaLT, OT, drama therapy, counselling and canine assisted learning. Oftentimes students require a greater level of therapeutic input that they are eligible for so we provide this as an additional support to help them develop their independence, wellbeing and communication in line with our school vision and SDP.</p>	
ELSA training for support staff.	<p>Microsoft Word - ELSA report 09.07.15.docx (elsanetwork.org)</p> <p>As part of our tailored approach to supporting student to access the curriculum as well as developing their communication and wellbeing, all TAs have been given training in the sandwich model of support to recognise very specific barriers to learning and put in place finely tuned specialist support to overcome these. Additionally, many support staff are also completing ELSA training to be able to further attend to the emotional needs of all students but specifically those who require it most, often our most disadvantaged students.</p>	1
Access to taxis where necessary to ensure all students who wish to attend after school clubs can do so.	<p>The value of after school clubs for disadvantaged children (ncl.ac.uk)</p> <p>Studies have shown that disadvantaged students often don't have the same access to transport as their non-disadvantaged peers. At The Link, we want all students to be able to benefit from being able to attend the after school clubs on offer, regardless of socio-economic background.</p>	1, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost: £50,629.75

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 2020 to 2021 academic year.

Our assessments show that our pupil premium eligible students are actually making very positive progress in both academic and non-academic assessments. Pupil premium students made up 64% of all Above Expected Progress grades and 39% of all Expected Progress grades. Within the Link Priorities- our informal curriculum of life skills based on an audit of all student barriers to learning- pupil premium students made up 57% of all Above Expected grades and 48% of all Expected grades.

This demonstrates that our pupil premium cohort are performing exceptionally well within the whole-school intake.

The impact of the pandemic was clear from the analysis of the Link Priorities assessment data; the three Link Priorities which performed the lowest were:

- Readiness to learn - able to focus and attend to adult led activities
- Transfer and generalise skills – able to apply knowledge and skills they learn at school to different activities and environments
- Emotional Development – able to recognise and communicate their emotions and implement effective strategies to support self- regulation

Of seven students who gained the lowest overall progress percentage points, giving them an overall grade of 'Below Expected', only three were pupil premium students.

Well targeted interventions have been implemented to support all students but particularly pupil premium students who have struggles with attendance. Personalised timetables, devices and additional therapy and now tuition have all been put in place.

Overall our pupil premium strategy has been proven to be effective and has demonstrated good progress for our cohort.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
CAL	Canine Assisted Learning
Digital School	OHCAT

Drama Therapy	Roundabout
Music Therapy	Nordoff Robbins
Music Lessons	Cognus, Sutton Council

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

Measure	Details
N/A	