

Pupil premium strategy statement – Barnsley Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	879
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	50%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024/25, 2025/26, 2026/27
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026
Statement authorised by	Stephen Pitcher (Principal)
Pupil premium lead	Richard McNicholas (Vice Principal)
Governor / Trustee lead	Geoff Hopwood (Chair of Governors)

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£434,700
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£434,700

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

The pupil premium strategy at Barnsley Academy has been developed to improve the academic progress and life chances of our disadvantaged pupils with a specific focus on educational equity and inclusivity through every aspect of school life and professional practice. It is underpinned by our belief that every child, regardless of background, can achieve at the highest levels and should be supported to have self-belief in their own potential and future success. Social or financial disadvantage should never be an obstacle to a young person's life chances, including the opportunity to attend a top university or alternative. We are committed to ensuring that all disadvantaged pupils have access to a challenging, ambitious, and effectively sequenced curriculum which is knowledge-rich, and focused on high quality delivery that supports mastery, enabling pupils to retain powerful knowledge and develop the character and values they will need to thrive and succeed in life.

Our strategy's key aim is to identify and address significant barriers to success. Our approach, which is underpinned by the DFE's tiered approach to pupil premium spending is equally pastoral and academic as we understand that the curriculum provision is only impactful when pupils are good attenders and feel a sense of belonging, and how we support pupils to attend well, engage and access the curriculum, sits at the heart of our whole school priorities.

A golden thread runs through performance management, continued professional development and quality assurance, so that all staff understand how they contribute within their role to addressing the disadvantage gap in the context of our wider long-term strategy.

By committing to delivering a high-quality, ambitious, character-focused curriculum and bespoke academic and pastoral support, which are underpinned by rigorous systems and review cycles, we hope to ensure that all disadvantaged pupils at Barnsley Academy can thrive and develop into happy and successful adults who live by the academy's core values of ambition, determination, and respect.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is below the level of their non-disadvantaged peers resulting in gaps in learning that need to be addressed.
2	Disadvantaged pupils, especially those with SEND, account for a disproportionately high number of behaviour incidents and suspensions.
3	Disadvantaged pupils account for a disproportionately high number of both safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.
4	Disadvantaged pupils have lower literacy starting points than their non-disadvantaged peers and make lower progress in reading from year to year.
5	Disadvantaged pupils currently make less progress in English and Maths than their non-disadvantaged peers and fewer disadvantaged pupils achieve at grades 4, 5 and 7 or above.
6	A disproportionately high number of disadvantaged pupils have lower aspirations and lower expectations for post-16 pathways than their non-disadvantaged peers.

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
Disadvantaged pupil attendance is at least in line with national averages for all pupils ensuring that they have full access to the curriculum on offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantaged pupil attendance, especially for those with SEND, improves year-on-year and is in line with non-disadvantaged pupils and national averages. <p>Disadvantaged pupil persistent absence, especially for those with SEND, drops year-on-year and is in line with non-disadvantaged pupils and national averages.</p>
Recorded behaviour incidents and fixed-term suspensions for disadvantaged pupils are significantly reduced and in line with non-disadvantaged peers ensuring that they have full access to the curriculum on offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitored behaviour KPIs are in line with non-disadvantaged pupils and show year-on-year reductions in behaviour incidents. - Fixed-term suspensions are in line with non-disadvantaged pupils (proportionally including SEND PP pupils) and show year-on-year reductions. - Pupils at risk of permanent exclusion receive bespoke intervention to address underlying behavioural triggers. <p>Attitude to learning grades for disadvantaged pupils are in line with those of non-disadvantaged pupils.</p>

<p>All disadvantaged pupil safeguarding and wellbeing concerns are addressed with actions supporting individuals to be happier and access education successfully.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil voice for disadvantaged pupils references improved wellbeing and actions taken to support needs. - Disadvantaged pupils requiring additional wellbeing support access a full curriculum and achieve improved academic and wellbeing outcomes. - Wellbeing support and advice is signposted, and pupils can articulate how to access it. - School collaborates effectively with external agencies where needed to ensure pupils receive the holistic support they need.
<p>Disadvantaged pupils have a reading age in line with age-related expectations, helping them to foster a love of reading, giving them better access to the curriculum and the best chance to thrive in examinations and assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year-on-year, a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils have a reading age within 6 months of their chronological reading age. - There is a year-on-year narrowing of the reading age gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. - The proportion of disadvantaged pupils reading independently increases. - All disadvantaged pupils have a reading score that it is at least in Stanine 4 or above.
<p>English and Maths progress and attainment for disadvantaged pupils is in line with national averages for all pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantaged pupil progress 8 is 0 or above overall and for English and Maths elements. - Disadvantaged pupil progress 8 is in line with that of non-disadvantaged pupils overall and within the English and Maths elements. - The proportion of disadvantaged pupils attaining at 4+, 5+ and 7+ in English and Maths improves year-on-year and is in line with non-disadvantaged pupils and national averages. - Quality assurance shows that disadvantaged pupil participation in lessons and the quality of work in their books is in line with non-disadvantaged Pupils.
<p>A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils go on to post-16 education, employment or training and have access to opportunities to develop subject-specific skills and wider cultural capital.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of disadvantaged pupils access a strong careers provision across their five-year journey, including exposure to a range of ambitious pathways and careers advice and complete post-16 applications. - 100% of disadvantaged pupils go into post-16 education, employment, or training. - A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils access A-level courses at KS5 year-on-year - A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils go on to study at university (including Russell Group) year-on-year. - A higher proportion of pupils access valuable alternatives including T-levels and apprenticeships that lead to employment within the respective field.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £140,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Refined approach to PDR and whole-staff CPD so that all stakeholders within the school actively understand and contribute to addressing our PP and SEND (disadvantaged) focused whole-school priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusive Teaching - Inclusive Leadership - Inclusive Communities 	<p>All research and guidance indicate that to implement change successfully, stakeholders in all roles and contexts need to be aligned with priorities, rather than being isolated and driven by professional goals and objectives in their own context.</p> <p>Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Addressing the Disadvantage Gap</p>	1, 2, 5
<p>Refining our collaborative approach to Maths and English to ensure that all PP and SEND pupils have the best opportunity to achieve 5+ in English and Maths with next steps and life chances as the driver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School-wide, increasing time (weekly meetings and as part of the programme of CPD) for staff to review the impact of the curriculum and refine accordingly through gaps identified in QA cycles. - Weekly Maths/English crossover meetings involving key stakeholders to ensure a collective approach to improving academic performance. - Strategic setting and timetabling of staff to maximise teachers' skills and knowledge. 	<p>Shared approach to English and maths yields increase in pupils' results (tribalgroupp.com)</p>	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timetabled Maths and English interventions banded on option subjects for target pupils who have fallen behind to secure Maths and English. 		
<p>Recruitment of Assistant Principal leading on Character Education. (2024-25)</p>	<p>Character education framework guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	1, 2, 3, 5.
<p>Developing a culture of high academic standards underpinned by character education to support pupils to develop the confidence and resilience they require to achieve exceptional outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Character sought, taught and caught – a golden thread through all curriculum areas. - A quality provision delivered through assemblies, tutor time and PSHE and RSE lessons. - Developing enrichment programme including the Duke of Edinburgh Award. - Provide opportunities to engage with valuable visits, trips, excursions and external speakers. - Raising the profile and importance of assessments, embedding a rank order approach as used by the most successful schools, to mirror the approach to final assessments/grade allocation. - In Y11, launch evenings and additional targeted progress evenings to target underperformance, with specific focus on PP and SEND. 	<p>Outstanding Schools: Character Education and School Improvement (jubileecentre.ac.uk)</p> <p>Rank order systems create greater clarity for staff, parents, and pupils and have been acknowledged as a factor raising attainment in several of United Learning's highest performing schools. One of the significant barriers to assessment information having sufficient impact is a lack of understanding about how to interpret it. John Dunford emphasises the significant role of effective data use and reporting in identifying and addressing learning gaps and underperformance for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	
<p>Embedding an exceptional approach to literacy across the curriculum, focused on developing the reading and oracy of PP and SEND pupils so that they have the literacy skillset they will require to thrive both in and beyond the school setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective diagnostic testing, including NGRT and proactive analysis to inform strategic intervention. - Targeted Reading Intervention and Testing – Lexoniks Leap and Advance alongside further bespoke 	<p><i>Disadvantaged pupils, generally, display lower reading ages than non-disadvantaged peers. This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic.</i> (Institute of education 2021)</p> <p>The impact of the word gap and less-developed vocabulary: word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)</p>	4

<p>intervention to maintain progress made within cycles of intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Everybody Writes': Developing extended written responses in independent practice so that pupils can apply core and procedural knowledge to the highest academic standard. - Whole-school tutor-time reading programme embedded with Years 7-10 to support fluency, develop of tier 2 vocabulary and model effective reading practice. - Greater focus on non-fiction to develop cultural capital within wider approach to education with character. - Quality training and CPD for the extended team to refine and reflect on their practice to deliver a high-quality, impactful provision. - Whole-school tutor-time reading programme embedded with Years 7-10 to support fluency, develop tier 2 vocabulary and model effective reading practice. Greater focus on non-fiction to develop cultural capital within wider approach to education with character. 	<p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for Pupils as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject:</p> <p>EEF - Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</p> <p>The significance of oracy and reading in delivering educational equity: May 2024 Dan Nicholls (dannicholls1.com)</p> <p>Studies on the impact of interventions:</p> <p>Phonics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Reading comprehension strategies EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	
<p>Establishing a collaborative approach to Literacy and SEND in the curriculum to develop an effective whole-school strategy to address literacy gaps, with a specific focus on PP and SEND:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of SEND Curriculum Lead working in collaboration with the Literacy and EAL Leads to develop the whole school strategy. - A long-term programme of CPD and dedicated curriculum planning time focusing on upskilling staff to adapt the curriculum and the pedagogy that underpins our collective approach. - Refined curriculum planning to focus on the securing of powerful knowledge for SEND and LAP PP. - A focus on developing the role of TAs to maximise their impact in the classroom. 	<p>EEF Effective Strategies for Supporting SEND Pupils</p> <p>EEF - Teaching Assistants</p>	4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific YARC and Cognitive Testing to identify potential barriers and resulting support for students. 		
Y9 Options: To refine the curriculum offer so that it is increasingly ambitious, rich and balanced, supporting Pupils to make well-informed choices that promote engagement and success, and allow them to plan effectively for their post-16 education.		5, 6
<p>Revision Homework: Raising the profile of homework so that all pupils see the value and importance and have the facility, structure and skills to engage with learning beyond the classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new whole school approach to homework with a primary focus on securing fundamental knowledge across the five-year programme. - Direct support for parents/carers – comms and guidance including a school webpage and launch to show parent/carers how to support their children at home. - Weekly knowledge testing – monitored and recorded to communicate successes and gaps with parents/carers. - Active teaching of revision skills in our Climbing the Mountain provision and in tutor time and lessons. - KS3 Maths and English – Sparx. - Effective rewards and incentives. - The Success Lounge after school provision. 	<p>EEF - Homework EEF - Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning</p> <p>Research: <i>The Revision Revolution</i> by Helen Howell with Ross McGill</p>	5

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

Budgeted cost: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Implement a strategic approach to in school intervention and tutoring,	One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4, 5, 6

<p>informed by accurate academic data to ensure that in core, EBACC and open element subjects pupils have the skills, knowledge and understanding of their own progress to maximise outcomes in NEAs and examinations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tutor time Intervention based on QLA utilised to target underperformance and increase progress to ensure all MAP and HAP PP Pupils are achieving in line with their peers. - Period 5 lessons in the Autumn Term to prioritise NEA elements and catch-up, alongside EBACC subjects. - Period 5 lessons from the Autumn Term and as a priority in the Spring Term onwards focusing on Maths, English and Science, with remaining time focusing on underperformance in all other subjects in Period 6 lessons. - Additional Maths tutoring for PP and SEND pupils to be delivered. - Saturday school and holiday enrichment and intervention to be targeted for PP and SEND pupils alongside wider underperformance. 	<p>Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p><i>Evidence suggests that, compared to their peers who do not receive tuition, pupils who receive small group tuition may make, on average, 4 months additional progress and pupils who receive one-to-one tuition may make, on average, 5 months additional progress.</i></p> <p>(DfE (Department for Education) School-Led Tutoring Guidance 2021)</p>	
<p>Targeted underperforming disadvantaged pupils assigned a mentor to monitor progress, attendance, behaviour as well as engagement with class and homework.</p>	<p>Whilst mentoring can have marginal impact, when done well, it can support pupils to address barriers to learning more swiftly and improve behaviour, attendance, and outcomes. By having SLT mentors, disadvantaged pupils are both supported and held accountable to high standards of behaviour, attendance, and effort in lessons:</p> <p>Mentoring EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 5, 6</p>

Individual music lessons provided by peripatetic teacher to increase disadvantaged pupil arts participation.	Arts participation has been shown to have a positive impact on pupil outcomes (see below). This recruitment has also supported the Academy to improve the breadth and balance of its curriculum at KS3 and KS4 and to improve the range of opportunities available to pupils. Arts participation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Arts education EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3, 6
Engagement with MISST (Music in Secondary School Trust) Programme.		6

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

Budgeted cost: £230,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Assistant Principal – Attendance appointed to work directly with the existing attendance team with a focus on building on and refining policy, protocols and systems, to improve how we work collaboratively across teams and contexts to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence. (2024-25)	<p>The DfE guidance has been used to support and guide the practice that has been implemented within the Academy. The guidance has been created in collaboration with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.</p> <p>Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Additional staffing gives capacity to enable resources to target specific areas of concern and to support pupils more swiftly and to engage more effectively with parents/carers in order to build trust and give pupils the best chance to reflect, reengage and feel a sense of belonging, which gives them a platform from which to make academic progress.</p> <p>Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	1
Appointment of experienced Senior Vice Principal: Culture and Ethos working to refine our collaborative approach across the areas of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding to address whole school priorities, focusing on removing barriers relating to the attendance, behaviour and engagement of PP and SEND pupils and their families.		2

<p>Additional staffing in behaviour team to support proactive and positive management of pupil behaviour with a focus on reintegration and a sense of belonging as we look to reduce removals from learning and FTS (PP/SEND)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 x full-time behaviour manager, - x4 behaviour team members - 1x Pupil Welfare Officer 	<p>Additional staffing in behaviour gives capacity to enable resources to target specific areas of concern and to support pupils more swiftly and to engage more effectively with parents/carers in order to build trust and give pupils the best chance to reflect, reengage and feel a sense of belonging, which gives them a platform from which to make academic progress.</p> <p>Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	2
<p>Additional staffing in safeguarding and wellbeing teams to identify and address safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.</p>	<p>Evidence clearly shows that to support Pupils to be successful, it is important to identify and address barriers to learning. The extended safeguarding and wellbeing team ensures that both things happen. Whilst not all Pupils supported by this team require Social and Emotional Learning support, many do, and the link below supports the evidence behind such approaches:</p> <p>Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	3
<p>Refining pastoral structures with focus on the role of Heads of Year (now Progress Leads) and the Form Tutor to maximise the impact that staff are having in their roles to influence the attendance, behaviour and engagement of PP and SEND pupils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality CPD, comms and systems to support effective practice. - Increased time dedicated to year group team meetings to support alignment and evaluation of our approach. - PDR directly linking to the role of the 		

form tutor in promoting and improving attendance.		
Appointment of an experienced full-time careers lead to ensure an effective careers curriculum is in place, as well as high quality careers advice and guidance and access to post-16 opportunities, working directly with Assistant Principal leading on destinations. (Including the launch of Cradle to Careers initiative)	<p>Research shows that careers education can be highly variable and can significantly impact on the life chances of young people. The appointment of a careers lead within the Academy ensures there is a member of staff whose focus is on ensuring this aspect of education is fully prioritised, especially for disadvantaged Pupils:</p> <p>Careers education EEF educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk</p>	6
Boys' Impact – collaborative project working with UL, Boys' Impact and SHINE to deliver a three-year rolling programme for 30 disadvantaged boys focusing on holistic progress with a focus on securing outcomes that will in turn give the boys greater access to opportunities that support happiness and success in the future.	<p>Boys' Impact Taking Boys Seriously</p> <p><i>Boys' Impact adopts a strengths-based approach, working affirmatively with boys and educators to address multi-faceted issues behind the statistics.</i></p> <p><i>Three threshold concepts have been generated through Taking Boys Seriously and Boys' Impact which contextualises the research and shapes the unfolding research process:</i></p> <p>Relational Education: meaningful relationships between boys and educators are crucial in facilitating engagement and holistic development in educational settings, particularly for boys and young men experiencing compounded educational disadvantage.</p> <p>Educational Ecosystem: This concept celebrates the unique gift that individuals and institutions across the whole pipeline of education from early years onwards can bring enabling boys to thrive.</p> <p><i>The promotion of collective capacities of communities and educational settings in advancing more equitable opportunities and outcomes for boys and young men experiencing compounded educational disadvantage.</i></p> <p>Compounded Educational Disadvantage: The concept of compounded educational disadvantage was coined through the research in</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

	<p><i>2018 helping shape the research methodology and advance critical thinking about the causes and responses to persistent low levels of educational attainment and progression for some groups of adolescent boys.</i></p> <p><i>It captures both systemic and contextual issues which in the UK include relative poverty, a selective education system, and normative masculinities constructed with reference to conflict legacies of segregation, polarisation, and residual violence. Each time a young man encounters one of these systemic issues it is as though another brick is added to their backpack making their journey through the education system more difficult.</i></p> <p>(The Boys Impact Pilot – September 2024)</p>	
Breakfast Club: breakfast provided in the canteen every day from 8am.	Some pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, do not eat breakfast in the morning. This can have a clear impact on their ability to concentrate in lessons and to regulate their mood and behaviour. It is offered to ensure cost does not prohibit them from accessing food in the morning and therefore accessing learning effectively.	1, 2, 3
Transport provision: school bus contracts and funded travel costs for PP pupils to remove barriers to attendance and to ensure safety and wellbeing of pupils.	Cost of transport and ease of access to school via public transport services can be a significant barrier for some pupils. By providing school buses and by supporting those pupils who need financial assistance with transport, we remove that barrier to attendance whilst also ensuring their safety and wellbeing. This has been clearly evidenced through individual cases where attendance has improved once the support has been put in place.	1, 3
Funding allocation for necessary equipment and resources to support full participation and engagement in learning and wider aspects of school life (revision guides, ingredients/materials for Art and Technology subjects, basic equipment, uniform etc.).	By supporting pupils with resources, where necessary, we can ensure that social and financial disadvantage are not a barrier to accessing our curriculum provision. All Pupils should have the opportunity to take part and to engage in all aspects of learning. This includes the means to revise effectively and engage in independent study at home. Similarly, we have high expectations around equipment and uniform, and it is important that pupils are supported where they would be unable to meet those expectations owing to cost and through no fault of their own.	1, 2, 5
Alternative provision funding to support access to education for	Where a small number of pupils have struggled to access mainstream secondary education owing to behavioural barriers to learning, alternative	1, 2, 5

pupils who are struggling to access full-time school within a mainstream setting.	<p>provision has been allocated to support them to access different opportunities to learn, whilst still focusing on core subjects such as English and Maths. Evidence has shown that for some of these pupils, the change of environment has had a positive impact on their behaviour and engagement.</p> <p>DFE - Alternative Provision: Effective Practice DFE - Alternative provision thematic review</p>	
Rewards funding to help promote and highlight positive behaviours, good attendance and habits.	<p>Whilst there is mixed evidence on the long-term impact of extrinsic motivators, the use of small, occasional rewards to raise the profile of positive behaviours and habits helps to create a culture where high standards are not only expected but are noticed, modelled, and highlighted for all stakeholders as the benchmark to aim for. These will be primarily focused on areas where effort is the primary driver and pupils are able to influence the outcome through positive choices (e.g., attendance, attitude to learning and behaviour).</p>	1, 2
<p>Access Arrangement Testing for all pupils in Y9-Y11 to remove identified barriers in exams and formal assessments.</p> <p>Additional funding to train all staff as exam readers to ensure that the school has the capacity to meet all pupils' needs in rehearsal and actual exams.</p>	<p>We appreciate the barriers that often prevent pupils from achieving their full potential in examinations and have dedicated time to ensure the academy's exam officer and the SEN(D) Team have the capacity to support all Pupils with identified needs, which in 2023 ensured 100% of Pupils with identified needs completed all core exams.</p>	4, 5

Total budgeted cost: £400,000

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

As year two begins, we continue to work to address the disadvantage gap with the six areas of challenge outlined at the beginning of year one remaining as the focus of our drive to close the disadvantaged gap.

PP pupils in 2024-25 achieved broadly in line with their peers from the 2023-24 cohort achieving 44% at 4+ and 29% at 5+ in English and Maths. However, the gap has widened slightly between non-PP and PP pupils owing to the improved performance from non-PP pupils. Disadvantaged pupils achieved 44% at the 4+ crossover compared to their non-disadvantaged peers who achieved 72%, while the gap remained the same at 5+. In contrast to previous years PP boys and boys in general out-performed girls, however this pattern is unlikely to continue based on what we know about our current Y11 cohort. PP boys remain a significant priority.

Along with our wider school focus on PP and SEND pupils' attendance, sense of belonging and progress, we are engaging with the Boys' Impact project following a successful pilot. The three-year rolling programme focuses on three areas: identity, aspirations and building trust; community engagement and charity, and careers and future planning. The KS3 boys who participated in last year's pilot made gains across a number of key measures. The boys' collective attendance improved by 4.5% from 85.1% to 89.6%; fixed term suspensions decreased by 27% and 90% of the boys were reading at Stanine 4 or above following specific reading interventions. We remain committed to strengthening our diagnostic approach and understanding of the granular details that have contributed to the underperformance of boys to develop effective and sustainable approaches to closing both disadvantage and gender gaps and ensuring educational equity.

Our character-driven culture, refined curriculum provision and the wider school experiences that we continue to offer are having a positive impact on both the academic outcomes and holistic development of pupils who are buying into our curriculum offer. We know that our biggest challenge with a proportion of our disadvantaged pupils is how we support them and their families to improve their attendance, behaviour and, with that, feel an increasing sense of belonging within the school community.

We have strengthened our curriculum provision, developing our approach character education and strengthening the curriculum offer committed to ensuring the five-year journey of disadvantaged pupils instils the character, knowledge and skills they will need to thrive at KS4 and beyond. We know from analysing data that that a proportion of low-MAP, LAP and SEND PP pupils have struggled to engage with the curriculum, and we

have a team in place led by the Vice Principal for Academic Standards, including the Literacy Lead, SEND Curriculum Lead and EAL Lead who continue to strategically lead on the wider school initiative to close the gap for LAP PP and SEND PP pupils.

In addition, we have committed to disruption-free learning and our mission is to offer 'a world-class education so that all pupils have the opportunity to attend a top university or real alternative.' We have invested heavily in upskilling our leaders and teachers, and the impact has been higher academic standards, an improved school culture and an improved curriculum experience. The evidence of all of this can be seen in the quantity and standard of pupil work, including for a significant proportion of disadvantaged pupils. Where disadvantaged pupils attend school and engage positively, the quality of independent practice in books is generally in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. This has been highlighted by a number of internal reviews and by external visitors. Furthermore, the school's reputation within the local community, an area of high deprivation, continues to improve, with high numbers of pupils selecting it as their first-choice secondary school, continuing the three-year trend of families opting for Barnsley Academy.

Low levels of literacy continue to be a barrier for a number of disadvantaged pupils, but through their effective delivery of the Lexoniks Leap and Advance reading programmes the Literacy Team have made definite strides towards closing the gap. From NGRT Test A to C on average, disadvantaged pupils reading at stanine 7 or above increased by 9% across Y7-Y10 with the number of pupils moving into Stanine 4 or above increasing on average by 7%.

This improvement can also be attributed to the continued work in curriculum areas to embed agreed approaches to reading. Initially in class the *Big Class Read* was launched alongside the school's Tutor Time Reading Programme. As part of our wider CPD offering, staff have committed to developing the skills that pupils need to effectively interpret and decode texts and infer meaning, in addition to developing their understanding and application of tier 2 and 3 vocabularies. Though a proportion of pupils are still reading below age-related reading expectations, we are confident that we have the right team and the right strategy in place to build on the previous two years' successes, refining our approach and reducing the gap further, with a focus on *Explicit Vocabulary instruction* and *Turn and Talk* as key drivers in the coming academic year.

2024-25 PP attendance was 87.8% a 0.4% improvement on last year's figure. This figure is influenced by the Academy's above average FTS figures, which in turn reflects the commitment to ensuring disruption-free learning and establishing a school culture where everyone feels safe. High suspensions remain a common trend across secondary schools in the local area.

In 2024-25 the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils' attendance was 6.3% (87.8% vs 94.1%), broadly in line with the previous year as the attendance of

both cohorts improved in comparison to 2023/24, with whole-school attendance improving by 0.6%. The persistent absence gap between disadvantaged and their non-disadvantaged peers for 2025 remained high at 27%. However, the figure for PP students has reduced by 11% compared to 2023/24.

As an ongoing response to attendance challenges, the school's performance development programme has been tailored to include attendance-based objectives for all staff, supported by tailored CPD so that everyone is aware of and empowered to fulfil their role in improving the attendance of our most disadvantaged pupils.

There continues to be a correlation between disadvantaged pupils and the number of behaviour, safeguarding and wellbeing incidents being reported. This continues to be disproportionate in comparison to those being reported by non-disadvantaged pupils.

As mentioned above, fixed-term suspensions (FTS) figures remain higher than average. However, over the course of the last academic year, the percentage of FTS was reduced by 9% as we continue to work with students and families to keep them in learning, however the number of PP pupils receiving FTS does remain disproportionate, figures for first four weeks of this year indicate promise as suspensions are tracking at 33% below the same period in 2024/25. The increased capacity both within the behaviour and safeguarding teams have helped the school to make inroads with some of our most hard to reach pupils, while our focus on the absent from learning curriculum mirrors the curriculum students engage with in class, so they have the best chance to access the fundamental knowledge they will require when returning to learning.

Leaders and staff remain committed to working with pupils and their families to support them to correct their behaviours and fully engage with learning and the wider school community. We are in a stronger position to address challenging behaviours as the team is more experienced, strategic and effective in de-escalating behaviours and working with pupils and their families.

External provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
Sparx Reader	Sparx Reader
Sparx Maths	Sparx Maths
New Group Reading Test	GL Assessment
YARCs (York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension)	GL Assessment
CAT4 (Cognitive Ability Testing)	GL Assessment

Midyis Tests	Cambridge CEM
4Matrix	4Matrix
Lexoniks	Lexoniks
The Day (Tutor Time Reading)	The Day
Language Nut	Languagenut Digital Language Resources Primary & Secondary Schools
SENECA	Seneca Learning Ltd.