

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	910
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	46%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024/25, 2025/26, 2026/27
Date this statement was published	September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
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 students. 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 students have access to a challenging, ambitious, and effectively sequenced curriculum which is knowledge-rich, and focused on high quality delivery that supports mastery, enabling students 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 students are good attenders and feel a sense of belonging, and how we support students 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 students 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 students is below the level of their non-disadvantaged peers resulting in gaps in learning that need to be addressed.
2	Disadvantaged students, especially those with SEND, account for a disproportionately high number of behaviour incidents and suspensions.
3	Disadvantaged students account for a disproportionately high number of both safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.
4	Disadvantaged students have lower literacy starting points than their non-disadvantaged peers and make lower progress in reading from year to year.
5	Disadvantaged students currently make less progress in English and Maths than their non-disadvantaged peers and fewer disadvantaged students achieve at grades 4, 5 and 7 or above.
6	A disproportionately high number of disadvantaged students 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 student attendance is at least in line with national averages for all students ensuring that they have full access to the curriculum on offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantaged student attendance, especially for those with SEND, improves year-on-year and is in line with non-disadvantaged students and national averages. <p>Disadvantaged student persistent absence, especially for those with SEND, drops year-on-year and is in line with non-disadvantaged students and national averages.</p>
Recorded behaviour incidents and fixed-term suspensions for disadvantaged students 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 students and show year-on-year reductions in behaviour incidents. - Fixed-term suspensions are in line with non-disadvantaged students (proportionally including SEND PP students) and show year-on-year reductions. - Students at risk of permanent exclusion receive bespoke intervention to address underlying behavioural triggers. <p>Attitude to learning grades for disadvantaged students are in line with those of non-disadvantaged students.</p>

<p>All disadvantaged student 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 students references improved wellbeing and actions taken to support needs. - Disadvantaged students requiring additional wellbeing support access a full curriculum and achieve improved academic and wellbeing outcomes. - Wellbeing support and advice is signposted, and students can articulate how to access it. <p>School collaborates effectively with external agencies where needed to ensure students receive the holistic support they need.</p>
<p>Disadvantaged students 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 students 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 students. - The proportion of disadvantaged students reading independently increases. - All disadvantaged students have a reading score that it is at least in Stanine 4 or above.
<p>English and Maths progress and attainment for disadvantaged students is in line with national averages for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantaged student Progress 8 is 0 or above overall and for English and Maths elements. - Disadvantaged student Progress 8 is in line with that of non-disadvantaged students overall and within the English and Maths elements. - The proportion of disadvantaged students attaining at 4+, 5+ and 7+ in English and Maths improves year-on-year and is in line with non-disadvantaged students and national averages. - Quality assurance shows that disadvantaged student participation in lessons and the quality of work in their books is in line with non-disadvantaged students.
<p>A higher proportion of disadvantaged students 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 students 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 students go into post-16 education, employment, or training. - A higher proportion of disadvantaged students access A-level courses at KS5 year-on-year - A higher proportion of disadvantaged students go on to study at university (including Russell Group) year-on-year. - A higher proportion of students 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: £150,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Launching a new approach to PDR and whole-staff CPD so that all stakeholders within the school actively understand and contribute to addressing our PP and SEND focused whole-school priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance - Behaviour/Sense of Belonging - Progress 	<p>All research and guidance indicates 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>	<p>1, 2, 5</p>
<p>Refining our collaborative approach to Maths and English to ensure that all PP and SEND students 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. - Timetabled Maths and English interventions banded on option subjects for target students who 	<p>Shared approach to English and maths yields increase in pupils' results (tribalgrou.com)</p>	<p>5</p>

<p>have fallen behind to secure Maths and English</p>		
<p>Recruitment of Assistant Principal leading on Character Education.</p>	<p>Character education framework guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 5.</p>
<p>Developing a culture of high academic standards underpinned by character education to support students 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 students 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 students.</p>	
<p>Embedding an exceptional approach to literacy across the curriculum, focused on developing the reading and oracy of PP and SEND students 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 intervention to maintain progress made within cycles of intervention. 	<p><i>Disadvantaged students, generally, display lower reading ages than non-disadvantaged peers. This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic.</i></p> <p>(Institute of education 2021)</p> <p>The impact of the word gap and less-developed vocabulary: word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)</p> <p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject:</p>	<p>4</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>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 Students</p> <p>EEF - Teaching Assistants</p>	4
<p>Y9 Options: To refine the curriculum offer so that it is increasingly ambitious, rich and balanced, supporting students</p>		5, 6

to make well-informed choices that promote engagement and success, and allow them to plan effectively for their post-16 education.		
<p>Homework: Raising the profile of homework so that all students 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"> - KS3 Maths and English – Sparx. - Effective rewards and incentives. - Active teaching of revision skills. - The Success Lounge after school provision. - Effective comms and support for parents/carers – website and home/school. 	<p>EEF - Homework EEF - Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning</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
<p>Implement a strategic approach to in school intervention and tutoring, informed by accurate academic data to ensure that in core, EBACC and open element subjects students have the skills, knowledge and understanding of their own progress to maximise outcomes in NEAs and examinations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Morning Meeting/Tutor Time Intervention based on QLA utilised to target underperformance and increase progress to ensure all MAP and HAP PP students are achieving in line with their peers. - Period 5 lessons in the Autumn Term to prioritise NEA elements and catch- 	<p>One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <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>	4, 5, 6

<p>up, alongside EBACC subjects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Period 5 lessons from the Spring Term onwards will prioritise 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 students to be delivered. - Saturday school and holiday enrichment and intervention to be targeted for PP and SEND students alongside wider underperformance. 		
<p>Targeted underperforming disadvantaged students 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 students to address barriers to learning more swiftly and improve behaviour, attendance, and outcomes. By having SLT mentors, disadvantaged students 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>
<p>Individual music lessons provided by peripatetic teacher to increase disadvantaged student arts participation.</p>	<p>Arts participation has been shown to have a positive impact on student 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 students.</p> <p>Arts participation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Arts education EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	<p>3, 6</p>
<p>Engagement with MISST (Music in Secondary School Trust) Programme.</p>		<p>6</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £250,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>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.</p>	<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>	1
<p>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 students and their families.</p>	<p>Additional staffing gives capacity to enable resources to target specific areas of concern and to support students more swiftly and to engage more effectively with parents/carers in order to build trust and give students 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 behaviour team to support proactive and positive management of student 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"> - 5 x full-time pastoral leads, - 1 x full-time behaviour manager, 	<p>Additional staffing in behaviour gives capacity to enable resources to target specific areas of concern and to support students more swiftly and to engage more effectively with parents/carers in order to build trust and give students 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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - x4 behaviour team members - 1x Student Welfare Officer 		
<p>Additional staffing in safeguarding and wellbeing teams to identify and address safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.</p>	<p>Evidence clearly shows that to support students 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 students 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 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 students.</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. 		
<p>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</p>	<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</p>	6

<p>post-16 opportunities, working directly with Assistant Principal leading on destinations.</p>	<p>fully prioritised, especially for disadvantaged students: Careers education EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	
<p>Breakfast Club: breakfast provided in the canteen every day from 8am.</p>	<p>Some students, especially disadvantaged students, 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.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Transport provision: school bus contracts and funded travel costs for PP students to remove barriers to attendance and to ensure safety and wellbeing of students.</p>	<p>Cost of transport and ease of access to school via public transport services can be a significant barrier for some students. By providing school buses and by supporting those students 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.</p>	<p>1, 3</p>
<p>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.).</p>	<p>By supporting students with resources, where necessary, we can ensure that social and financial disadvantage are not a barrier to accessing our curriculum provision. All students 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 students are supported where they would be unable to meet those expectations owing to cost and through no fault of their own.</p>	<p>1, 2, 5</p>
<p>Alternative provision funding to support access to education for students who are struggling to access full-time school within a mainstream setting.</p>	<p>Where a small number of students have struggled to access mainstream secondary education owing to behavioural barriers to learning, alternative 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 students, the change of</p>	<p>1, 2, 5</p>

	<p>environment has had a positive impact on their behaviour and engagement.</p> <p>DFE - Alternative Provision: Effective Practice</p> <p>DFE - Alternative provision thematic review</p>	
<p>Rewards funding to help promote and highlight positive behaviours, good attendance and habits.</p>	<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 students 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 students 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 students needs in rehearsal and actual exams.</p>	<p>We appreciate the barriers that often prevent students 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 students with identified needs, which in 2023 ensured 100% of students with identified needs completed all core exams.</p>	4, 5

Total budgeted cost: £430,000

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

As we now move into a new three-year strategic cycle and continue to work to address the disadvantage gap, the six areas of challenge that were outlined in the previous three-year plan remain the key areas for focus.

PP students in 2023-24 achieved broadly in line with their peers from the 2022-23 cohort achieving 46% 4+ and 28% 5+ in English and Maths. However, the gap has widened slightly between non-PP and PP students owing to improved performance from non-PP students. Disadvantaged students achieved 46% at the 4+ crossover compared to their non-disadvantaged peers who achieved 75%. It was a similar picture at 5+ with 24% and 53% respectively. A key area of focus within this remains the achievement of middle prior attaining disadvantaged boys.

Along with our wider school focus on PP and SEND students' attendance, sense of belonging and progress, we are engaging with the United Learning x Boys' Impact Pilot Scheme. We are committed to strengthening our diagnostic approach and understanding of the granular details that have contributed to the underperformance of boys in order 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 students who are buying into our curriculum offer. We know that our biggest challenge with a proportion of our disadvantaged students 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.

During the past three years, we have had clear success in developing character education and strengthening the curriculum to ensure the five-year journey of disadvantaged students instils the character, knowledge and skills they will need to thrive at KS4 and beyond. We know from analysing data that a number of low-MAP, LAP and SEND PP students 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 will be strategically leading on the wider school initiative to close the gap for LAP PP and SEND PP students.

In addition, we have committed to disruption-free learning and our mission is to offer 'a world-class education so that all students 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 student work, including for a significant proportion of disadvantaged students. Where disadvantaged students attend school and engage positively, the quality of independent practice in books is on a par 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 196 students selecting Barnsley Academy as their first-choice secondary school, continuing the trend from 2022-23.

Low levels of literacy continue to be a barrier for a number of disadvantaged students, 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 students reading at stanine 7 or above increased by 10% across Y7-Y10 with the number of students moving into Stanine 4 or above increasing on average by 7%.

This improvement can also be attributed to the 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 students 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 students 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 last year's successes, refining our approach and reducing the gap further.

2023-24 PP attendance was 88.9% while in comparison the school's PP attendance figure for 2023-24 was 86.2%. This figure is largely 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 2023-24 the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students was 5.9% (86.2% vs 92.1%). The persistent absence gap between disadvantaged and their non-disadvantaged peers for 2024 remained high at 20.2%. However, there are signs of improvement when compared to the 2022-23 gap of 28.1%.

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 students.

There continues to be a correlation between disadvantage students and the number of behaviour, safeguarding and wellbeing incidents being reported. Like 2021-22 and 2022-

23, this continues to be disproportionate in comparison to those being reported by non-disadvantaged students.

As mentioned above, FTS figures remain higher than average. However, from January to July 2024, excluding March and April, the number of FTS decreased in comparison to the same period in the previous year. From May to July there was a 29% reduction in FTS in comparison to the same period in 2022-23. From January, 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 students.

Leaders and staff remain committed to working with students 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 students 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.

