

RFSS Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2026-2027

This statement details our school's use of Pupil Premium funding for the 2026/27 academic year, to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged students academically, improve attendance and to support their holistic personal development. This document outlines our Pupil Premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year, the rationale behind why we are spending the money in this way, and the impact that last year's spending of Pupil Premium had within our school.

Why does the Government provide the Pupil Premium?

The government believes that poverty/low income is the single most important factor in predicting a child's future life chances. Many pupils from low-income families have lower attainment at the age of 16 than non-disadvantaged peers. The government believes that the Pupil Premium is the best way to address these inequalities by ensuring that funding is used to support the disadvantaged pupils who need it the most. The key reasons for pupil premium funding to schools are:

Tackle Educational Inequality

Pupils from low-income families or disadvantaged backgrounds often face barriers that impact their learning. The Pupil Premium aims to reduce the gap in academic achievement caused by these challenges.

Provide Targeted Support

Schools receive extra funding to support eligible pupils. This money is used in ways that schools decide will be most effective—such as extra tuition, pastoral care, or after-school clubs.

Improve Life Chances

By boosting the education of disadvantaged pupils, the government aims to improve their future job prospects, health outcomes, and overall quality of life.

Accountability and Transparency

Schools must show how they spend the Pupil Premium and how it improves outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This ensures the funding is used effectively.

School Overview:

Detail	Data
Number of students at Rugby Free Secondary School	924 (1209 inc. SF)
Proportion (%) of Pupil Premium eligible students	216 Students 23.4% (17.9%)
Proportion (%) of FSM eligible students	250 (20.7%) 305 (25.2%) Inc. SF
Academic year/years that our current Pupil Premium strategy plan covers	2026-27 Academic Year
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	Iain Green
Pupil Premium Leads	Samantha Bryant
Governor / Trustee Lead	Iain Green and Alex

Funding Overview:

Detail	Amount
Pupil Premium funding allocation this academic year	£297,960
Pupil Premium funding across the Trust	£1,073,040
Pupil Premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0

Our principle aims in spending this Pupil Premium funding are:

- To ensure that every student has access to, and engages with an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum
- To ensure that all students have access to a range of aspiration raising activities to enable them to develop their cultural capital
- To overcome emotional, aspirational and attendance barriers to educational success

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan 2026-27

Statement of Intent:

"Research has shown that disadvantaged pupils, on average, achieve worse educational outcomes due to the additional challenges they face. Roughly 40% of the overall gap between disadvantaged 16-year-olds and their peers has already emerged by age 5, and these differences continue to widen as children move through the education system." (EEF 2025/DFE 2026)

National Context:

Nationally, disadvantaged pupils continue to achieve less well than their non-disadvantaged peers across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.

Attainment and Examination Performance:

- a) At Key Stage 4, disadvantaged pupils achieve an average Attainment 8 score of 34.6, compared with 50.0 for non-disadvantaged pupils.
- b) Only 26% of disadvantaged pupils achieve a Grade 5 or above in both English and mathematics, compared with 53% of their peers, demonstrating a significant attainment gap.

Key Stage 2 (Reading, Writing, Maths Combined):

- a) Pupil Premium pupils achieving expected standards: 48% - 50%
- b) Non-Pupil Premium pupils: 70% - 72%
- c) Gap: -22 percentage points

Key Stage 4 Progress 8 (KS2 to KS4 progress):

- a) Pupil Premium pupils typically have a **negative score** indicating below-average progress.

The Six Central Barriers: (Taken from EEF, 2025):

The EEF states that disadvantaged pupils face a range of barriers to educational success, but the most commonly identified are:

1. **Low literacy attainment**, particularly reading, vocabulary development and disciplinary literacy across the curriculum.
2. **Poor attendance and persistent absence**, which have become one of the greatest barriers to achievement since the pandemic
3. **Lower attainment in English and mathematics**, limiting access to the wider curriculum and future progression.
4. **Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)** needs, affecting engagement, behaviour and readiness to learn.
5. **Limited access to enrichment**, cultural capital and wider opportunities, reducing confidence, aspirations and experiences that support academic success.
6. **Economic disadvantage**, which can affect access to learning resources, technology, study space and wider support outside school.

The EEF also analysed over 1,250 Pupil Premium strategies from schools across England. The three barriers most frequently identified by schools were:

- 83% identified literacy as a key barrier.
- 78% identified attendance.
- 74% identified social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and wellbeing.

Research indicates that the barriers identified within the EEF framework mirror that which are seen nationally and much is being done throughout the school to combat this.

What are the Barriers at RFSS and what are we doing to address them?

Strategic Barrier	Evidence within RFSS	Strategic Response
Literacy and disciplinary literacy	Variability in reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension limits curriculum access for some pupils.	Whole-school disciplinary literacy, explicit vocabulary instruction, reading intervention and staff professional development.
Attendance and persistent absence	Attendance remains lower for some disadvantaged pupils, particularly where EBSA, SEMH or wider vulnerabilities are present.	Early identification, attendance mentoring, family engagement and multi-agency support.
Self-efficacy, confidence and aspiration	Some pupils require additional support to develop confidence, resilience and ambitious post-16 aspirations.	Coaching, mentoring, careers education, leadership opportunities and personal development curriculum.
Access to wider opportunities	Financial barriers can reduce participation in enrichment, educational visits and extracurricular activities.	Targeted financial support, subsidised visits and proactive promotion of enrichment opportunities.
Complex vulnerability	Disadvantage frequently overlaps with SEND, safeguarding, SEMH and family circumstances.	Integrated pastoral support, SEND provision, safeguarding systems and external agency collaboration.
Examination readiness and independent learning	Some pupils require additional support in developing effective revision strategies, independent study habits and examination confidence.	Academic mentoring, metacognitive strategies, targeted intervention and structured revision programmes.

The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium (2025) has moved beyond simply identifying barriers and instead sets out a five-step process for developing an effective strategy, underpinned by the familiar three-

waved approach. This is also reflected in the 2026 DfE guidance and has been closely mirrored in the RFSS Pupil Premium strategy.

1. Diagnose the barriers accurately

The EEF recommends that schools first understand the specific barriers facing their disadvantaged pupils, rather than assuming all disadvantaged pupils have the same needs.

2. Use reliable research evidence

Schools should select approaches that are supported by evidence, particularly the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit and guidance reports, rather than relying on intuition or isolated initiatives.

3. Adopt the EEF's tiered approach

- High Quality Teaching
- Targeted interventions
- Wider Strategies

4. Implement with care

- careful planning,
- staff training,
- consistent implementation,
- leadership oversight,
- giving approaches sufficient time to embed.

5. Monitor, evaluate and refine

- review pupil progress regularly,
- evaluate whether interventions are working,
- stop or adapt approaches with limited impact,
- publish an updated strategy annually while maintaining a longer-term three-year plan

Our Approach:

At Rugby Free Secondary School, we recognise that disadvantage is complex, dynamic and highly individual. Eligibility for Pupil Premium funding provides an important indicator of potential educational disadvantage; however, leaders understand that pupils experience barriers in different ways and to differing degrees.

Our strategy is not based upon assumptions associated with socio-economic status alone. Instead, they are underpinned by the most recent research and evidence presented by the DFE and the EEF. We use a broad range of evidence including attendance, attainment, literacy assessments, behaviour, safeguarding information, pastoral knowledge and pupil voice to identify barriers that may prevent pupils from achieving their full potential.

When compiling potential actions for this academic year, consideration was given to the three wave approach explained in the aforementioned EEF publication, which are as follows:

1. Teaching 2. Targeted Academic Support 3. Wider Strategies

Consequently, all actions and strategies are mapped against these three waves with research and evidence used to support the implementation of, and rationale behind, these strategies. Therefore, our strategies relate not just to the academic progress of students, but to their development through a holistic lens.

We work hard to ensure that assumptions are not made about lower expectations of disadvantaged students and that all students are taught to strive for maximum progress and attainment, throughout all years and subjects.

Research has in fact shown that many disadvantaged pupils demonstrate exceptional resilience, aspiration and academic ability. Our role is therefore not to lower expectations, but to remove barriers that prevent pupils from accessing the same opportunities as their peers.

School analysis indicates that barriers frequently overlap. For example, pupils eligible for Pupil Premium may also experience:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs
- Caring responsibilities
- Family instability
- Low confidence or self-efficacy
- Poor attendance
- Literacy difficulties

Understanding these intersecting factors allows leaders to deploy support more precisely and ensures that interventions are proportionate, evidence-informed and responsive to changing needs.

Importantly, leaders recognise that disadvantage is not static. Barriers experienced in Year 7 often differ significantly from those encountered during Key Stage 4. Our strategy therefore reflects a graduated waved approach, adapting provision throughout pupils' educational journey.

In terms of maximising attendance and progress, many of those strategies identified by EEF as delivering the biggest gains feature. For example, teacher marking/feedback is monitored by regular SLT Quality Assurance. Other targeted interventions from teaching and pastoral support staff (e.g. small group tuition, behaviour, attendance/reintegration, mentoring and counselling)

are available and offered as required and their impact monitored and reviewed. Robust in-school (and external) post-assessment processes ensure timely interventions.

At Rugby Free Secondary School, we reject the notion that disadvantage determines destiny.

Our philosophy is founded upon three principles.

High Expectations

Every pupil is expected to participate in an ambitious curriculum, enrichment program and achieve highly. Staff maintain consistently high expectations regardless of prior attainment or background, recognising that expectations strongly influence outcomes.

Evidence-Informed Practice

School improvement is driven by evidence rather than educational fashion. Decisions regarding Pupil Premium expenditure are informed by the Education Endowment Foundation, Department for Education guidance and rigorous evaluation of our own practice.

Equity Through Inclusion

Educational equity requires more than equal access. It requires ensuring that every pupil receives the precise support necessary to succeed. This means identifying barriers early, responding proportionately and continually evaluating whether strategies are having the intended impact.

Ultimately, our aim is not simply to narrow attainment gaps. Our ambition is to ensure that every disadvantaged pupil leaves Rugby Free Secondary School equipped with the knowledge, qualifications, experiences and confidence required to flourish in adulthood. Through excellent teaching, meaningful relationships and carefully targeted support, we remain committed to ensuring that every pupil is truly **Set for Life**.

RFSS offers and delivers a curriculum, both academic and enrichment which is rich in breadth and depth, enabling progress in terms of academia and being 'set for life', regardless of ability or background - underpinned by a culture of high expectations, high aspirations and inclusivity. As such, RFSS constantly monitors the progress of many subgroups (in addition to each full cohort) including disadvantaged students covered by Pupil Premium (and PP+) funding (i.e. FSM, Ever 6, CIC, CPIC) with the intention and goal of securing good progress and the best outcomes, thereby narrowing the attainment gap for disadvantaged students.

Key to achieving the school's overall aims through our curriculum, is high quality teaching and learning. In the current 2026 OFSTED report, it was stated that "Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make secure progress through the curriculum". We want students to leave our school with the confidence that comes from knowing more, remembering more, and being able to do more. Therefore, the development of knowledge and skills are significant aspects of what we focus on in the classroom.

Beyond the classroom, a range of cultural capital activities and enrichment opportunities (including trips and visits) are provided for students, which Pupil Premium students are encouraged to participate in as a means of broadening their experiences so that disadvantaged students can leave school as high achieving, well-rounded individuals equipped to be '**set for life**'.

In terms of maximising progress, many of those strategies identified by EEF as delivering the biggest gains feature, for example, teacher delivery and feedback is monitored by regular SLT Quality Assurance. Other targeted interventions from teaching and pastoral support staff (e.g. Small group interventions, Attitude to Learning Interventions, Attendance support, SEMH Mentors access) are offered as required and their impact monitored and reviewed. Evidence that these interventions and strategies are working were highlighted in the most recent 2026 OFSTED report that stated "Disadvantaged pupils also achieve well in external examinations" and "pupils' attendance at school is improving, including for disadvantaged pupils"

The successful 2026 Ofsted inspection also recognised Rugby Free Secondary School's ambitious curriculum, inclusive ethos, positive relationships and high expectations for all pupils. These strengths provide a secure foundation upon which we continue to improve outcomes for disadvantaged learners. OFSTED stated "The school uses additional funding well to support disadvantaged pupils. For example, some of these pupils receive targeted interventions, additional tutoring and mentoring. This is helping to improve these pupils' academic performance." With our increased success in supporting our disadvantaged students we can see that our popularity in the local community has continued to rise with over 8882 applications in year 7, with 558 first and second choice applications (Year 7) and over 350 applications (Sixth Form) ahead of the 2026-27 academic year.

Challenges:

This section details the key challenges to achievement, attainment and progress that we have identified amongst our disadvantaged students.

Challenge Number	Detail of Challenge
1	Levels of Literacy, disciplinary literacy and Numeracy.
2	Self-efficacy, confidence and aspiration
3	High numbers of complex vulnerability (multiple disadvantaged)
4	Low Attendance and persistent absence
5	Higher levels of social, emotional and mental health issues
6	Access to wider opportunities due to deprivation

Intended Outcomes:

This section 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. All are one year intended outcomes, unless otherwise specified in brackets.

Intended Outcome	Success Criteria
To ensure disadvantaged students know, understand and retain more in order to make accelerated progress – especially through improved literacy and numeracy.	• Improvements in grades through English and Maths intervention groups and the wider curriculum. • Attainment data shows good progress and narrowing of the gap. • Students know how to help themselves to be more effective learners leading to accelerated progress
To ensure that our disadvantaged students, attend and find school a rewarding experience.	• Reduction in persistent absence. • Reduction in EBSA numbers. • Parents and carers more engaged with school. • Reduction in number of students accessing IRR. • Incremental improvement in attendance and engagement behaviour.
To support disadvantaged students to be effective learners. Students adopt positive learning behaviours and engage more proactively in lessons, especially in Key Stage 3.	• Fewer days in IRR than the previous year. • Suspensions are fewer than the previous year. • Permanent exclusions are fewer than the previous year. • Evidence of students using self-regulation strategies to de-escalate situations and avoid consequences. • More positive reward points for Pupil Premium students than in the previous year. • More Pupil Premium students nominated for awards than in the previous year. • Improved engagement in terms of attitude to learning – reflected in ATL teacher grades at data capture windows.
To broaden the cultural capital of all disadvantaged pupils through the curriculum and enrichment activities.	• Increased engagement in extra-curricular activities. • Increased participation in trips and visits, especially those that are for longer durations. • Increased numbers of Pupil Premium students on the Student Leadership Team.

To reduce SEMH barriers to learning	• SEMH/well-being issues affect fewer students. • In-school/external support (Mentors, family support worker, pastoral support officers etc) means SEMH impacts learning and progress less, and students become more resilient. • Implementation of 'The Guide' with targeted students in order to reduce SEMH barriers.
Increased parental engagement, especially with Pupil Premium families.	• Parents engage by signing up for Parents' Evenings and Parents' Information Evenings - similar percentage to non-PP attendance. Parents respond to surveys and school communication more frequently. • Parents attend the specific Pupil Premium focused parental workshops, and the parental workshops that are open to all, such as Healthy Eating on a Budget cooking workshops.
More disadvantaged pupils aspire to Sixth Form at RFSS, or elsewhere.	• Increased awareness of opportunities available (e.g. university taster days) • Engagement in Careers Fayres. • Destinations. • NEET figures remain positive.

Activity in this Academic Year (2025-2026):

This details how we intend to spend our Pupil Premium during **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, Staff CPD, Recruitment and Retention)

Budgeted cost: £232,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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1a) RFSS Teaching Strategy centred on Tom Sherrington's Walkthrus, in order to enable Quality First Teaching.	<i>'Evidence indicates that high quality teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment, including for disadvantaged pupils. Schools should focus on building teacher knowledge and pedagogical expertise, curriculum development, and the purposeful use of assessment.'</i> (EEF Pupil Premium Menu, 2024)	7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching
1b) Specific Staff Handbook Guidance on QFT and Disadvantaged Students expanded on by high quality CPD and QA to measure impact.	<i>'Ensure that professional development effectively builds knowledge, motivates staff, develops teaching techniques, and embeds practice.'</i> (Effective Professional Development Guidance Reports EEF, 2023)	7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching
1c) Undertake Baseline assessments where applicable, including NGRT Reading tests. All core subjects to undertake baseline assessments in year 7	<i>'Baseline assessments enable teachers and leaders to intervene from the outset.'</i> (Cambridge, 2022)	1 – Low academic levels of literacy and numeracy on entry 7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching
1d) Support materials for staff who require additional support, through Wave 1, Wave 2 and Wave 3 CPD.	<i>'CPD works best when it:</i> <i>• Is tailored to teachers' needs and contexts</i> <i>• Combines theory and practice, with expert modelling, classroom experimentation, and feedback</i> <i>• Fosters collaboration and shared support</i> <i>• Has clear goals tied to pupil impact (Timperley et al. 2007; Yoon et al. 2007; Kraft, Blazar & Hogan 2018)'</i>	

2a) Regular Mentoring Support for Early Career Teachers and colleagues identified as requiring additional support. Sessions to include specialist training on QFT and Disadvantaged Students.	<i>'Set aside regular time: Schools that allocate scheduled, regular mentor-mentee meetings—supported by time-off timetable for both—see deeper engagement and stronger outcomes.'</i> (Gov.uk, 2024)	7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching
2b) Additional pathway for staff who require further support, which will also include 15+ sessions of CPD on QFT teaching for key sub-groups such as Pupil Premium students. New staff induction to include specific PP training.	<i>'Emphasising this personalised support can help to break down the barrier sometimes felt between teachers and allow a more open space for non-judgemental and honest discussion about classroom practice.'</i> (Iris:2022)	7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching
3a) Continue to develop high-quality teaching, assessment and literacy, by utilising tools such as NGRT assessments in order to support assessment and interventions.	<i>'Benchmarking: NGRT compares a student's performance against a large, representative national sample, helping schools understand how a student is performing relative to peers.</i> <i>Reliable tracking over time: Results can be used to measure progress year-on-year.'</i> (NGRT, 2023)	1- Low academic performance on entry, with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy.
3b) Continue to offer Literacy and Numeracy interventions for those students who require the most catch-up at Key Stage 3. These include: - Social Interventions - Homework Club - Reading Buddies - Literacy & Numeracy Interventions	<i>'Catch-up strategies include regular, informal assessments; identifying pupils who need additional, one-to-one support...'</i> (Gov.uk:2020)	1- Low academic performance on entry, with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy.

4a) Use external speakers and companies to promote the dangers of knife crime, gang culture, county lines and online safety, through Prison Me No Way and Loudmouth Theatre. All external events to feature targeted groups of Pupil Premium students from all year groups. 4b) Amend the PSHE curriculum to fit in with local and national issues.	<i>'County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018). It can happen in any part of the UK and is against the law and a form of child abuse. forms of criminal exploitation include child sexual exploitation, trafficking, gang and knife crime.'</i> (NSPCC:2018)	6 - Community issues such as gangs, county lines and high levels of deprivation.
5a) Quality Assurance episodes such as Curriculum Evaluations and Book Looks to involve reports on provision for Disadvantaged Students.	<i>'Consistent application of QFT for Disadvantaged Students is the most powerful factor in improving student outcomes for Disadvantaged Students.'</i> (RQI, 2022)	7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching
6a) Recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers. Maintaining a school ethos where 'relationships matter' and where staff feel 'safe, valued, and respected'. 6b) Staff Well-being groups and staff voice splinter groups continue to refine job satisfaction by a 'You Said, We Did' approach. 6c) Employ a specific SEND teacher to enable Year 7 and Year 8 students to experience Boost Group teaching and learning, with smaller class sizes.	<i>'Schools can motivate teachers to enter the profession by ensuring that careers in teaching are attractive, sustainable and rewarding. Managing workload and supporting the delivery of effective professional development are key to retaining great teachers.'</i> (EEF Pupil Premium Menu, 2024) <i>Comparison of annual Staff Survey and retention and recruitment data against the national recruitment crisis data.</i> <i>'Some of our students from more affluent homes benefit from external tutors. Overstaffing the core provides the opportunity for RFSS to provide rich support in the classroom and for Disadvantaged Students fast-tracked to targeted intervention.'</i>	7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching 3 - High numbers of students with SEND, with this now much higher than NA.

7a) Investment in technology and other resources to further raise the quality of teaching and learning such as; pencil cases, revision guides, art materials and food ingredients. 7b) Acquisition of , Seneca, Little Wandle, Century Tech and GCSE-Pod to support students accessing platforms through mobile phones. 7c) The purchase of student and parent friendly ClassCharts to boost communication (e.g. Rewards, Home Learning) and Bromcom for Student Performance Analysis. 7d) Mid-year Jan/Feb application window open for Opportunities Fund for parents and staff to request bespoke PP Funding 7e) Identified Revision Guides for all core subjects provided free for Disadvantaged Students in year 10 and 11 7f) Subsidised Music Lessons for	<i>To improve learning, schools should consider the specific barriers technology is addressing, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, and use technology in a way that is informed by effective pedagogy.'</i> EEF Pupil Premium Menu, 2024) <i>"Schools with higher levels of disadvantage have experienced higher levels of loss than other schools, particularly in secondary (2.2 months in schools with high rates of free school meal eligibility and 1.5 months in schools with low rates of free school meal eligibility)" (DfE Interim Report: 2021) "Evidence shows learning platforms such as GCSEPod are effective interventions in a student's learning, with this App consolidating subject knowledge and accelerating progress." (GCSEPod: 2022)</i> <i>'Our hope is that this guidance will help to support a consistently excellent, evidence-informed education system in England that creates great opportunities for all children and young people, regardless of their family background.'</i> EEF Using Digital Technology to Improve Learning Guidance Report, 2019)	7 – Consistent access to quality first teaching 2- Lack of self-regulation and independent learning, especially in Key Stage 3. 4- Low Attendance as a consequence of high levels of SEMH and SEND.
8a) Investment in extra-curricular clubs, trips and visits to enable further opportunities for students to extend their learning outside of the classroom. 8b) Purchase Absolute Education to track and monitor sub-group attendance to enrichment more closely.	<i>'There's something about the shared experience of a school trip that stays with us forever. Unique and apart from the everyday classroom experience, trips provide the possibility to communicate and bond with peers in different and freer ways, to make new friends and explore new places. Whether pupils get to try new things or experience life-changing moments, school trips are educationally enriching in the broadest and most encompassing sense.'</i> (FundEd: 2024)	3,Lack of self-regulation and independent learning, especially in Key Stage 3. 4 -Low Attendance as a consequence of high levels of SEMH and SEND.

9a) build on the success from our Inclusive Attendance work and integrate the new ATTEND framework to improve rates of attendance for all sub-groups as per our attendance procedure 9b) Operate a morning breakfast club that explicitly targets PP students, with the opportunity for students to be 'set for school' 9c) Ensure all staff are trained in trauma-informed approaches, to ensure a consistent approach to behaviour and attitudes inside and outside the classroom.	<i>'Three quarters of schools in England say poor attendance and low-reading levels are the biggest challenges affecting their socio-economically disadvantaged pupils' academic achievement.'</i> (EEF: 2023) <i>'Breakfast clubs in schools can support children and young people to get into school – get there on time – and help give them the start they need to take on their school day.'</i> (Magic Breakfast: 2024) <i>'The key goal of trauma-informed practice is to raise awareness among all staff about the wide impact of trauma and to prevent the re-traumatisation of clients in service settings that are meant to support and assist healing.'</i> (NAPAC: 2024)	4 -Low Attendance as a consequence of high levels of SEMH and SEND. 5- High levels of social, emotional and mental health issues, post-Covid 19.
10a) Raise aspirations through target grade expectations and an updated assessment model, underpinned by FFT Aspire.	<i>'Recognising students' strengths is important, but I would argue that the best method of supporting underachieving students is to have high aspirations.'</i> (SecEd:2020)	1- Low academic performance on entry, with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy. 7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching

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

Budgeted cost: £105,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
1a) Plan, deliver and evaluate a Key Stage 3 Interventions Plan (Literacy and Numeracy foci) with Pupil Premium students fast-tracked to this additional support 1b) Plan, deliver and evaluate a KS4 Intervention Plan with Pupil Premium students given priority through careers and next steps 1c) Every teacher to receive CPD on how to identify a sub-group focus and to use 'bus routes' and 'focus 10', to support academic under performance or encourage academic excellence. To be reviewed termly. 1d) Offer after School homework club for KS 3 and KS4 as well as Subject Specific Revision Classes at key Stage 4 to develop an achievement culture, with Pupil Premium students receiving targeted invitations where appropriate.	<i>'High quality teaching should reduce the need for extra support for all pupils. However, it is likely that some pupils will require additional support in the form of high quality, structured interventions to make progress, or to catch up with their peers.'</i> (EEF Selecting Interventions:2022) <i>'Teachers require knowledge of the unique skills that each child brings to the classroom in order to effectively target instruction towards students' learning needs.'</i> (York:2014) <i>'The need for additional support for disadvantaged students has never been greater.'</i> (Turner:2022)	1- Low academic performance with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy 2- Lack of self-regulation and independent learning 7 - Consistent access to quality first teaching

1e) Interventions to provide intense targeting of identified students to maximise impact based upon internal data. 1f) Morning Registration Core Support Intervention for Year 11 three days a week at key times, to include targeted Pupil Premium students. 1g) Intense NEA monitoring through NEA tracker, of completion rates within timescales, with a focus on Pupil Premium students. 1h) Holiday Intervention programmes to accelerate student progress in all breaks (except Christmas), with targeted invitations for Pupil Premium students.	<i>'Intensive individual support, either one to one or as a small group, can support pupil learning. This is most likely to be impactful if provided in addition to and explicitly linked with normal lessons. Schools should think carefully about implementation of tuition, including assessment of learning gaps, careful selection of curriculum content, ensuring those delivering tuition are well-prepared, and monitoring impact.'</i> (EEF Pupil Premium Menu, 2024)	1. Low academic performance with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy 2. Lack of self-regulation and independent learning
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2a) Deliver learning episodes, adaptive teaching and resourcing to meet the specific needs of Disadvantaged Students, and especially those with SEND. 2b) Staff CPD on quality-first teaching for students to build on RFSS Teaching and Learning model delivered weekly before and after school on specific sessions that arise from QA. 2c) Effective deployment of T&L program every Monday to maximise additional support, so that classroom support is helpful to all. 2d) Ensure teachers know their key foci students by delivering half-termly Focus 10 sessions, weekly spotlight sessions and CPD on seating plans and Classcharts	<i>'Disadvantaged pupils with SEND have the greatest need for excellent teaching. Specific approaches to support these pupils may include explicit instruction, cognitive and metacognitive strategies, scaffolding, flexible grouping, and the targeted use of technology'. EEF Pupil Premium Menu, 2024)</i> <i>'Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them.'</i> (EEF Making the Best Use of Teaching Assistants, 2025) <i>Teachers require knowledge of the unique skills that each child brings to the classroom in order to effectively target instruction towards students' learning needs.'</i> (York:2014)	3. High numbers of students with SEND 1. Consistent access to quality first teaching
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3a) continue to develop our mentoring Scheme including 6th form reading buddies, motivation matters and 6th form mentors so KS3 students have positive role models to work with 3b) Develop a 6th form program to work with key Year 11 Pupil Premium students to undertake peer mentoring in preparation for GCSE's 3c) Sixth Form students to be assigned to key students to support with reading in Key Stage 3.	<i>'High impact for very low cost based on extensive evidence (+5 Months progress) EEF Toolkit</i> <i>'The Hurworth model stresses the difference between soft (traditional) and hard (assertive) mentoring and sites this distinction as the key to improvement.'</i> (Horsley, 2021) <i>'Students gain rare insights from the experiences of other students and start to feel confident in themselves.'</i> (Newcastle University, 2023)	1. Low academic performance with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy 2. Lack of self-regulation and independent learning
4a) Effective plans for Literacy and Numeracy-based catch-up Key Stage 3 interventions to accelerate the progress of Disadvantaged students. 4b) Implement the Unit Award Scheme to support certification in alternative methods, and to support in English and Maths revision.	<i>'Schools will be encouraged to continue to prioritise tuition for those students who need it the most through existing budgets.'</i> (Gov.uk:2024) <i>'Managing a school with a larger than average pupil premium cohort means that embedding our pupil premium offer into our whole school approach is crucial, and the need to feel success underpins this.'</i> (King, 2025)	1. Low academic performance with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy 2. Lack of self-regulation and independent learning
5a) Reading scores and ages shared on Class-Charts so they are aware of students' reading ages for intent and implementation purposes.	<i>'Reading ages are crucial components of planning and implementation, often offering an insight into the different needs required for each student within a classroom setting.'</i> (NGER: 2021)	1. Low levels of Literacy

6a) Timetable additional literacy, numeracy and science groups to support students with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy. 6b) Utilise staff to deliver timetabled interventions (English and Maths, and Literacy / Numeracy support), with a focus on Pupil Premium students. 6c) Specific SEND trained teacher to support students who have low levels of Literacy, and/or SEND. 6d) Introduction of a vulnerability matrix to identify transient disadvantages, targeting immediate support where needed and share with all staff in spotlight sessions	Additional staff employed with a specific focus on Literacy and Numeracy. We run 'booster' groups for Literacy and Numeracy, where students need additional support to access the curriculum within the upper pathways. <i>'Most research into literacy difficulties and literacy intervention focuses on early intervention when there is the greatest opportunity to close the gap between normal and slower progression in literacy development. Sequential and systematic approaches for younger children are often effective because new learning behaviours are established before less helpful responses are practised and embedded. Older students tend to have varied profiles of needs for support. Either they have specific needs often related to a deficit in one area of literacy which can be addressed with a targeted programme or they have more complex and individual profiles of helpful and less helpful knowledge and skills.'</i> (UCL, 2018)	1. Low levels of Literacy and Numeracy
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7a) DoL's to work with leadership to support teachers to identify a sub-group focus 3, to support academic under performance or encourage academic excellence. To be reviewed termly.	<i>Following data capture windows, there is analysis undertaken of students' performance and attitude to learning. From this, a Focus 3 for each class will be created, with a focus on PP students explicitly.</i>	1. Low levels of Literacy and Numeracy 2. Lack of self-regulation and independent learning
8a) Set for School breakfast Club for Pupil Premium students, with a focus on supporting our students to start the day correctly.	<i>'Breakfast clubs can be an important way of supporting a whole school focus on healthy lifestyles. Breakfast clubs allow children to have a healthy breakfast in a safe and secure environment before school and can be particularly essential for families who do not have the resources or the time to provide breakfast for their children. They are able to offer children a social environment to have breakfast with their peers.' (Food Life:2024)</i>	1. Low academic performance on entry, with low levels of Literacy and Numeracy. 2. Lack of self-regulation and independent learning, especially in Key Stage 3.

Wider Strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing):

Budgeted cost: £60,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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1a) Supporting the SEMH of our Disadvantaged Students through a referral to SEMH Mentor team and SEND & Inclusion team. 1b) Ensure timetabling of SEMH Mentors to further strengthen the pastoral intervention systems, and to implement 'The Guide'. 1c) Investment in whole school PSHE & LORIC programme to build positive SEMH skills in line with the school values 1d) Restorative and relationship-driven approach to promote positive behaviours from Disadvantaged Students to accelerate their learning and reduce their enhanced risk of suspension through Values Cards and a Restorative Relationships approach based on Trauma Informed Training. 1e) Trauma Informed Attachment Aware training undertaken regularly and approaches to underpin practices. 1f) Waved tiers of SEMH support offered both internally and externally to students, with Pupil Premium students discussed at Panel where applicable.	<i>'Social and emotional skills support effective learning and are linked to positive outcomes later in life.'</i> EEF Pupil Premium Menu, 2024) <i>'SEMH Mentors can really benefit students in providing them with accessible, trusted members of staff with whom they can rely upon.'</i> (Ludlow:2023) <i>'More than 3,000 children a day lost access to learning through suspension in 2021/22, and children living in poverty were 3.7 times more likely to be sent home from school than their peers.'</i> (Children & Young People Now: 2022) <i>'Trauma-informed schools could make a positive difference to young people's behaviour and to their mental wellbeing, attainment and future life chances.'</i> (Holmes: 2021) <i>'Progress is best made step by step; a graduated approach respects complexity, builds resilience, and ensures each layer of growth is grounded in understanding.'</i> (Horner, 2025)	5. High levels of SEMH issues due to the pandemic. 3. High numbers of students with SEND and with EHCPs.
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2a) Purchase of safeguarding software, Smoothwall, in order to further protect both staff and students when working remotely. (KCSiE – monitoring and filtering)	<i>"The internet and online technology provides new opportunities for young people's learning and growth, but it can also expose them to new types of risks. E-safety should form a fundamental part of schools' and colleges' safeguarding and child protection measures." (NSPCC: 2021)</i>	5 – High levels of social emotional and mental health issues due to the pandemic 3 - High numbers of students with SEND and with EHCPs.
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3a) Raise Attendance of Disadvantaged Students 3b) Additional staff recruited to work with attendance concerns / school refusers. - Senior Attendance Champion 3c) RFSS Attendance Plan written across 25/26 academic year and PP attendance champion recruited 3d) Disadvantaged Students fast-tracked to the next tier of intervention due to their vulnerability to persistent absence. 3e) Re-launch of The Student Voice allowing students access to report concerns online.	<i>'This year, almost two in five disadvantaged pupils (37.9 per cent) were persistently absent – which has actually worsened from 37.2 per cent last year. This is also more than double the rate for their better-off peers – whose persistent absence rates have instead dropped from 17.5 per cent to 16.7 per cent in the same timeframe. It means the disadvantage gap in attendance has widened by 6.7 percentage points, rising from 14.5 per cent in pre-pandemic 2018-19 to 21.2 per cent this year.'</i> (Schools Week: 2023) <i>Additional staff employed with a specific focus on students / families who are attendance concerns, and/or school refusers. This decision has been made in line with the EEF research that suggests 'attendance has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels' (EEF, 2022).</i> <i>'Build respectful relationships with students, families and other stakeholders in order to create trust and engagement.'</i> (Gov.UK - Improving School Attendance, 2022)	4 – Low Attendance 3 - High numbers of students with SEND and with EHCPs.
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4a) TEEP programme introduced to encourage Disadvantaged Students to access to Extra-Curricular and Enrichment Activities, through targeted invitations. 4b) Cultural Capital and enrichment opportunities promoted in our ever-evolving curriculum to broaden the horizons of all students but especially our Disadvantaged Students and PP Enrichment. Enrichment fair organised to include external agencies 4c) School trips organised to offer financial support the participation of disadvantaged students with tracking of participation to support full engagement by disadvantaged students	<i>'There is intrinsic value in teaching pupils creative and performance skills and ensuring disadvantaged pupils access a rich and stimulating arts education. Arts participation may be delivered within the core curriculum, or through extra-curricular or cultural trips which can be subject to financial barriers for pupils from deprived backgrounds.'</i> (EEF Toolkit + 3 months) <i>'An "enrichment gap" is emerging between disadvantaged pupils and their peers due to a decline in access to after school activities in schools, which are facing increasing pressure on their budgets.'</i> (Schools Week: 2024) <i>'Inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.'</i> (Ofsted, ongoing)	5 – High levels of social emotional and mental health issues due to the pandemic 6 - Community issues and high levels of deprivation
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5a) Providing more opportunities for Disadvantaged Students through extending school provision. 5b) Summer School organised to target effective Y7 induction, to the particular benefit of Disadvantaged students 5c) Home Learning Policy and Staff Guidance revised to produce more consistent and effective home learning opportunities 5d) Development of a Home Learning Club to reduce barriers for SEND and Disadvantaged Students both at lunchtime and after school	<i>'Extended school time encompasses purposeful changes to the school day or the school calendar. This can extend upon core teaching, such as targeted after school programmes of tuition, homework, or additional summer school programmes. Such programmes are more likely to foster academic benefits when clearly structured, linked to the curriculum and led by well-qualified and well-trained staff.'</i> EEF Pupil Premium Menu, 2024) <i>Including additional non-academic activities such as sports, arts or cultural enrichment are valuable in their own right and can offer opportunities to pupils from low-income households who may not otherwise be able to afford them. A mix of activities may also help to promote engagement and take up of summer schools.'</i> (+3 Months Progress) EEF Toolkit <i>'Pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive additional benefits from homework. However, surveys in England suggest that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have a quiet working space, are less likely to have access to a device suitable for learning or a stable internet connection and may receive less parental support to complete homework and develop effective learning habits. These difficulties may increase the gap in attainment for disadvantaged pupils. Homework clubs can help to overcome these barriers by offering pupils the resources and support needed to undertake homework or revision.'</i> (+5 Months) EEF Toolkit	1 – Technological access 5 – High levels of social emotional and mental health issues due to the pandemic 6 - Community issues and high levels of deprivation
6a) An increase in attendance to school through the introduction of a 'Set for School' breakfast Club before school.	Additional staffing and funding required in order to launch a breakfast club for targeted students. <i>'In an effort to support positive breakfast habits from childhood many schools provide children with an opportunity to consume breakfast on school premises in the company of peers through provision of a breakfast club. Research has shown that breakfast clubs have been somewhat successful.'</i> (NLMJ, 2015)	4 – Low Attendance

7a) Further develop parental engagement with parents/carers of Disadvantaged Students 7b) HOY & Tutors target regular contact 7c) Implementation of workshops and parental engagement sessions. 7d) Increasing use of School Newsletters and Social Media to celebrate and inform. 7e) Weekly Headteacher's Awards to be at least 50% Pupil Premium students via positive discrimination. 7f) introduction of community workshops to develop relationships beyond the school gates	<i>'While much of this battle can be won inside the school gate, what happens at home is crucial too. We know that levels of parental engagement are consistently associated with children's academic outcomes.'</i> EEF Parental Engagement Guidance Report <i>'Embedding positive discrimination with Pupil Premium students is a key to unlocking potential and motivation.'</i> (Sutton:2022) <i>'A key challenge for schools is identifying the different experiences of their students and responding to the volume of safeguarding concerns that are likely to arise as students begin to open up to their teachers. It's important to remember that these concerns could arise in relation to any child, not just those previously identified as vulnerable, and that many children will have had a range of challenging experiences.'</i> (Returning to School after Lockdown Report: 2021)	5 – High levels of social emotional and mental health issues due to the pandemic 6 - Community issues and high levels of deprivation
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8a) Increase students' aspirations of what can be achieved. 8b) Expand the academic enrichment on offer to students around careers particularly for the HPA with the introduction of a HPA program and University visits in early KS4	<i>With a focus on the impact of low aspirations on disadvantaged students, a contextual issue that is particularly prevalent within Rugby itself, the school purchased 'Unifrog'.</i> <i>... compared to students with low aspirations and low expectations, having higher aspirations improves school achievement even if expectations are low. Furthermore, complete alignment between high aspirations, high expectations and high achievement is the most important predictor for future educational behaviour among students. Compared with students with low aspirations, low expectations and low achievement, those with high achievement who had expressed high aspirations, but low expectations were more likely to apply for a university course. The latter group of students also had better chances than students with high aspirations, high expectations but low achievement.</i> <i>(Students' aspirations, expectations and school achievement: what really matters? Nabil Khattab BERJ)</i>	2 – Lack of self-regulation and independent learning 5 – High levels of SEMH issues due to the pandemic 6- Community issues and high levels of deprivation
9. Safeline – Student Safeguarding Leads as 'bolt on' CPD for students above 'Young Black Men' - Warwickshire Mind: developing positive role models, On Track (SEMH), Highly Strung, Drama 360, external alternative provisions	<i>'The course participants will be empowered to share their experiences of prejudice and racism and together will develop a plan of how to overcome and resolve future discrimination at school or within their wider community. Safeline hopes that the programme will enable young people from ethnic minorities to feel better supported, with an understanding that they will be treated equally and that they feel safe to report any form of abuse including sexual abuse. (Topics covered in the pilot course will include bullying, discrimination, unconscious bias and media language including music).'</i>' (Safeline, 2025)	6- Community issues and high levels of deprivation

Wave 1: Inside: Classroom / T&L Strategies	Wave 2: Outside: Pastoral & Wider Strategies	Wave 3: Intervention Strategies
KEY ACTIONS: • Teacher knowledge of who Pupil Premium students in their lessons are, with this also marked on Bromcom. • Targeted questioning and cold-calling aimed at Pupil Premium students, where appropriate and applicable. • Provide check-in support for Pupil Premium students after explanations, and when tasks begin. • Regularly check for understanding of Pupil Premium students. • Live model to Pupil Premium students in order for them to see what success looks like. • Live feedback (either verbal or written) to Pupil Premium students in order for them to see things instantaneously. • Ensure that Pupil Premium students are not sat together in seating plans. • Ensure that Pupil Premium students are not grouped together in collaborative activities. • Amend the Curriculum to ensure it fits the needs of Pupil Premium students.	KEY ACTIONS: • Attendance discussions and interventions in place for Pupil Premium students who are not meeting attendance targets. • Offer a Breakfast Club that targets specific Pupil Premium students who have below expected attendance and/or punctuality. • Provide one-to-one or small group mentoring for targeted Pupil Premium students, through SEMH Mentors. • Immerse Pupil Premium students in technological platforms where possible, such as Seneca and GCSEPod. • Provide additional Careers Interviews, especially for Pupil Premium students who are lacking career aspirations. • Increased focus on the Pupil Premium group when analysing data. • Positive discrimination in praise / reward points for Pupil Premium students. • Feature Pupil Premium students in Safeguarding spotlights. • Implement additional parental sessions, with Pupil Premium students, parents and carers targeted.	KEY ACTIONS: • Implement Catch-Up Interventions (focus on targeted year groups) for Pupil Premium students in English and Maths. • Organise external speakers to present to Pupil Premium students, parents and carers. • Provide sessions linked to expectations and key barriers for each year group (Bootcamps). • Join the Brilliant Club to promote aspirations for Pupil Premium students who are HPA and wish to go to University. • Ensure there is a timetable in which Sixth Formers can work with Pupil Premium students on targeted subjects or areas or foci. • Senior Leadership Team and Directors of Learning to monitor the books of Pupil Premium students through work scrutiny. • Provide Revision Guides for Key Stage 4 students, where appropriate. • Provide lesson equipment for Pupil Premium students, where appropriate. • Open a bidding process for Departments to bid for additional Pupil Premium funding, twice per year.

Part B: Review of outcomes in the Previous Academic Year (2026-27):

Pupil Premium Statement and Review

Disadvantaged pupils have higher EBacc entry than their non-disadvantaged peers, but lower attainment across all reported measures. Improving English and maths outcomes is the clearest priority, alongside translating curriculum access into stronger achievement.

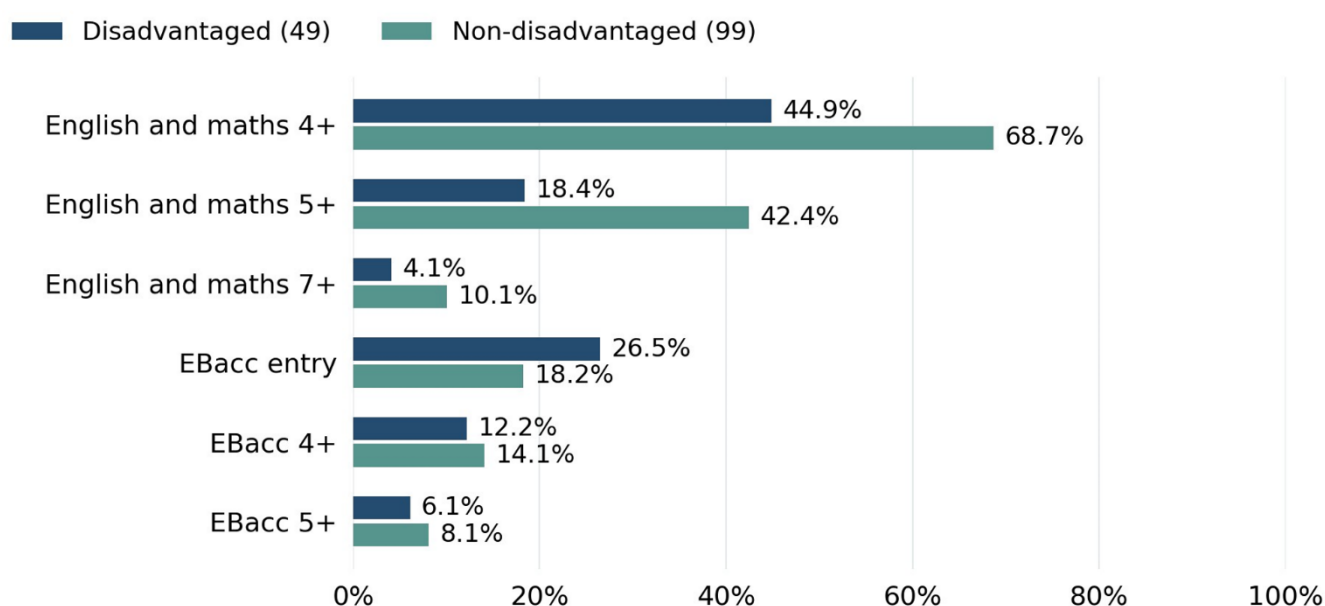
The dashboard cohort comprises 148 pupils: 49 disadvantaged (33.1%) and 99 non-disadvantaged. Comparisons below are within the school.

Headline attainment

Measure	Disadvantaged	Non-disadvantaged	Gap below peers
Attainment 8	35.09	48.62	13.53 points
EBacc average point score	3.11	4.18	1.07 points

The 13.53-point Attainment 8 gap reflects lower scores across each component, indicating a broad attainment challenge.

Curriculum entry and achievement



English and maths. 44.9% achieve grades 4+ in both subjects, compared with 68.7% of peers, a 23.8 percentage-point gap. At grades 5+, the gap is 24.0 points; at grades 7+, it is 6.0 points.

EBacc. Entry is 8.3 percentage points higher for disadvantaged pupils. However, EBacc achievement is lower by 1.9 points at grades 4+ and 2.0 points at grades 5+.

Attainment priorities and trends

Component scores identify where attainment differs. The separate pupil premium series provides historical context, with 2026 explicitly labelled as prospective.

Attainment 8 component comparison

Component	Disadvantaged	Non-disadvantaged	Gap below peers
English	7.29	10.25	2.96 points
Maths	6.82	9.45	2.63 points
EBacc	10.76	14.51	3.75 points
Open	10.15	14.40	4.25 points

The open component has the largest reported points gap, followed by EBacc. English and maths together account for a 5.59-point difference. These are weighted component totals, so gaps should be interpreted alongside the number and weighting of subject slots.

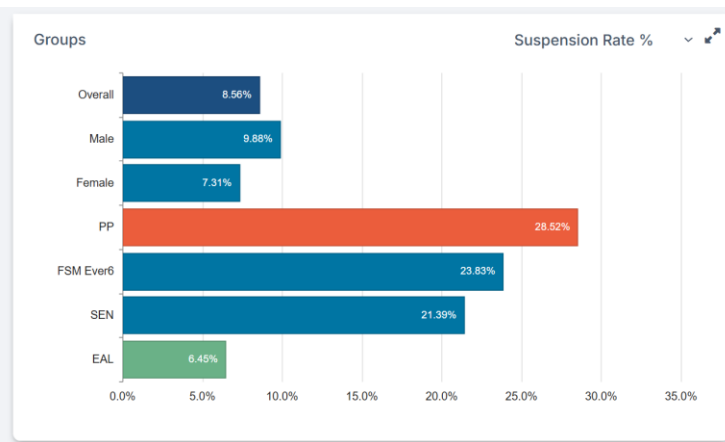
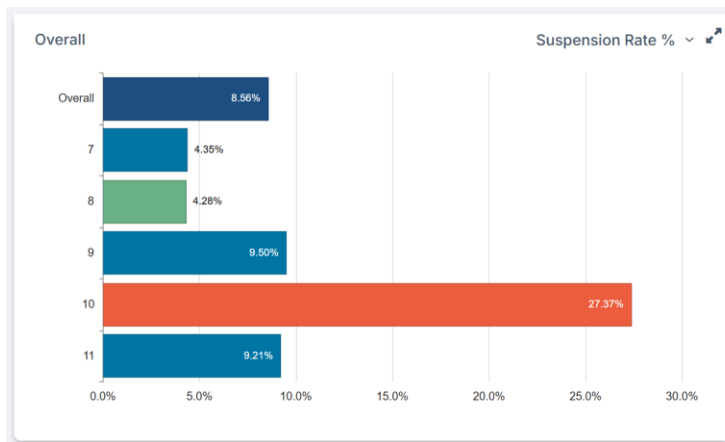
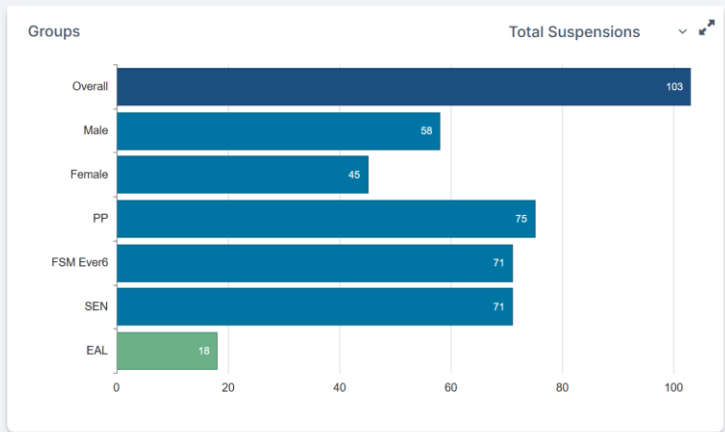
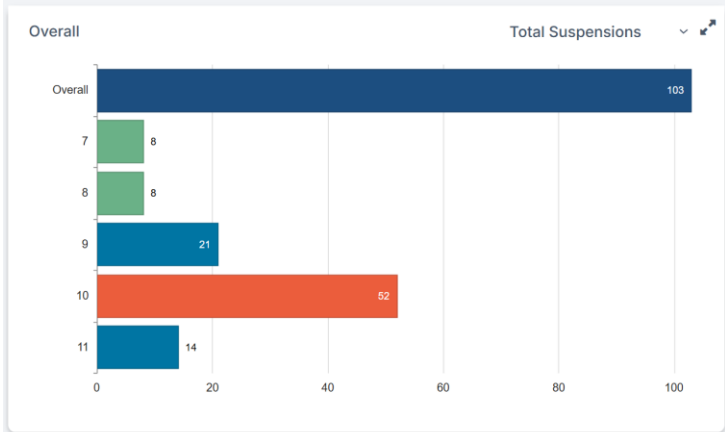
Pupil premium trends

Measure	2024	2025	2026 prospective
Attainment 8	40.29	35.28	35.01
EBacc entry	17.2%	17.5%	26.5%
English and maths 4+	55.2%	42.1%	44.9%
English and maths 5+	32.8%	21.1%	18.4%
English and maths 7+	1.7%	0.0%	4.1%

Areas of improvement. Prospective 2026 EBacc entry is 9.0 percentage points above 2025. English and maths 4+ is 2.8 points higher, and 7+ is 4.1 points higher.

Continuing concerns. Prospective Attainment 8 is 0.27 points below 2025 and 5.28 below 2024. English and maths 5+ falls by a further 2.7 percentage points from 2025. The 4+ rate remains 10.3 points below 2024.

Total Students On Roll	Total Permanent Exclusions	Permanent Exclusion Rate	Total Suspensions	Total Suspension Days	Suspension Rate	Threshold ⓘ
1203	3	0.25%	103	66	8.56%	0



Externally Provided Programmes:

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme:	Programme:
Absolute Education	White Rose Maths
Go Teach Maths	Study Bugs
NGRT	CPOMS
UniFrog	Careers Torch
Seneca	Alternative Provision Providers
Summer School	Community Police Workshops
Little Wandle	Century Tech
Up Learn	My Maths
GCSE Pod	Smooth wall
Kerboodle	Active Learn
FFT Aspire	Smart Log

Further Information:

Further Information:

The intention of Rugby Free Secondary School is to ensure that all students from all backgrounds make exceptional progress and attainment throughout all areas of the curriculum, with particular focus on Maths and English.

We believe that the best way to do this is to place Teaching and Learning at the heart of our approach, ensuring high-quality teaching throughout all subjects and year groups. In addition to this, our strategy supports disadvantaged children alongside their peers, with a separate focus on those identified as High Previous Attainers from Key Stage 2 data.

As can be seen from the above, common challenges faced by schools, along with the needs of individual children, are the foundation of our approach. Our Pupil Premium strategy is underpinned by robust educational research, including evidence and guidance from the **Ambition Institute**, alongside wider national evidence on effective teaching, professional development and improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This ensures that our decisions are informed by the strongest available evidence and are continually reviewed to maximise impact for our students.

All approaches adopted by RFSS staff rely on the following:

- Knowing our students and their individual needs.
- Early identification of those in need of intervention through pastoral and academic tracking.
- Ensuring accurate and timely intervention.
- Delivering consistently high-quality teaching informed by evidence-based practice and professional development.
- Regularly evaluating the impact of our provision and adapting our approach in response to emerging evidence and the needs of our students.