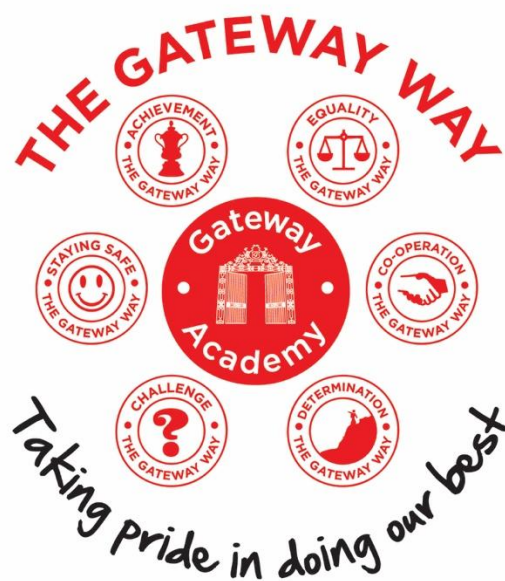


Pupil Premium Policy



Pupil Premium Policy

Approved by: Lisa Breslin and Claire Cleary

FGB 22/09/26

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

‘Closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers is the greatest challenge facing English schools. The gap is stubborn because its causes are entrenched and complex, and most lie beyond the control of schools and educators. However, it is clear that schools can make a difference.

In England, the gap has closed in both primary and secondary schools since the introduction of the Pupil Premium, and in every part of the country schools have demonstrated how great teaching and careful planning can make a huge impact on the outcomes of disadvantaged children.’

Education Endowment Foundation – The EEF Guide to Pupil Premium funding

AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Provide background information about the pupil premium grant so all members of the school community understand its purpose and which pupils are eligible
- Set out how the school will make decisions on pupil premium spending
- Summarise the roles and responsibilities of those involved in managing the pupil premium in school

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the pupil premium [allocations and conditions of grant guidance 2026 to 2027](#) and guidance on [using the pupil premium, virtual school heads’ responsibilities concerning the pupil premium](#), and the [service pupil premium](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

PURPOSE OF THE GRANT

Pupil premium grant

The pupil premium grant is additional funding allocated to publicly funded schools to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

The school will use the grant to support these groups, which comprise pupils with a range of different abilities, to narrow any achievement gaps between them and their peers.

We also recognise that not all pupils eligible for pupil premium funding will have lower attainment than their peers. In such cases, the grant will be used to help improve pupils’ progress and attainment so they can reach their full potential.

Service pupil premium grant

An additional grant, the service pupil premium grant, is funding to provide pastoral support for pupils who are children of serving and former armed services personnel. Pupils can be eligible for both pupil premium and service pupil premium.

Service pupil premium will not be combined with pupil premium funding, and spending of each premium will be accounted for separately.

USE OF THE GRANT

Pupil premium

The school will use pupil premium funding to address specific challenges disadvantaged pupils face, through:

- High-quality teaching
- Targeted academic support
- Wider strategies to help pupils to attend, belong and succeed

Pupil premium is not a personal budget for individual pupils. The school may spend the pupil premium grant to benefit:

- Eligible pupils registered at our school
- Pupils who meet the funding criteria and who are registered at other state-funded schools – e.g. when hosting summer schools which welcome pupils from other schools

Where appropriate, the Academy may also use pupil premium funding to:

- Support non-eligible pupils with other identified needs, such as those who:
 - Have or have had a social worker
 - Are carers
 - The school believes to be economically disadvantaged but who have not been identified as eligible for the pupil premium
- Deliver whole-class interventions which will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils

HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THE USE OF PUPIL PREMIUM

Our Pupil Premium Strategy is designed to improve the educational outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. We follow the Department for Education's five-step approach to developing and delivering an effective Pupil Premium strategy:

1. identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils;
2. use evidence to identify approaches that are likely to be effective;
3. develop an appropriate strategy;
4. deliver and monitor the strategy; and
5. evaluate impact and sustain successful approaches.

Our strategy is based on a detailed understanding of the needs of disadvantaged pupils at Gateway Academy rather than assumptions about disadvantage. Pupil Premium is not treated as an individual budget for each eligible pupil; funding is directed towards evidence-

informed approaches that address the most significant barriers affecting our disadvantaged cohort.

Identifying challenges to attainment

We identify barriers through a range of quantitative and qualitative evidence, including:

- assessment information and pupils' starting points
- progress and attainment information across the curriculum
- diagnostic assessment in areas such as phonics, reading, writing, mathematics and language development
- attendance and persistent absence information
- SEND assessments, APDR cycles and Learning Plans
- safeguarding, pastoral and wellbeing information where relevant
- observations, learning walks and scrutiny of pupils' work
- pupil and parent voice
- discussions with teachers, the SENCO, DSL, attendance staff and other professionals
- analysis of patterns for disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils within the Academy and, where appropriate, national outcomes

We consider the interaction between disadvantage and other potential barriers, including SEND, English as an additional language, mobility, being new to English education, involvement with children's social care and low prior attainment. We do not assume that all disadvantaged pupils face the same barriers.

For our cohort, identified challenges may include:

- low starting points on entry to Nursery and Reception, particularly in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and early literacy
- gaps in foundational knowledge and skills for pupils joining the Academy at different points in their education
- weaker oral language, vocabulary and comprehension
- gaps in early reading, reading fluency, spelling, handwriting, writing and mathematics
- additional barriers for some pupils with SEND
- limited opportunities to develop wider cultural knowledge and experiences outside school
- attendance and persistent absence
- social, emotional and wellbeing needs which may affect readiness to learn
- limited access to appropriate resources or support for learning outside school
- barriers some parents may face in supporting learning, including language, confidence and familiarity with the English education system

These challenges are reviewed throughout the year so that provision can be adapted where needs change.

Alignment with the DfE menu of approaches

All Pupil Premium-funded activity is selected in accordance with the Department for Education's current **menu of approaches**.

Our strategy follows the three broad strands of the menu:

High-quality teaching

High-quality classroom teaching is our first priority because improving teaching has the greatest potential to benefit all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged. Funding may therefore support:

- high-quality teaching, assessment and curriculum development
- professional development for teachers and support staff
- systematic synthetic phonics and early reading
- the teaching of foundational literacy and mathematics skills
- adaptive and inclusive teaching
- effective feedback and assessment
- mentoring and coaching for staff
- appropriate technology or resources that strengthen teaching and diagnostic assessment

Targeted academic support

Where diagnostic assessment identifies specific gaps, pupils may receive carefully targeted additional support, including:

- structured small-group or one-to-one tuition
- targeted phonics, reading, writing, language or mathematics interventions
- oral language and vocabulary development
- additional support for disadvantaged pupils with SEND
- appropriately deployed teaching assistants delivering structured, monitored interventions

Targeted support supplements rather than replaces high-quality classroom teaching.

Wider strategies

Where non-academic barriers are affecting pupils' educational outcomes, funding may support:

- improved attendance and reduced persistent absence
- social, emotional and behavioural support
- pastoral and wellbeing provision
- enrichment, educational visits and wider opportunities
- breakfast or food provision where appropriate
- effective communication and work with parents and families

We do not fund activities simply because they have been used previously. Each approach must respond to an identified need, fall within the DfE menu of approaches and have a credible evidence base.

Using research evidence

Our spending decisions combine knowledge of our pupils and local context with high-quality external research evidence.

Key sources include:

- the DfE Using Pupil Premium: Guidance for School Leaders and current Conditions of Grant
- the Education Endowment Foundation Guide to the Pupil Premium
- the EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit
- relevant EEF guidance reports, including literacy, mathematics, SEND, metacognition and implementation
- the EEF's evidence resources on attendance and parental engagement
- the DfE Reading Framework
- the DfE Writing Framework
- relevant evidence from other recognised What Works centres and research organisations where appropriate
- evaluations of programmes and interventions, including the EEF's Promising Programmes where relevant

Research evidence is considered alongside professional judgement and evidence from our own pupils. We consider not only whether an approach has evidence of impact, but whether it is appropriate for our pupils, whether staff can implement it successfully and how its impact will be evaluated.

For example, evidence supporting high-quality oral language approaches informs our response to weaknesses in vocabulary and spoken language; evidence relating to systematic phonics and literacy informs early reading provision; and evidence relating to metacognition, feedback, SEND and parental engagement informs wider classroom practice and targeted provision.

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

We recognise that selecting an evidence-informed intervention alone does not guarantee impact. We therefore consider implementation carefully, including staff training, resources, leadership capacity, fidelity to agreed approaches and the time required for changes to become embedded.

For each significant element of Pupil Premium expenditure we identify:

- the challenge being addressed
- the intended outcome
- the evidence supporting the chosen approach

- how the approach will be implemented
- how impact will be monitored
- what evidence will be used to determine whether it should be continued, adapted or stopped.

Impact is monitored throughout the year using assessment and progress information alongside attendance, work scrutiny, learning walks, APDR/Learning Plans, pupil voice and other relevant evidence.

Senior leaders retain oversight of Pupil Premium expenditure and impact. Governors scrutinise the strategy, challenge leaders about the rationale for expenditure and monitor whether approaches are improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Our overriding principles are that we:

- maintain high expectations for disadvantaged pupils
- identify need rather than make assumptions based on eligibility
- prioritise high-quality teaching
- intervene early where gaps emerge
- use evidence-informed approaches
- ensure targeted interventions complement strong classroom teaching
- monitor implementation as well as outcomes
- adapt or discontinue approaches that are not having the intended impact
- evaluate whether our strategy is improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We will publish our strategy statement on the school's use of the pupil premium in each academic year on the school website, in line with the conditions of grant, and using the template on GOV.UK.

Service pupil premium

The service pupil premium will be spent in response to the specific needs of service children at the school – it will not be used to subsidise routine school activity.

The Academy will use the service pupil premium to:

- Offer pastoral support and counselling during challenging times for service children
- Help mitigate the negative effects on service children of family mobility and separation
- Help pupils improve communication with a deployed parent

ELIGIBLE PUPILS

The pupil premium is allocated to the school based on the number of eligible pupils from Nursery to Year 6.

Eligible pupils fall into the categories explained below.

Pupils eligible for 'targeted' free school meals and 'ever 6'

From the 2026/27 academic year, all pupils in households that receive Universal Credit are eligible for free school meals (FSM) under the government's expanded FSM programme. As a result, there are now 2 categories of benefits-based FSM:

- Targeted: for pupils whose household income is less than £7,400 – the same income threshold as before the expansion
- Expanded: for pupils whose household income is £7,400 or more

Pupils who qualify for targeted FSM are eligible for the pupil premium; pupils who only qualify for expanded FSM are **not** eligible for the pupil premium.

Pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 who receive universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) **and** qualify for targeted FSM are eligible for the pupil premium; pupils who only qualify for expanded FSM are **not** eligible for the pupil premium (though we still encourage them to apply for benefits-based FSM).

We will recheck pupils' eligibility annually.

Ever 6 FSM cohort

Pupils are eligible for the pupil premium if they have been eligible for targeted FSM (or FSM before the 2026/27 academic year) at any point in the past 6 years – these pupils are known as being part of the 'ever 6 FSM cohort'.

Looked-after children

Pupils who are in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, a local authority in England or Wales for more than 24 hours.

Previously looked-after children

Pupils recorded in the most recent October census who:

- Were looked after by a local authority or other state care immediately before being adopted, or
- Left local authority or other state care on a special guardianship order or child arrangements order

This includes children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales.

Service children

A pupil attracts the service pupil premium if they meet any of the following criteria:

- They have a parent serving in the regular armed forces (this includes pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full-time reserve service) and they have been registered as a 'service child' in the most recent DfE school census
- They have a parent serving in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England, and they have been registered as a 'service child' in the most recent October DfE school census
- They have been registered as a 'service child' on any DfE school census at any point in the past 6 years ('ever 6 service children'), as determined by the DfE's latest conditions

of grant guidance, including those first recorded as such in the most recent October census

- They are in receipt of a child pension from the Ministry of Defence because 1 of their parents died while serving in the armed forces

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CoHeadteachers and senior leadership team

They are responsible for:

- Keeping this policy up to date, and making sure it is implemented across the school
- Making sure all school staff are aware of their role in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and supporting pupils with parents in the armed forces
- Planning pupil premium spending and keeping this under constant review, using an evidence-based approach and working with virtual school heads where appropriate
- Spending pupil premium in line with the conditions of grant for each financial year and the DfE's 'menu of approaches
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium to assess the impact of the school's use of the funding
- Reporting on the impact of pupil premium and service pupil premium spending to the governing board on an ongoing basis
- Publishing the pupil premium strategy statement on the school's use of the pupil premium in each academic year on the school website, in line with the DfE's [guidance on using the pupil premium](#) and using the template on GOV.UK
- Providing relevant training for staff, as necessary, on supporting disadvantaged pupils and raising attainment

Governors

The governing board is responsible for:

- Holding the CoHeadteachers to account for the implementation of this policy
- Making sure the school is using pupil premium funding appropriately, in line with the rules set out in the conditions of grant
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, in conjunction with the CoHeadteachers, to assess the impact and effectiveness of the school's use of the funding
- Monitoring the school's use of the service pupil premium to assess the effectiveness of the school's use of the funding in providing pastoral support to service children
- Monitoring whether the school is ensuring value for money in its use of the pupil premium
- Challenging the CoHeadteachers to use the pupil premium in the most effective way

- Setting the school's ethos and values around supporting disadvantaged members of the school community

Other school staff

All school staff are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy on a day-to-day basis
- Setting high expectations for all pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium
- Identifying pupils whose attainment is not improving in response to interventions funded by the pupil premium, and highlighting these individuals to the senior leadership team
- Sharing insights into effective practice with other school staff

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be monitored by the CoHeadteachers.

It will be reviewed annually by the Lisa Breslin and Claire Cleary. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.