Pupil premium strategy statement Ferndown Upper 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	860
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	24.0%
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)**	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Deneen Kenchington, Deputy Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Martha Chengadu, Pupil Premium Coordinator
Governor / Trustee lead	Sarah-Louise Cole, Pupil Premium link governor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 250,150
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years *(enter £0 if not applicable)*	£ 0
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*	£ 250,150

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Ferndown Upper School, we are committed to ensuring that every student regardless of background or the challenges they face is supported to make good progress and achieve their personal best across the curriculum. We see every student as a valued member of the Ferndown Family, our strategy is designed to foster aspiration, resilience, and personal agency, equipping students not only for success during their time at FUS but also for life beyond school.

Our strategy is underpinned by the following key principles:

- *Quality First Teaching and academic support*
- *Supracurricular opportunities and enrichment*
- *Unique experiences both inside and outside the classroom*
- *Bespoke pastoral provision, with a focus on relationships*
- *Supporting successful post-16 destinations and best outcomes*

This three-year strategy, our central focus is improving attendance for disadvantaged pupils, recognising that consistent attendance is fundamental to engagement, attainment, wellbeing, and long-term success.

We deliver our strategy through a combination of universal provision, targeted support, and wider initiatives, ensuring that disadvantaged pupils are present, engaged, and thriving. We have identified key challenges and allocated funding in an impactful and efficient manner, drawing on both in house expertise and external opportunities.

Quality First Teaching of our broad and ambitious curriculum remains at the heart of our approach. Our strategy supports the continued development of teaching practice to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged students and their peers, while also benefiting the wider cohort.

We believe passionately in the power of enrichment and strive to provide all students with access to a rich set of experiences that broaden horizons and inspire ambition. Through the engagement of all stakeholders, we aim to ensure that every student is given the opportunity and support to become the best version of themselves.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance rates for disadvantaged students at Ferndown Upper School currently stand at 86%, compared to 94% for their peers. Persistent absence is a significant concern, with 40% of disadvantaged pupils in all lower school year groups meeting the threshold for persistent absence. This presents a substantial barrier to engagement, progress, and wellbeing, and is a key focus of our strategy moving forward.
2	Progress for disadvantaged pupils at Ferndown Upper School has improved significantly over the past four years and is now a key strength, driven by quality teaching, strategic focus, and pastoral support. Attainment has also improved, with the gap now reduced to around one third of the national benchmark. Attainment scores: • **2023**: FSM 40.90 | non-FSM 50.41 | gap 9.51 • **2024**: FSM 43.89 | non-FSM 49.49 | gap 5.60 • **2025**: FSM 43.91 | non-FSM 48.74 | gap 4.83 Despite this positive trajectory, an attainment gap remains between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Closing this gap continues to be a central focus of our strategy and is the primary intention of our pupil premium funding.
3	Over the past three years, More Able disadvantaged students have made significantly less progress than their disadvantaged peers overall. Although this is a small cohort meaning year on year fluctuations are expected the underlying trend consistently shows lower progress and attainment. Progress8 scores for more able disadvantaged pupils were: • **2023**: PP 0.35 | MA PP 0.38 (one student) • **2024**: PP 0.22 | MA PP -0.16 • **2025**: PP 0.44 | MA PP -1.08 (no KS2 data, used CATs) This highlights the need for targeted academic stretch, enrichment and aspiration affirming interventions to ensure these students are supported to reach their full potential.
4	The literacy attainment of disadvantaged pupils at Ferndown Upper School is generally lower than that of their peers, which limits access to the full curriculum and impacts progress across all subjects. Diagnostic assessments indicate that many pupils particularly struggle with reading fluency and extended vocabulary, highlighting a need for targeted support to close this gap and enable equitable access to learning.
5	Our observations and discussions with students and families have shown that disadvantaged pupils can undervalue their achievements and hold moderated expectations for success. While many do have clear aspirations for their futures, these are shaped or limited by external influences. To address this, our strategy includes enhanced careers education, advice, and guidance to help pupils broaden their horizons, build confidence in their goals, and make informed decisions about their future pathways.

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
Improve attendance for disadvantaged pupils.	Success will be measured by attendance for students who qualify for Pupil Premium funding rising to above 90% and persistent absence reducing by ten percentage points.
Sustain strong overall progress for disadvantaged pupils.	Success will be measured by Pupil Premium students achieving a positive Progress8 score and the Attainment8 gap remaining less than half of the national average for Pupil Premium students.
Increase attainment and progress for More Able disadvantaged pupils.	Success will be measured by the two-year average Progress 8 score for More Able Pupil Premium students being higher than the overall Progress 8 score for all Pupil Premium students.
Improve literacy attainment for disadvantaged pupils.	Success will be measured by the majority of Pupil Premium students who entered Year 9 with a below-expected reading age reducing their reading age deficit.
Raise aspiration, self-confidence, and awareness of future opportunities for disadvantaged pupils.	Success will be measured by all students who qualify for Pupil Premium funding being engaged in a programme of careers education, advice, and guidance. All disadvantaged pupils receive personalised careers support tailored to their interests and aspirations.

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: £ *125,075*

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Quality first teaching	The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) identifies high-quality teaching as the most effective way to improve pupil outcomes. Evidence shows that strong classroom practice benefits all pupils, particularly disadvantaged learners. Professional development and consistent pedagogical approaches help close attainment gaps and sustain progress. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833	1,2,3,4,5
Improving literacy	EEF guidance on literacy highlights that reading comprehension and vocabulary are strongly linked to attainment across subjects. Targeted interventions like Lexia support struggling readers, improving fluency and access to the wider curriculum. This approach addresses literacy gaps that hinder progress in multiple subjects. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4 https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4/EEF_KS3_KS4_LITERACY_GUIDANCE.pdf?v=1763562366	2,4
PP Team	EEF recommends a tiered approach to Pupil Premium spending, with leadership oversight ensuring strategic alignment. A dedicated PP team enables robust monitoring and evaluation, including analysis of academic grades and behaviour data, to assess the impact of interventions. Research shows that systematic review and coordination of strategies is critical for sustained improvement and accountability. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/effective-professional-development/EEF-Effective-Professional-Development-Guidance-Report.pdf https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3,4,5

Music lessons	EEF evidence suggests arts participation can improve academic outcomes and engagement. Music lessons enhance confidence, motivation, and cognitive skills, which can indirectly support attainment in core subjects. This enrichment also promotes wellbeing and cultural capital. EEF average effect size +3 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation	1,2,3,5
Enrichment and compulsory academic trips	EEF evidence on experiential learning suggests that subject-specific trips deepen understanding, improve engagement, and provide real-world context for classroom learning. These experiences enhance cultural capital and support improved attainment in related subjects. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning EEF average effect size +3 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation	2,3,5

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

Budgeted cost: £ *62,538*

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Revision resources	EEF guidance suggests that providing structured revision materials supports independent learning and exam preparation. Access to high-quality resources reduces disadvantage-related gaps in readiness for assessments. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil_Premium_menu_evidence_brief.pdf.pdf https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	2,3
Subject-specific targeted intervention and peer tutoring	EEF toolkit shows small group and one-to-one tuition are highly effective for closing gaps. Subject-specific interventions provide focused support in areas of greatest need, improving attainment and confidence. EEF average effect size +4 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition EEF average effect size +6 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/peer-tutoring	2,3
Homework club	EEF research shows that structured homework support can improve learning, particularly when linked to classroom teaching. Homework clubs provide a quiet space, resources, and guidance, reducing barriers for disadvantaged pupils and improving completion rates. EEF average effect size +5 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework	2,3,4,5
Late bus	EEF notes that extended school time can improve attainment when used for targeted interventions. Providing a late bus removes logistical barriers, enabling disadvantaged pupils to attend after-school tutoring and enrichment activities. EEF average effect size +3 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/extending-school-time	2,3

Data-driven intervention	EEF endorses data-driven approaches combined with tutoring and behaviour interventions. Using assessment data to target support ensures resources are directed where they have the most impact, improving progress for priority pupils. EEF average effect size +4 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/using-pupil-premium https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3,4,5
Food & Nutrition ingredients	EEF menu of approaches highlights removing barriers to curriculum access as a valid strategy. Providing ingredients ensures full participation in Food Technology, supporting practical learning and engagement. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil_Premium_menu_evidence_brief.pdf.pdf https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9032/5/4/60	2,3
Targeted laptop provision	EEF digital technology guidance notes that access to devices can support learning when combined with effective teaching. Targeted provision of laptops and equipment ensures equity in digital learning opportunities. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/digital https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833	2

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

Budgeted cost: £ *62,537*

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Enhanced attendance interventions	EEF toolkit highlights parental engagement as an effective strategy for improving attendance and attainment. Regular communication with families reinforces expectations and supports early intervention. EEF average effect size +4 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/evaluation-report-release-pupil-absence https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/attendance-interventions-rapid-evidence-assessment https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3,4,5
Breakfast club	EEF evaluation of Magic Breakfast shows improved concentration and attainment when pupils start the day with a healthy meal. Breakfast clubs also provide social interaction and pastoral support. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/magic-breakfast https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf https://nesr.usda.gov/school-breakfast-program-rapid-reviews	1,2,3,4,5
Enhanced careers education and intervention	Research indicates that personalised careers guidance reduces NEET risk and validates aspirations. Providing structured careers education helps pupils make informed decisions and plan ambitious pathways. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/careers-education https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3,5

Diverse experiences	EEF toolkit shows outdoor adventure learning improves resilience and social skills. Residential trips provide opportunities for teamwork and independence, fostering aspiration and confidence. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	2,3,5
University engagement	Sutton Trust evidence states outreach programmes and university visits increase the likelihood of disadvantaged students applying to higher education and improve confidence in academic pathways. The Department for Education (DfE) guidance emphasizes employer and university engagement as part of Gatsby Benchmarks for careers education, supporting aspiration and progression to higher education. https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Higher-Education-Access-Report-1.pdf https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools/careers-guidance-and-access-for-education-and-training-providers	1,2,3,5
Pastoral support	EEF evidence supports social and emotional learning and behaviour interventions as effective strategies. Pastoral managers provide targeted support, improving wellbeing and engagement for disadvantaged pupils. EEF average effect size +3 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning EEF average effect size +3 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/behaviour?utm_source=/education-evidence/guidance-reports/behaviour&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_search&search_term=behaviour https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833	1,2,3,5
Uniform grant	Removing financial barriers such as uniform costs promotes inclusion and attendance.	1,2,3

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)	Emotional Literacy Support Assistants help pupils develop coping strategies and emotional regulation. Evidence shows improved wellbeing and readiness to learn, which supports academic progress. EEF average effect size +3 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning https://www.elsanetwork.org/report/dorset-elsa-intervention-impact-report/ https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3,5
PP student Forum	EEF recommends incorporating pupil voice to tailor interventions and improve engagement. Student forums provide feedback that informs strategy and fosters a sense of ownership. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RRA800/RRA827-4/RAND_RRA827-4.pdf https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3,5
Parent feedback	EEF evidence shows parental engagement can positively impact learning outcomes. Forums create opportunities for collaboration, improving trust and shared responsibility for pupil success. EEF average effect size +4 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3
Transition support (Year 8→Year 9)	EEF article indicates that structured transition support reduces attainment dips. Liaison activities help pupils adapt socially and academically, improving continuity of learning. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-supporting-pupils-through-transitions-a-trio-of-challenges https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833	1,2,3,5

SHINE and THRIVE programmes	EEF toolkit supports social and emotional learning interventions for improving wellbeing and attainment. External programmes like SHINE and THRIVE provide targeted mental health support. EEF average effect size +3 months. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833	1,2,3,5
Duke of Edinburgh award scheme	Outdoor adventure learning builds resilience, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. These attributes support academic perseverance and aspiration. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf https://www.dofe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/DofE-2024-Impact-Report.pdf https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/133134/pdf/	1,2,3,5
Removing non-academic barriers to success	EEF guidance on Pupil Premium spending highlights the importance of removing non-academic barriers to learning, such as lack of essential equipment. Providing calculators, pens, and other stationery ensures equitable access to the curriculum and reduces anxiety linked to being unprepared. DfE also supports funding for these resources to promote engagement and inclusion, which can positively impact attendance and attainment. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/documents/guidance-for-teachers/pupil-premium/Pupil-Premium-resource-evidence-brief.pdf?v=1695997833 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68e661e3dadf7616351e4f5b/Using_pupil_premium_guidance.pdf	1,2,3,5

Total budgeted cost: £ *250,150*

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Ferndown Upper School continues to make strong progress in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Internal progress data from 2025 shows a significantly narrowed gap, with disadvantaged pupils outperforming their peers in English. Attainment for disadvantaged pupils has also improved over time, with the Attainment 8 gap reduced from 14.5 grades four years ago to 4.5 grades last year, and 5.2 grades this year (4.5 grades for FSM students). Notably, Ferndown's attainment gap is now around one-third the size of the national average in both 2024 and 2025, placing the school above national benchmarks for disadvantaged attainment.

Attendance remains a key area for development. Whole school attendance is currently 92%, while disadvantaged pupil attendance stands at 86%, with persistent absence at 40% significantly above national expectations. The boys' mentoring programme has had notable success, improving both attendance and attainment for targeted students through regular one-to-one support, goal setting, and relationship building. In addition, the school's programme of trips and visits continues to support wellbeing and engagement, offering enriching experiences that build confidence and connection.

Careers education is delivered through structured lessons in Years 9 and 10, and we are working to ensure all disadvantaged pupils have access to personalised guidance and clear post 16 pathways. Literacy development also remains a priority, with new reading age testing being introduced from September to better inform targeted support. These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to ensuring every pupil is equipped not only to succeed academically, but to thrive personally and socially both during their time at Ferndown and beyond.

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
Scholar Programme	Brilliant Club
Shine	The Shine Project
Thrive	The Shine Project
Being a Boy	Arts University Bournemouth
Empower	Bournemouth University

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year**
Pupils who qualify for Service Pupil Premium (SPP) funding have access to most of the school's Pupil Premium initiatives and interventions, although a small number are not applicable to their circumstances. In addition, all Service Pupil Premium families are contacted annually to ensure the school is informed if a family member is deployed overseas.
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
Pupils who qualify for SPP funding are included in all data collection processes and impact assessments. The school currently has a small number of pupils who qualify for SPP funding, two of these pupils completed their GCSE examinations in summer 2025.