



Rugby Free

Secondary School



Pupil Premium Policy

Policy Details

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1. Introduction



Pupil Premium is additional funding provided by the Department for Education (DfE) to state-funded schools in England to improve the educational outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.

The central purpose of Pupil Premium is to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils and raise their attainment, contributing to closing the national attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

The school recognises that disadvantage is not synonymous with low attainment. Disadvantaged pupils are a diverse group with different strengths, needs, experiences and aspirations. Eligibility for Pupil Premium does not determine an individual pupil's ability or potential.

The school will therefore use Pupil Premium strategically and flexibly, based on a clear understanding of the needs of our disadvantaged pupils and the best available evidence about approaches likely to improve outcomes.

Pupil Premium funding is not a personal budget for individual pupils. The school may use funding to support groups of pupils or whole-school approaches where these address identified needs among disadvantaged pupils. DfE guidance also permits Pupil Premium to benefit other pupils with identified needs where this forms part of an evidence-informed approach.

2. Aims :

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that all members of the school community understand the purpose of Pupil Premium and the principles governing its use;
- Ensure that Pupil Premium funding is used in accordance with the current DfE Conditions of Grant;
- Improve the educational outcomes of disadvantaged pupils;
- Accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils and raise their attainment;
- Identify and address barriers to learning and achievement experienced by disadvantaged pupils;
- Ensure that disadvantaged pupils have consistently high-quality teaching;
- Provide targeted academic support where this is identified as appropriate;
- Address wider barriers to educational success, including attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and engagement;
- Ensure that spending decisions are informed by the best available evidence, professional expertise and knowledge of the school's context;
- Ensure that the impact of Pupil Premium spending is monitored, evaluated and used to inform future decision-making;
- Ensure appropriate accountability to governors/trustees and the wider school



community.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the current:

- Department for Education Pupil Premium Conditions of Grant for the 2026 to 2027 financial year;
- Department for Education Pupil Premium: Overview;
- Department for Education Using Pupil Premium: Guidance for School Leaders;
- Department for Education Pupil Premium Strategy Statement requirements and template;
- Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Guide to the Pupil Premium, updated September 2025;
- Relevant DfE guidance concerning service pupil premium, looked-after children and previously looked-after children;
- The school's funding agreement and articles of association, where applicable.

The Pupil Premium grant is made under section 14 of the Education Act 2002, with conditions attached under section 16. Schools must comply with the current Conditions of Grant when using the funding.

This policy will be updated when relevant statutory requirements or DfE guidance change.

4. Purpose of the Grant

The school will use Pupil Premium to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

The school will:

1. Diagnose needs carefully using current school-level information and knowledge of individual pupils and families.
2. Use reliable evidence to identify approaches that are likely to be effective.
3. Develop a coherent strategy that forms part of wider school improvement planning.
4. Implement and monitor approaches effectively, providing appropriate support for staff.
5. Evaluate impact and adapt provision, discontinuing or modifying approaches where evidence indicates that they are not having the intended impact.

These principles reflect the EEF's current five-step approach to Pupil Premium strategy development.

Pupil Premium spending will not be based solely on whether an intervention has historically been used by the school. The school will consider:

- The identified need;
- The strength and relevance of the evidence;
- The likely benefit to disadvantaged pupils;
- Implementation requirements and capacity;
- Cost and value for money;
- The potential for sustainable improvement;
- The impact of the approach, once implemented.

5. Use of the Grant

Rugby is a diverse community, and it is recognised that disadvantaged pupils may experience a range of academic, attendance, behavioural, social, emotional and practical barriers. We have students who are from some of the least deprived areas of the UK and some who are in the top ten percentile for most deprived. Couple this with a higher-than-average number of students in the town and school with SEND needs and a higher proportion of students for whom English is an additional language, as well as a higher rate of attempted suicides in young people, we understand that many of our students face significant barriers to learning.

The school's Pupil Premium strategy will be informed by current evidence about the school's disadvantaged cohort rather than assumptions about pupils based on their Pupil Premium status.

The school will consider, where relevant:

- Prior attainment and current attainment;
- Progress over time;
- Literacy and numeracy;
- Reading fluency and comprehension;
- Attendance and persistent absence;
- Punctuality;
- Behaviour, engagement and participation;
- SEND and additional learning needs;
- Social, emotional and mental health needs;
- Access to learning resources;
- Engagement with the curriculum and enrichment;
- Aspirations and post-16 destinations;
- Parental and pupil voice;
- Safeguarding and contextual factors;

- Transition between key stages;
- Any other barriers identified through professional assessment and school-level evidence.

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
7	Consistent access to quality first teaching and learning opportunities.

When considering how to spend the funding we use the Education Endowment Foundation's 'Guide to the Pupil Premium' to provide an appropriate structure that aligns with the Department for Education's reporting template. This categorises strategies into three areas:

- High-quality teaching
- Targeted academic support
- Wider strategies

High-Quality Teaching:

High-quality teaching is the priority and foundation of the school's Pupil Premium strategy.

Pupil Premium funding may be used to strengthen teaching and learning through approaches such as:

- Professional development;
- Evidence-informed teaching approaches;
- Curriculum development;
- Development of literacy and numeracy;
- Assessment and feedback;
- Metacognition and self-regulated learning;
- Support for early career teachers and other staff;
- Recruitment and retention where this supports high-quality provision;
- Effective use of teaching assistants;
- Approaches that improve classroom participation and access to the curriculum.



The school recognises that improving the quality of everyday classroom teaching is likely to benefit disadvantaged pupils at scale and therefore should form a central part of the strategy.

Targeted Academic Support

Where assessment identifies a need, Pupil Premium may fund targeted academic support, including:

- Structured small-group teaching;
- One-to-one support where appropriate;
- Literacy and numeracy interventions;
- Reading support;
- Targeted revision and examination preparation;
- Structured tutoring;
- Transition support;
- Support delivered by appropriately trained teachers or teaching assistants.

Targeted support will be closely connected to classroom teaching and the curriculum wherever possible.

Interventions will have clearly identified intended outcomes and will be monitored to determine whether they are improving pupil outcomes.

Where an intervention is not having the intended impact, the school will consider adapting or discontinuing it.

Wider Strategies

Pupil Premium may also be used to address wider barriers to educational success.

- Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence;
- Behaviour and engagement;
- Social and emotional support;
- Pastoral support;
- Parental engagement;
- Support for successful transitions;
- Access to enrichment and wider opportunities;
- Approaches that improve readiness to learn;
- Support addressing identified practical barriers to participation in education.

Wider strategies will be funded where there is a clear rationale linking the activity to identified needs and improved educational outcomes.

The school will not assume that every disadvantaged pupil requires the same intervention.

Each Term, we will publish information on the school's use of the pupil premium on the school website, using the DfE strategy template, to meet the requirements set out in our funding agreement and the DfE's guidance on what Our Pupil Premium Strategy Statement must include:

Part A:

- A statement of intent
- Challenges faced by eligible students
- Intended outcomes
- An activity plan of strategies for the academic year

Part B:

- A review of outcomes in the previous academic year

6. Eligible Students

Pupil Premium funding arrangements are determined annually by the DfE. The school will use the eligibility criteria set out in the current Conditions of Grant and associated technical guidance.

For 2026–27, Pupil Premium funding for mainstream and special schools is based on eligible pupils in Reception to Year 11, rather than Years 7–11 only.

The main categories are:

Free School Meals / FSM Ever 6

Pupil Premium includes pupils recorded as eligible for free school meals or who have been eligible for free school meals within the previous six years, in accordance with the current DfE funding criteria.

From the 2026–27 academic year, free school meal eligibility has been expanded. However, the expanded free school meal entitlement does not itself attract Pupil Premium. Pupil Premium eligibility continues to relate to the DfE's targeted FSM criteria.

The school will use the current DfE technical guidance when determining which pupils attract Pupil Premium funding.

Looked-After Children

Pupil Premium Plus funding relates to looked-after children and is allocated to local authorities, which determine the arrangements for passing funding to schools.

Where funding is retained centrally, the Virtual School Head is responsible for ensuring that it is used to improve the educational outcomes of looked-after children.

The school will work closely with the relevant Virtual School Head and designated teacher and will ensure that educational support is linked to the pupil's identified needs and Personal Education Plan.



Previously Looked-After Children

Previously looked-after children who meet the current DfE eligibility criteria attract Pupil Premium Plus.

The school will identify and respond to the specific educational needs of previously looked-after pupils. Pupil Premium is not a personal budget for an individual pupil, and the school may direct resources according to identified need.

Service Pupil Premium

Service Pupil Premium is provided for eligible pupils from service families.

Service Pupil Premium is distinct from the deprivation element of Pupil Premium. Eligible service pupils are not necessarily financially disadvantaged.

Its primary purpose is to provide mainly pastoral support and to help mitigate the impact of family mobility and parental deployment. Unlike the main Pupil Premium grant, Service Pupil Premium is not required to be spent through the DfE menu of approaches.

The school may use Service Pupil Premium to support the academic progress of service pupils where this is identified as a priority.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Pupil Premium Lead

The headteacher and senior leadership team leadership team member responsible for pupil premium are responsible for:

- Keeping this policy up to date, and ensuring that it is implemented across the school
- Ensuring that all school staff are aware of their role in raising the attainment of disadvantaged students and supporting students 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
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of students eligible for the pupil premium to assess the impact of the school's use of the funding
- Reporting on the impact of pupil premium spending to the governing board on an ongoing basis
- Publishing information on the school's use of the pupil premium on the school website, as required by our funding agreement and in line with DfE guidance.
- Providing relevant training for staff, as necessary, on supporting disadvantaged students and raising attainment
- Evaluating trends and patterns in relation to PP and non-PP students

Sustainable Improvement Board (Standards & Excellence Committee)

The Standards & Excellence Committee is responsible for:

- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

- Ensuring 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 students eligible for the pupil premium, in conjunction with the headteacher, to assess the impact and effectiveness of the school's use of the funding.
- Monitoring whether the school is ensuring value for money in its use of the pupil premium
- Challenging the headteacher 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 students, including those eligible for the pupil premium.
- Identifying students 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

Virtual school heads

Virtual school heads are responsible for managing pupil premium funding for children looked after by a local authority and allocating it to schools. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying the eligible looked after children and informing the local authority
- Making sure methods for allocating and spending ensure that looked after children benefit without delay
- Working with each looked after child's educational setting to put together a personal education plan, agree how pupil premium funding will be spent to meet the need identified in this plan, and ensure the funding is spent in this way.
- Demonstrating how pupil premium funding is raising the achievement of looked after children

Virtual school heads are in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority they work for.

Monitoring Arrangements



This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Pupil Premium and the Pupil Premium Lead.

The review will consider:

- Changes to legislation and DfE guidance;
- Changes to the DfE Conditions of Grant;
- Current EEF evidence and guidance;
- The school's current disadvantaged pupil cohort;
- The impact of the previous year's strategy;
- Feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff;
- Relevant school improvement priorities.

The reviewed policy will be shared with the governing board / Local Accountability Board for oversight and approval in accordance with the school's governance arrangements.

Pupil Premium spending will be monitored throughout the year.

The school will evaluate:

- Whether planned activity has been implemented as intended;
- Whether pupils are accessing the provision;
- Whether implementation is of sufficient quality;
- Whether the intended outcomes are being achieved;
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils;
- Attendance and behaviour where relevant;
- The impact on individual pupils and groups;
- Value for money;
- Whether approaches should be continued, adapted or discontinued.

Evaluation will use a range of evidence rather than relying on a single measure.

The school will consider short, medium and long-term outcomes and will adapt provision when evidence indicates that a different approach is required.