

Pupil premium strategy statement - Da Vinci Academy

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	413
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	60.6%
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)	2024-25 2025-26 Year 2 2026-27
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Jayne Scattergood Headteacher
Pupil premium leads	Jayne Scattergood Headteacher Sophie McKenzie Assistant Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Tony McIlroy

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£426,775
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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>	£426,775

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Da Vinci Academy, we believe that all children are entitled to the very best breadth and depth of provision, in all aspects of their school experience. All students, irrespective of their background, follow a highly ambitious, knowledge-rich curriculum that is well-sequenced and complemented by our extra-curricular offer. It is our belief that no student should be left behind as a result of disadvantage, and we endeavour to break down barriers to accessing learning for all students.

DVA's Pupil Premium Strategy aims to address the main barriers faced by our learners, and through rigorous staff training, targeted student support and intervention, to facilitate for all students the opportunity to achieve academic success and personal growth.

To achieve our objectives, we will focus on the following –

- Providing all teachers with high-quality, personalised CPD to ensure that all students receive effective, quality-first teaching in all subjects
- Providing targeted intervention and support to quickly address identified gaps in early learning including the use of small group work and 1:1 tuition, particularly in the area of reading catch-up;
- Providing wider opportunities for all pupils to access co-curricular activities
- Providing appropriate social, emotional and mental health support to enable pupils to access learning within and beyond the classroom.

The key principle for Da Vinci Academy is that all our staff understand the challenges of educational disadvantage and recognise their role and responsibilities in addressing them. The challenges are outlined as below and every interaction throughout the school day may provide additional opportunities to address these. Our staff understand the huge importance of our collective responsibility for overcoming the barriers and challenges faced by our disadvantaged students.

The constant development of high-quality teaching experiences for all sits at the heart of our strategy as this is where our students spend most of their time during the school day and where all research indicates we can make the biggest difference to tackle educational disadvantage. One of our main areas of focus is to improve teachers understanding of how to support students with their reading and vocabulary acquisition during subject specific lessons but also through our tutor time reading programme Years 7-10.

Increasing numbers of disadvantaged pupils are arriving at secondary school without a functional secondary reading age which impacts negatively on their success at school. At Da Vinci we are committed to addressing this barrier for disadvantaged pupils because a child's ability to read determines their motivation and ability to learn in all lessons and how they see themselves in relation to others. Addressing early and struggling readers is the biggest social justice lever that we can address for our disadvantaged students to ensure equity.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Overall attainment and progress is lower for disadvantaged pupils than for non-disadvantaged pupils in most subjects. In Summer 2025, attainment 8 for disadvantaged pupils was improved by +0.04 since 2024, however, this is less than the improvements made by non-disadvantaged pupils at +0.32. This resulted in an attainment 8 gap of -1.08 in Summer 2025. Disadvantaged students were outperformed by non-disadvantaged students in all subject areas. Diagnostic assessments undertaken indicate disadvantaged pupils perform less well in reading tasks that require high levels of background knowledge and vocabulary (English) and with longer problem solving and application tasks (Maths and Science).
2	NGRT reading assessments show that disadvantaged pupils' reading is significantly weaker than their non-disadvantaged peers, particularly at the lower end of the distribution in years 7-9. It seems that, on average, the vocabulary, background knowledge and ability of pupils to draw inferences from texts is a significant issue for a large proportion of our disadvantaged cohort. Increasingly number of students are not reading at a secondary functional level at transition to Year 7. The proportion of students identified as early readers on entry are 33% for disadvantaged compared with 14% for non-disadvantaged.
3	Tracking data shows that disadvantaged pupils' attendance is over 4% lower and that of their non-disadvantaged peers. Disadvantaged pupils are also more likely to persistently absent from school. Pupils who are persistently absent from school are likely to achieve lower GCSE grades as they have greater gaps in their education and therefore are at greater risk of underachievement and post 16 NEET. 2024-25 disadvantage attendance was 89.55% versus non-disadvantaged attendance 93.82% - a gap of 4.32%.
4	Behaviour and suspension data indicates that disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately represented in this data due to a rise in social and emotional difficulties faced. In particular, mental health issues of anxiety and low self-esteem are prevalent. These difficulties particularly impact disadvantaged students and have a negative impact on their attainment and behaviour resulting in lesson avoidance (internal truancy) and disruptions to their learning.
5	Lesson observations highlight an issue with some disadvantaged pupils not fully participating in their learning , taking longer to settle, lacking resilience during written work and not always completing class and/or homework. Internal data records (B2 and internal reflection) indicate disadvantaged pupils as having accumulated increased low level behaviour issues indicating attentional issues for some of the disadvantaged cohort. The evidence suggests that maintaining pupil attention and motivation through effective teaching strategies is a high priority.

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
National average progress and attainment	2026 KS4 outcomes demonstrate; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National average attainment for all pupils Top quartile for progress made by disadvantaged pupils amongst similar schools
Improved reading levels	2025/26 evidence includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading interventions are effective in catching up disadvantaged students Year 7 students increase their vocabulary from Starling VR in line with their peers Gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils on reading tests is closed Attainment for disadvantaged pupils in GCSE English Language is in line with national averages
Improved attendance and reduced persistent absence rates	2025/26 evidence includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> above average attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils using national benchmarks below average persistent absence rates for disadvantaged students using national benchmarks
Improved behaviour data	2025/26 evidence includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> behaviour data demonstrates reduction in number of negative behaviours for disadvantaged pupils suspension data demonstrates a reduction in the number disadvantaged pupils being suspended qualitative data from pupil voice and teacher observations following interventions to measure impact
Increased participation in learning and homework tasks	2025/26 evidence includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> data from lesson observations pupil and teacher voice book looks that demonstrate an increase in work rate homework records indicate increase in rates of completion (Sparx)

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

Budgeted cost: £ 66,800

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
1. Internal training for all staff so that they understand the challenges faced by educational disadvantage and how they can address this is their role, as well as the whole school strategy. (AIP objective 8.1)	Every member of staff understands their role in supporting disadvantaged students – recommendation 1 adopting the behaviour to drive implementation = engage, unite, reflect A School's Guide to Implementation guidance report Education Endowment Foundation	1,2,3,4,5
2. Improve subject-specific teaching and support of reading and writing in all lessons. • Focussing on the teaching of reading and vocabulary first through deliberate vocabulary instruction. We will use professional development time to develop teachers' knowledge and skills to aid implementation in the classroom (AIP objective 2.2)	Developing disciplinary literacy is a key recommendation in the EEF Guidance Report on Improving Secondary Literacy. EEF KS3 KS4 LITERACY GUIDANCE.pdf The above report demonstrates significant evidence that improving pupils' reading comprehension and vocabulary skills impacts attainment at GCSE.	1,2,3,4,5
3. Continuous development of refining teaching practice using the L.E.A.D. Teaching Excellence Framework as a school wide model for all staff. Regular drop-in and feedback cycles using instructional coaching to model and embed high quality practice using Steplab software. Development and implementation of DVA teaching and learning toolkit (AIP objectives 1.2, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2)	Evidence relating to quality first teaching impacts positively on pupil attainment at GCSE. Adaptive practice supports pupils with a wide range of needs Evidence provided by EEF states that effective professional development is pivotal in improving disadvantaged outcomes Effective Professional Development EEF	1,2,3,4,5
4. All pupils in Years 8-10 experience high quality reading in tutor time to	Research demonstrates a strong correlation between fluent readers, effective reading	1,2,5

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
develop their vocabulary knowledge and improve their reading fluency skills (AIP objective 2.1)	comprehension and vocabulary development.	
5. Year 7 students participate in Starling Vocabulary Retrieval during morning registration 4 times per week to improve their vocabulary particularly tier 2 words. (AIP objective 2.1 and 2.2)	Year 7 students to undertake Starling Vocabulary Retrieval research project in association with Nottingham Trent University (Dr Emma Vardy) based upon PALS UK PALS-UK EEF Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS-UK) Nottingham Trent University	1,2, 5
6. Improved use of assessment to determine gaps in pupils foundational knowledge on entry and throughout the academic year. (AIP objective 2.3, 4.1 and 4.2)	Use of NGRT on entry to identify gaps in foundational knowledge. Systematic assessment built into curriculum to identify strengths and weaknesses to ensure either catch-up support provided or teacher intervention. Sparx Maths baseline assessment used on entry to compare against national standards and subsequent analysis and plan to address gaps	1,2,5
7. Embedding of high impact adaptive teaching strategies for SEND pupils into daily teaching practice. Three staff trained as trainers in this approach. (AIP objective 8.1)	Trust wide professional development programme for teachers/teaching assistants using five a day strategy to meet increasing SEND need. EEF blog: 'Five-a-day' to improve SEND outcomes EEF	1,2,3,4,5

Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £144,700

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
8. Targeted reading interventions delivered by reading team One to one -That Reading Thing -Thinking Reading -Lexia -PALS (AIP objective 2.1)	Research demonstrates that effective reading interventions are targeted at students weaknesses Reading comprehension strategies EEF	1,2,5

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
9. Training for Starling VR tutor team (20 staff) and on-going CPD for this group throughout the year (AIP objective 2.1)	Year 7 students to undertake Starling Vocabulary Retrieval research project in association with Nottingham Trent University (Dr Emma Vardy) based upon PALS UK PALS-UK EEF Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS-UK) Nottingham Trent University	1,2,5
10. Embedding of Lexia intervention during form time for selected students, and to use as a booster for those who have graduated interventions (AIP objective 2.1)	EEF research demonstrates that the use of Lexia is a powerful intervention for struggling readers Proven Results - LexiaUK	1,2,5
11. Embedding the use of the online platform Sparx Maths, Reader and Science to deliver personalised homework and interventions (AIP objective 1)	Research evidence indicates that student engaging in 1 hour Spark weekly can improve their GCSE outcomes by 1 grade Sparx Maths - Impact The-Impact-of-the-Sparx-Reader-Trial.pdf What does research show about the effectiveness of Sparx Science? Sparx Science Help Centre	1,2,5
12. Embedding structured library lessons into Y7/8 English curriculum to increase opportunities for reading and reading for pleasure (AIP objective 2.1)	Increased opportunities for pupils to expand the amount they read for pleasure has a positive impact on their attainment. Regular use of Sparx Reader during library lessons. DfE Reading Framework: 7 key take-aways for schools Blog The-Impact-of-the-Sparx-Reader-Trial.pdf	1,2,5

Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £221,800

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
13. Emotionally Based School Avoidance internal school alternative provision to re-integrate students with emotionally based school avoidance back into the school setting (AIP objective 7 and 8)	Derby City Council graduated response implementation to re-integrate severe absentees back into school. A-Graduated-Response-to-Supporting-pupils-presenting-with-EBSNA.pdf	1,2,3,4,5
14. Additional Attendance Officer to undertake 1-2-1 and small	Research indicates that targeted personalised interventions are most	1,3,4,5

group work with students whose attendance falls into a category of concern (AIP objective 7)	effective in addressing severe absenteeism. Supporting School Attendance - Reflection and Planning Tool Education Endowment Foundation	
15. Small group intervention through a sport-based approach to tackle social, emotional and mental health needs (AIP objective 8 and 10)	Research indicates that targeted approaches are more effective in improving behaviour in schools. Improving behaviour in schools	1,3,4,5
16. Intervention Leader to undertake small group or 1-2-1 interventions to support students SEMH and remove barriers to learning (AIP objective 8 and 10)	Research indicates that targeted approaches are more effective in improving behaviour in schools. Improving behaviour in schools	1,3,4,5

Total budgeted cost: £433,300

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal assessments. The data provided below demonstrates that the performance of disadvantaged pupils has improved in some areas.

Pupil Premium students continue to underperform compared to their counterparts, this trend is in line with the national picture. However, attainment 8 for our disadvantaged students has increased since 23/24 by +0.04. Despite the Academy 4+EM pass rates increasing for all students, our PP cohort 4+EM cohort suffered a decrease this academic year meaning that our disadvantaged cohort must remain at the forefront of our strategic action planning.

We have drawn on school data and observations to assess wider issues impacting disadvantaged pupils' performance, including attendance, behaviour and reading. Whilst the attendance of our disadvantaged students has increased by +1.35% when compared with previous years. Although we are pleased with the improvements disadvantaged attendance will remain a focus for the school due to the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged gap. In the 24-25 academic year, we have also reduced persistent absence for disadvantaged students by 10% which is a significant improvement for this key group of students.

In the DFE summer version of similar schools comparison report for the academic year 24/25 – attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals was 4.7% higher than that in similar schools. This is demonstrated an increase of attendance of 1.4% from 23/24 for pupils eligible for free school meals.

Reading continues to be a focus of the academy – students have accessed and enjoyed a variety of interventions including DVA reading, That Reading Thing and Thinking Reading. From the ten students who graduated from That Reading Thing they had an average increase of 2 years of reading age.

The average gain in decoding ability from the Thinking Reading intervention among students was five years, evidencing exceptional acceleration in foundational reading skills. These results confirm the programme's effectiveness in rapidly closing reading gaps for the most disadvantaged students. Moving forward, early reading will remain a focus to ensure that all our students can read at an age-appropriate level.

Da Vinci Academy is based in an area of high social deprivation and low aspiration. The post 16 destinations of our disadvantaged students has seen a slight improvement in recent years; however, this is still an area for improvement. In 2025 disadvantaged students made up 71% of students (5 students) who were NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) compared to 76% (9 students) in 2024.

Disadvantaged pupils are overly represented in our fixed term exclusion data as 78% of students receiving a suspension are disadvantaged. This is an over representation for this key performance indicator as our disadvantaged cohorts' range between 54 and 60%. However, suspensions for disadvantaged students did decrease by 41.4% in the 24-25 academic year with a further reduction of 3.4% of students receiving repeat suspensions.

Behaviour and attendance figures are highly correlated with the number and scope of referrals to our Intervention Base, Bridge and EBSA provision. Additional resource to the allocation has been added to help meet the rising needs of our pupils, again this has a high representation of disadvantaged students.

In our EBSA provision (emotionally based school avoidance) ten students accessed the provision for the full year – of these nine were disadvantaged. For validity purposes only those who have accessed for the full year are being used for data collection. As a cohort, attendance of those accessing EBSAP has seen an increase of 4% from 23/24. 4% = 8 days 400 extra lessons over the course of the year. 50% of disadvantaged students have seen an increase in their annual attendance. As a cohort, attitude to learning of those accessing EBSAP has seen an increase of 0.21 from Summer 24 to Summer 25. 60% of all EBSAP students have improved their attitude to learning.