Pupil premium strategy statement – Whittingham C of E Primary 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	86
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	5% (6 children) plus 1.7% (2 children) Forces PP (PP-Pupil Premium)
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)	A new plan started in 2024 as part of a 3 year plan. Updated Autumn Term 2025
Date this statement was published	December 2025 (updates in red)
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026. Final review completed October 2026.
Statement authorised by	Belinda Athey – Headteacher and PP Governor Jayne Saul
Pupil premium lead	Belinda Athey
Governor / Trustee lead	Jayne Saul

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding for this year	£10,175
Carried forward from last year	£0
Total spend	£10,175

Final review: the full allocation was directed towards the planned academic, pastoral and wider-strategy priorities. All actions in the 2025–26 plan were completed or embedded into ongoing school provision.

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our ultimate objectives for our disadvantaged pupils are that they:

- Receive additional support to address any gaps in academic learning so that they make progress in line with, or better than, their peers given their individual starting points.
- Receive inspirational teaching, visits and visitors to inspire and challenge, making them aware of future opportunities later in education, including apprenticeships, university and skilled professions.

And that we:

- Provide signposting support to parents so they can access additional support for SEMH and know where to go for further funding opportunities such as scholarships.
- Celebrate talents and diversity, acknowledge barriers to learning and work actively to remove or reduce those barriers for pupils.

Our current pupil premium strategy plan works towards achieving those objectives as follows:

- Although the overall plan is for three years, it is reviewed and adapted regularly so that it meets the needs of individual cohorts. This is particularly important in a small rural school where numbers of pupils receiving pupil premium are low and individual needs can vary considerably.
- It is closely linked to the school budget expenditure plan and School Development Plan.
- Each identified child has an action plan with SMART objectives which are reviewed and updated termly.

The key principles of our strategy plan are:

- To ensure pupils have equal opportunities to curriculum enrichment both in and out of school.
- To ensure pupils are given the emotional and academic support they need to do well at school and in the future.

Positive final review: these principles have been fully reflected in practice. The school has combined targeted academic support with strong pastoral provision, family signposting, inclusive enrichment and practical help to remove barriers created by rural isolation and financial disadvantage.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Rural isolation – our school is in an area of rural isolation and for some families transport is a major factor in whether they are able to attend events or support their child in attending out-of-school activities.
2	Impact of SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health) on full participation in school and wider activities.
3	Residual gaps in core English and Maths knowledge and skills for some older pupils, requiring precise assessment and targeted support.
4	Support with learning at home, access to suitable resources and support with scholarships or additional opportunities for pupils with particular strengths or talents.

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	Final review
To address the impact of rural isolation, namely poor transport links on attendance at events and extra-curricular activities.	Families are supported with transport and practical arrangements. Home visits and remote/online contact are used where appropriate. Lift sharing and community solutions are promoted so that pupils are not disadvantaged by geography.	COMPLETED – access barriers have been actively reduced. Pupils have been able to participate in a wide range of school, sporting, cultural and residential opportunities, with practical support or subsidy where needed.
To identify and address any SEMH concerns.	Staff receive appropriate CPD (continuing professional development); the Mental Health Lead/SENDCo and wider team support pupils; emotion coaching and targeted programmes are used; families are signposted to suitable services.	COMPLETED – pastoral support is embedded. Talkabout/Thrive, staff training, mental-health support and family signposting have strengthened early identification and helped pupils participate more confidently in school life.
To implement differentiated learning and additional intervention time for children with identified gaps.	Additional support is implemented and impact measured. Gaps are addressed and pupil progress is compared carefully with starting points and peers.	COMPLETED – targeted English and Maths support, RWI (Read, Write, Inc), assessment information, small-group intervention and individual action planning have been used to identify gaps quickly and respond precisely.
To provide carefully planned visits, visitors and curriculum enrichment which broaden horizons and raise aspiration.	Pupils have meaningful experiences beyond school. Costs are subsidised or removed where needed so that disadvantage does not limit participation.	COMPLETED – disadvantaged pupils have accessed the same broad programme of educational visits, visitors, sport, culture, outdoor learning, residential experiences and community projects as their peers.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we used pupil premium funding to address the challenges above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: part of the pupil premium allocation plus school budget staffing costs.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed	Final review
Additional support for English and Maths within lessons from experienced teachers.	EEF (Education Endowment Fund) evidence; internal data and progress scrutiny.	3	COMPLETED – experienced staff provided targeted support. Teaching was adapted in response to assessment information and pupil progress was reviewed through data, work scrutiny and ongoing teacher assessment.
Purchase and continued use of Accelerated Reader, alongside additional books matched to pupils' reading levels and interests.	Reading assessment and engagement data; recognised evidence base for reading practice and feedback.	3	COMPLETED – Accelerated Reader remained embedded and additional reading material supported fluency, motivation and regular reading. The school also continued to use NFER assessments to strengthen tracking and teacher judgement.

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

Budgeted cost: part of the pupil premium allocation plus further support from the school staffing budget.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed	Final review
Talkabout and Thrive sessions delivered in small groups weekly.	Both programmes are established in school and are used to support communication, self-regulation, confidence and emotional wellbeing.	2	COMPLETED – targeted pastoral and communication support was delivered and remained available according to identified need.
Further small-group intervention addressing gaps and providing appropriate challenge for more able learners.	Assessment data, pupil work, teacher assessment and book scrutiny.	3 and 4	COMPLETED – small-group and individual support was used flexibly. Provision included English, Maths, phonics, spelling, reading and other identified priorities, with support adjusted as pupils progressed.

Wider strategies (for example, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed	Final review
Ongoing observation of pupils; feedback from pupils and families; MECC (Making Every Contact Count)-informed family support and signposting.	School experience and use of external services including MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form)/CYPS, (Children and Young People Service) NDAS (Domestic Violence Support), Be You and Cygnus where appropriate.	2	COMPLETED – staff training strengthened confidence in recognising need and directing families to appropriate support. This has supported early help, wellbeing and pupils' readiness to learn.
Inspirational visits, visitors, cultural and heritage opportunities, sport and wider enrichment.	Participation, pupil voice and evaluation of curriculum/enrichment opportunities.	1	COMPLETED – pupils accessed a rich range of opportunities including cultural, heritage, sporting, outdoor and community experiences. Financial or practical barriers were reduced so disadvantaged pupils could participate alongside their peers.
Practical support to reduce the impact of rural isolation.	Attendance/participation monitoring and direct support for families.	1	COMPLETED – the school used practical transport solutions, flexible family support and inclusive access arrangements. The school's walking bus also strengthened access and sustainable travel and received a Highly Commended award in the 2026 Love Northumberland Awards.

Total budgeted / actual spend: £10,175 pupil premium funding. Carried forward: £0.

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Final review – October 2026

All actions identified within the 2025–26 pupil premium plan were completed or embedded into ongoing provision. The school's approach has remained deliberately personalised because the number of eligible pupils is small and individual starting points, barriers and strengths vary considerably.

The previous three-year plan had three main objectives:

- Raising standards in phonics.
- Raising attendance.
- Developing the skills of SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and teaching staff so they can effectively signpost parents and caregivers to appropriate services.

Attainment and academic progress

100% of pupil premium pupils passed the Year 1 phonics check and 100% of pupil premium pupils passed the Year 2 phonics re-check. This demonstrated the positive impact of the school's sustained emphasis on early reading and phonics.

Positive review: this strong focus has continued. Read Write Inc. is taught systematically, Accelerated Reader is used to promote and monitor independent reading, additional reading material has been purchased and NFER assessments support accurate identification of gaps and progress. Targeted teacher and teaching-assistant support has been used in English and Maths, including small-group intervention, spelling support and additional challenge where appropriate.

Attendance and access

Whole-school attendance rose to 95.6% against a 96% target. By the end of the summer term, all disadvantaged children on roll were achieving between 94% and 98% attendance across the year, compared with a previous range of 74% to 94%.

Positive review: attendance and participation improved substantially. The school has continued to respond to rural isolation through direct family support, practical transport arrangements, promotion of lift sharing and the walking bus. The key principle has been that geography or family circumstances should not prevent a child from attending, participating or benefiting from wider opportunities.

SEMH, safeguarding and family support

Teaching and support staff attended MECC training. This strengthened signposting to services including MARF/CYPS, NDAS, Be You and Cygnus.

Positive review: the planned SEMH actions were completed. Staff have continued to use Talkabout, Thrive and wider pastoral approaches; needs are identified early and support is coordinated through senior leaders, SEND leadership and trained staff. Families are signposted to external support when appropriate, and individual circumstances are considered sensitively so pupils can remain engaged with learning and wider school life.

Summary of wider work benefiting pupil premium pupils

The following work has either been funded directly through pupil premium, supported by school budget alongside pupil premium, or delivered as part of the school's wider commitment to removing barriers for disadvantaged pupils.

Area of work	What the school has done	Benefit for disadvantaged pupils
Reading and phonics	Systematic RWI phonics; targeted catch-up; RWI spelling support; Accelerated Reader licensing/training; additional matched books; reading incentives and reading-for-pleasure opportunities.	Improves fluency, confidence, vocabulary, comprehension and access to the wider curriculum.
Assessment and rapid response	NFER assessments, regular teacher assessment, RWI assessments, Accelerated Reader Star assessments, book scrutiny and progress review.	Allows gaps to be identified early and support to be adapted quickly for individual pupils.
English and Maths support	Additional experienced-teacher and support-staff input, small-group teaching, individual intervention and targeted practice.	Supports pupils to narrow gaps while maintaining ambition and appropriate challenge.
SEMH and communication	Talkabout, Thrive, emotion-coaching approaches, mental-health and wellbeing support, individual pastoral responses and staff development.	Supports regulation, communication, confidence, engagement and readiness to learn.
Family support and signposting	MECC-informed support and signposting to relevant external agencies and services; direct contact with families; home visits and flexible communication where appropriate.	Helps families access timely support and reduces non-academic barriers that can affect attendance and learning.
Rural isolation and transport	Practical support with access to events, lift sharing, transport solutions, online contact where needed and the school walking bus.	Reduces the risk that geography, transport or cost prevents pupils and families from taking part.
Enrichment and cultural capital	Educational visits and visitors, heritage and arts activity, Aln Alliance opportunities, museum and theatre experiences, community projects and curriculum-linked visits.	Broadens horizons, builds vocabulary and knowledge, raises aspiration and gives disadvantaged pupils the same rich experiences as peers.
Sport and physical development	Inclusive competitions, multi-sports, daily activity, subsidised swimming and broad access to sport and physical activity.	Promotes health, confidence, teamwork, resilience and participation.
Residential and outdoor learning	Access to residential experiences, Forest School and outdoor learning, with costs supported where necessary.	Builds independence, confidence, social development and memorable learning experiences.
Transition and future aspiration	Transition support, links with secondary education, careers/apprenticeship/university awareness and aspiration-raising opportunities.	Supports confident progression and helps pupils see a wider range of future pathways.
Inclusive participation	No pupil is excluded from an educational opportunity solely because a voluntary contribution cannot be made; provision is adapted to meet individual need.	Ensures equality of access and prevents financial disadvantage from narrowing the curriculum.

Overall positive evaluation: the school has used its small-school context as a strength by knowing pupils and families well, responding quickly to individual need and combining academic support with pastoral care and rich opportunities. Pupil premium provision is not treated as a separate add-on; it is integrated into teaching, assessment, attendance, safeguarding, enrichment and family support so that disadvantaged pupils can participate fully and achieve well.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes used as part of the school's provision.

Programme	Provider
Accelerated Reader	Renaissance Learning
Talkabout	Speech and language / social communication intervention materials
Thrive	The Thrive Approach
Read Write Inc.	Ruth Miskin Training / Oxford University Press
NFER assessments	National Foundation for Educational Research

Service pupil premium funding

The school receives a small amount of Service Pupil Premium funding each year.

In the previous plan this was used for a short-term, high-impact Maths intervention.

Impact: raised attainment in Maths from the pupil's individual starting point.

Final review: Service Pupil Premium continues to be used flexibly in response to individual need. Support is targeted rather than generic and can include academic intervention, pastoral support and help with participation in wider school opportunities.

Final evaluation and next steps

The 2025–26 strategy has been implemented successfully. All planned actions have been completed or incorporated into ongoing practice. The strongest features of provision are the close knowledge of individual pupils, timely intervention, strong early-reading provision, careful assessment, effective family support and the breadth of opportunities available despite the school's rural location.

The next strategy cycle will continue to prioritise high-quality teaching first, precise use of assessment, early identification of gaps, attendance and wellbeing, and equality of access to enrichment. Particular attention will continue to be given to Maths and spelling where school evaluation has identified the need to raise standards further, while sustaining the strong work in reading, phonics, inclusion and pastoral support.