

Dixons Fazakerley

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	745
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	52%
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 to 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	June 2026
Statement authorised by	Nicholas Hughes, Principal
Pupil premium lead	Dani Kelly
Governor / Trustee lead	James Barron

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£437,875
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>	£437,875

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Dixons Fazakerley Academy we have many minds but one mission: we ensured all students succeeded at university, or a real alternative, thrived in a rewarding career and had a purposeful and happy life. The aim of the Pupil Premium is to identify and implement strategies that help to increase social mobility and reduce the attainment gap.

We are committed to eradicating social and educational disadvantage. This is our ultimate objective for all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The aim of our Pupil Premium strategy is to identify and implement strategies that help to increase social mobility and reduce the attainment gap.

Teaching meets the needs of each learner through quality first teaching, significant investment in teacher development and harnessing the power of feedback. We have drawn on educational research evidence to support our approaches which have been proven to have the most significant impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and raising the attainment of all students. The following sources were used in deciding how to use our Pupil Premium Grant:

- School Funding and Pupil Premium 2025
- Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit.
- Research on disadvantaged pupils and the vocabulary gap.
- Curriculum and Assessment Review Final Report.

At the core of our approach at Dixons Fazakerley Academy is high-quality teaching. This is the central principle that drives the decisions behind our strategy, enabling us to have the greatest impact not only on the majority of students at our school who receive pupil premium funding, but for all our pupils. As part of this, we ensure that all students are considered from the offset within our routines, systems, and classroom practice. Increasing our students' attendance is important so that they are learning in the classroom.

In addition to this, additional interventions outside of curriculum time provides our students with extra opportunities to master the material they need to be successful. Our high expectations of all and our high-quality teaching aims to reduce the disadvantage gap by ensuring all our students and in particular our disadvantaged students, can access, learn and enjoy a high quality, ambitious and challenging curriculum across Key Stage 3 and 4.

Using the above sources, we have also identified the following priority areas for spending:

- Evidence based literacy interventions and a whole school reading initiative.
- Additional teaching staff.
- Whole school and numeracy IT curriculum packages, such as 'Sparx maths'
- Small group and/or individual intervention groups
- Lead Climb group enhanced teaching/provision
- Boosting Basic alumni tutors
- Enrichment opportunities/programmes such as rowing
- Enhancement of the Mountain Rescue provision
- Attendance interventions with parental involvement

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Nationally, attendance of PP students is significantly below that of non-Pupil Premium students. It is important to continue to intervene and maintain the focus on attendance.</p> <p>Our disadvantaged pupils have lower attendance compared to our students who are not eligible for Pupil Premium. We have found that the most disadvantaged students are more likely to have low attendance in KS3. During KS4, disadvantaged students are more likely to become persistently absent. This can fundamentally lead to a negative impact on their GCSE results.</p>
2	<p>Low reading and literacy attainment</p> <p>Weak literacy levels, particularly reading, hinder students' access to the curriculum and performance in assessments</p>
3	<p>Academically rigorous KS3 and KS4</p> <p>Despite raising attainment of all students over the last four years, the curriculum Attainment gap between PP students and non-PP students in Year 11 still needs further diminishing based on exam outcomes. We will continue to sustain a high quality and aspirational curriculum across all subjects, with a particular focus in the first instance on English, maths and the EBACC subjects.</p>
4	Emotional and pastoral strategies

	Lower levels of self-regulation, resilience building, independent learning and organisational skills: behaviour reports in the academy show a significant number of PP students may experience difficulties in adhering to the school cultures routines and expectations, to curriculum and homework setting/completion.
5	<p>High Quality Teaching</p> <p>To ensure the best possible outcomes and in striving to diminish the attainment gap, students engage with high quality teaching that aligns with true inclusion. Inclusive practices will be consistently used across the curriculum to ensure individual needs are being met.</p>

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
To ensure that the curriculum implemented at all key stage 3 and 4, is ambitious, EBacc focused, and intelligently sequenced, so that students know more and remember more powerful knowledge, raising overall attainment.	<p>Improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, focusing on productive struggle and the implementation of Know/Show':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning walks and quality assurance checks through pupil voice and book looks demonstrate an increased level of engagement and progress. Accompanied by instant feedback for staff to address improvements in the moment - Performance of students in cycle 3 assessments at DFA improves in comparison with other academies in the Trust (average percentile ranking increases each academic year) - Attainment 8 is at national average or above for 2024 - Attainment 8 improves from 2024 figure to above national by the end of the strategy (2027)
Consistency in high quality teaching across the key stages, curriculum areas and within subjects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data will show an increase in attainment per cycle per year group. - Inclusive practice embedded across the curriculum and evident in learning walks - Effective use of the Trust INIs, including the INIPS and INISs. to create an inclusive classroom where levels of engagement are evident throughout learning walks and deep dives.

	- Inclusive strategies are collectively being used with a sense of shared responsibility across the academy.
Student attendance and persistent absenteeism will not have the same detrimental impact on student attainment.	- Learning and knowledge gaps caused by poor attendance or absenteeism will be identified in data and planning days 3x per year and intervention plans will be executed. - Whole school attendance percentage increases when compared to the last academic year.
Literacy levels improve	- 90% of students reading age is at or above their chronological age by the end of the strategy plan.
Reduction in suspensions, repeat suspensions and negative behaviour points by disadvantaged students, compared to national figures due to the changes being embedded of a value's driven culture	- Substantial reduction in suspensions and repeated suspensions over the course of the strategy from year to year. When comparing cycle figures, reduction by at least 50% - Students can self-regulate and reflect the values of DfA. This will be measured by the number of corrections.

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: £150,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Recruitment of subject specialists in Science	There is a positive relationship between the level of 'specialist' teaching in English and Mathematics and attainment in these subjects at the end of key stage 4. DfE December 2016 'Specialist and non-specialist' teaching in England: Extent and impact on pupil outcomes.	1-5
Dixons curriculum sustainment	Some disadvantaged students do not have the schema to enable them to understand new ideas or concepts. This may manifest itself in	1-5

	the form of poor-quality work. Some disadvantaged students have a lack of aspiration, stemming from their socio-economic circumstances. As a result, they suffer also from a lack of motivation. In both cases, swift teacher support will result in better learning and enable students to build components of learning into more complex composites. Other academies within the Trust have demonstrated positive student outcomes with the DTC curriculum. The work the academy does on values driven education and self-determination through our drivers of mastery, autonomy and purpose all support the curriculum.	
Personalised professional development (including leadership, supports retention)	There is much evidence to show that teacher CPD can have a strong impact on student outcomes (Cordingley et al (2015) and Darling-Hammond et al (2017), with some studies suggesting gains equating to more than two years' progress in one year. These gains have been shown to be even greater for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Wiliam 2016 and Timperley et al) thus having the potential to improve the life chances of all students. Research published in SecEd (2017) found that investing in high-quality, sustainable CPD activities makes staff feel valued, which subsequently reduces staff turn-over, but also ensures that regardless of their level of experience, teachers are able to keep improving, year-on-year, for the benefit of pupil outcome.	2-5
Deliberate practice clinics	There is increasing evidence that teachers who work in supportive contexts stay in the classroom longer, and improve at faster rates (Papay and Kraft (2015).	2-5
Instructional coaching	A meta-analysis reviewing 60 studies on teacher coaching programmes found that sustained coaching improves both classroom teaching and pupil achievement (Kraft et al 2018). Furthermore, 'Developing great teaching' report concludes that in terms of external input, the most successful outcomes came in the form of coaching and facilitating, rather than prescribing.	2-5
Homework linked to 100% sheets - LCWC	Homework has a positive impact on average (+ 5 months), particularly with pupils in secondary schools. EEF.	2-5
Robust Reading during DEAR time	Evidence shows that 1 in 4 students leave primary school having not reached the	1+5

	<p>expected level for reading. In addition, 1 in 8 disadvantaged students will not have access to a single book at home. (National Literacy Trust & Alex Quigley, Closing the Reading Gap)</p> <p>Creating a culture of reading for pleasure and progress will narrow the reading gap between disadvantaged students and their peers.</p> <p>Frequent reading will also enrich students' vocabulary, thus narrowing the vocabulary gap.</p> <p>Students should have access to high quality, appropriate texts in order to make progress.</p> <p>This also creates enrichment and improves mental health.</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £150,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Y11 Mentoring Programme	On average, mentoring appears to have a small positive impact on academic outcomes. Some studies have found more positive impacts for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, and for non-academic outcomes such as attitudes to school, attendance and behaviour.	1, 3, 5
Counselling	There are several mechanisms through which poor mental health could lead to poorer educational outcomes, including through school absence and mobility, through behavioural and attentional difficulties and through lowered aspirations and school connectedness	1, 3, 5
Fresh Start Reading Programme	<p>Literacy is an important life skill and involves proficiency in reading and writing. Poor literacy skills can hinder a students' ability in school and in wider life. The approach selected as been successful in other Dixon Academies. Fresh Start is a systematic synthetic phonics program designed to support struggling readers in secondary schools. It is particularly beneficial for students who are learning English as an additional language or who have difficulty reading due to various reasons.</p> <p>The program includes a quick diagnostic assessment to ensure students start at their highest point on the program, whether for accurate decoding or reading fluency. Daily</p>	1-5

	<p>lessons are tailored to each student's level, supporting word reading, fluency, and comprehension. The program's modules are age-appropriate and reflect students' everyday experiences and backgrounds, making it engaging and motivating.</p> <p>Fresh Start is aligned with the DfE's 2023 Reading Framework and provides comprehensive training for secondary teachers to effectively teach older pupils to read.</p>	
Focus on a value's driven culture	<p>A defining issue for successful schools is the quality of leadership, culture and ethos. Values need to be much more than a series of statements on a school website. Strategy statements for tackling educational disadvantage need to be alive and explicit in school classrooms, corridors and canteen. Sage research provides new empirical evidence of how successful principals directly and indirectly achieve and sustain improvement over time through combining both transformational and instructional leadership strategies. The findings show that schools' abilities to improve and sustain effectiveness over the long term are not primarily the result of the principals' leadership style but of their understanding and diagnosis of the school's needs and their application of clearly articulated, organizationally shared educational values through multiple combinations and accumulations of time and context sensitive strategies that are "layered" and progressively embedded in the school's work, culture, and achievements. The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: How Successful School Leaders Use Transformational and Instructional Strategies to Make a Difference (Sage 2016)</p>	1-5

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

Budgeted cost: £150,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Expand the attendance team so that there is a more targeted approach to tackling poor attendance and	Research from UCL in 2020 shows that students who are absent from school see a small decline in their academic achievement. Each day of individual student absence results in around 0.3-0.4% of a standard deviation	1

providing early intervention	reduction in achievement. Equivalently, eight days of absence (the average in England) would move a student one place down a ranking of 100 students (e.g. from 50th to 51st). Students from low-income households see a larger negative effect from each day of absence. This is supported by our own data that students who attend school regularly attain in line with national figures	
Bromcom to monitor behaviour patterns and provide appropriate intervention	Research shows that careful behaviour management has a positive impact upon outcomes. Bromcom enables seating plans to be constructed based on influences or student characteristics e.g. SEN, PP, easily and quickly. Behaviour management instances can be recorded quickly, along with reward points thereby reducing teacher workload. Behaviours and rewards can be customised to our school setting. Intelligence reports can also be customised and trigger actions, so that there is increased consistency. Behaviour analytics allows for analysis in trends of behaviour and therefore allow for appropriate intervention.	3,4,5
Parents Evenings to communicate with parents/carers	he DfE research paper 'School cultures and practices: supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils A qualitative comparison of London and non-London schools Research Brief' August 2018 found that high performing schools engaged well with parents and supported parents in keeping their child's aspirations high	1, 3, 4, 5
Remove barriers to non-attendance – uniform, equipment, bus passes, text message service, home visits, EWO	The educational performance of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds (commonly defined in terms of family socioeconomic status) is much lower than their peers, and England has a relatively large achievement gap. Research has shown that there is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic attainment.	1, 3, 5
CPOMS	Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding children, whether this is identifying or raising concerns early of safeguarding issues or putting into place best practice to prevent harm. CPOMS has proved to be a successful tool in responding to the needs of pupils, staff and visitors allowing secure means of communication within school and to linked professional bodies.	1,3,4
Career Guidance	Good career advice can yield large returns by helping young people and adults develop the	1-5

	<p>ability to manage their education and career. It can help increase people's self-awareness and self-esteem, which can lead to rewarding career choices. OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 found that students in schools that offer career guidance were more likely to expect to complete tertiary education than students in schools that do not offer career guidance and were more likely to expect to work in a high-skilled occupation.</p>	
Co-curricular activities	<p>Sustainable extra-curricular academic tailored programme to support students. Research: Sutton Trust, Potential for Success, July 2018 Students should have access to high quality extra-curricular activities in order to boost essential life skills that facilitate academic attainment and future success.</p>	1-5

Total budgeted cost: £450,000

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Our assessments demonstrated that pupil behaviour, wellbeing and mental health has continued to provide challenges. The impact was particularly acute for disadvantaged pupils. We used pupil premium funding to provide wellbeing support for all pupils, and targeted interventions where required. We are building on that approach in our new plan.

We have arrested the decline seen in attendance at the start of the 2025-26 academic year. Robust action, including the use of trust central capacity and a new incentivisation programme has supported this. Our relentless focus on attendance, including home visits, daily phone calls, well-being calls home from mentors and advisors has resulted in a higher level of attendance for our disadvantaged students. We are still not where we want to be but are confident that the structures in place will support raising attendance. The multi-year trend remains on an upward trajectory.

To address significant gaps in literacy for disadvantaged pupils, Dixons Fazakerley has embedded the Fresh Start phonics programme as a core intervention. Delivered in small groups at least four times per week, the programme targets students who enter secondary school below age-related expectations in reading. Regular six-weekly assessments ensure rapid progression and allow pupils to exit the programme swiftly once they reach fluency. Internal tracking shows that the majority of pupils complete Fresh Start within one term, with many making accelerated progress—typically improving by up to 12 months in reading age over a 12-week period. This approach has not only improved reading confidence and comprehension but also enabled pupils to access the wider curriculum, contributing to closing the attainment gap for those eligible for Pupil Premium

In achievement, the outgoing YR11 cohort saw an increase in overall attainment and in the percentage of students achieving 4+, 5+ and 7+ in English and mathematics. This increase was not reflected in the outcomes for our pupil premium students. However, the starting points of this cohort were significantly lower than that of the previous two-year groups and the progress made by disadvantaged students was an increase of 0.22 (0.1 increase for all) demonstrating the improving impact of our work which we continue to develop.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Sparx Maths	Sparx Maths

Read Write inc	Ruth Miskin
Fresh Start Phonic	Ruth Miskin
Maths Mastery	NW Learning Hub
Student Heroes	Humanitopia
Adaptive development programme	One World Network
Rowing	British Rowing
Alumni Tutoring	Dixons Academies Trust
Lead Climb	Dixons Academies Trust