

# Woodlands Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2024 to 2025 academic year) 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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

## School Overview

Detail	Data
School name	Woodlands Academy
Number of pupils in school	97
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	64.9%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended</b> )	2024/2025 To 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2024
The date on which it will be reviewed	Autumn 2025
Statement authorised by	Andrew Morgan, Principal
Pupil premium lead	Andrew Morgan
Governor / Trustee lead	Adrian Armstrong

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£65,345
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£65,345

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

Woodlands Academy provides education for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils from across the City of Nottingham as well as other local authorities. All of our pupils have and EHC plan.

The academy aims to support the development of all pupils, including those disadvantaged as defined by the Pupil Premium Grant definitions, which over two-thirds of the whole school cohort. We recognise that pupil progress is contextualised, needs-led and we aim to develop the whole child.

We aim to use our pupil premium funding to support not only academic strategies and attendance but also the wider curriculum and enrichment. All our strategies are researched and will be monitored to ensure impact.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<b>Attainment</b> Our assessments show that disadvantaged pupils generally make less progress from their starting points when entering school. Whilst the types of barriers to learning and the difficulties disadvantaged pupils experience vary, their overall academic progress tends to be lower in most subjects compared to non-disadvantaged pupils. This is most noticeable in reading and literacy, with maths also being a focus as a core skill.
2	<b>Attendance</b> Our data and assessments show that some of our disadvantaged pupils have erratic attendance due to changing or challenging home circumstances and previous educational experiences.
3	<b>Personal development/life skills/independence</b> Our assessments, observations and conversations with pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils often require additional support to develop personal skills, e.g., independent travel, work experience.
4	<b>Communication/social interaction</b> Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils show that our disadvantaged pupils generally have greater challenges around communicating and expressing their needs than their peers, including non-verbal, limited language and social interaction difficulties

5	<p><b>Sensory needs</b></p> <p>Many of our pupils have sensory needs which if not met can lead to barriers in self-regulation</p>
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## Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategic plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils in all subjects, relative to their starting points as identified through baseline assessments, notably in Literacy and Maths.	An increase in the number of disadvantaged pupils entering and succeeding in GCSE, Entry Level, Functional Skills and Unit Award subjects, particularly Literacy and Maths.
Pupils achieving GCSEs, Entry Level, Functional Skills and Unit Award Certificates.	An increase in achievement as demonstrated through our termly data capture.
Pupils to have improved language comprehension to access the curriculum in their pathway.	Assessment of language comprehension shows a reduction of the gap between themselves and non-disadvantaged pupils at the Academy.
Disadvantaged pupils to have better functional mathematics skills.	An increase in achievement as demonstrated through our termly data capture.
Disadvantaged pupils will have greater confidence and independence skills in the school and wider community, to help them prepare for adulthood.	Through discussion and observation with staff, pupils and families and meeting independence targets on their EHCPs.
To improve attendance of all PP pupils	For disadvantaged pupils to attend school in line with their peers and national data.
Pupils will use appropriate communication systems to aid their understanding and to express themselves with said devices	Disadvantaged pupils will have more access to the curriculum, whichever Pathway they are in and will be meeting communication targets that are outlined in their EHCPs.
Improved attainment and independence of pupils with sensory needs	Through discussion and observation by school and families, disadvantaged pupils with sensory needs will have greater access to their curriculum.

## 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: **£20,994**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Widening Arts participation through Music, Drama and Art lessons to include performance.	EEF Research: Overall, the average impact of arts participation on other areas of academic learning appears to be positive. Improved outcomes have been identified in English, mathematics and science. Benefits have been found in both primary and secondary schools. Some arts activities have been linked with improvements in specific outcomes. For example, there is some evidence of the impact of drama on writing and potential link between music and spatial awareness.	1, 4, 5
Primary aged and pupils in Yellow and Green pathways to be taught the RET Phenomenal Phonics Programme, which is compliant with new DfE guidance, Including staff CPD and resources.	EEF research on Phonics: <i>“Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.”</i>	1, 4
Enhancing maths teaching through CPD and concrete resources and manipulatives including Numicon.	<p><b>Improved Conceptual Understanding:</b> Numicon’s structured imagery and tactile components help students understand numerical relationships and basic operations, aligning with the Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract (CPA) approach. This progression from hands-on manipulation to abstract reasoning is especially effective for students struggling with math concepts, including those with SEND <a href="#">Nottingham ePrints</a></p> <p><b>Increased Engagement and Confidence:</b> By turning abstract numbers into tangible forms, Numicon reduces anxiety around mathematics. Activities such as counting holes, ordering shapes, and creating patterns</p>	1

	<p>make learning interactive and enjoyable, fostering a positive attitude towards numeracy</p> <p><a href="#">Early Years Resources News</a></p> <p><b>Support for Diverse Learning Needs:</b> Numicon's flexibility allows it to be tailored for different abilities and ages. For example, it aids early learners in foundational skills and supports older students in exploring more complex concepts like number bonds, place value, and arithmetic</p> <p><a href="#">Learn and Thrive</a></p>	
<p>Makaton training</p> <p>All staff to be trained to Level 1</p> <p>Identified key staff to be trained to Level 2 and Safeguarding</p>	<p>"Non-verbal people can and do learn signs when they have failed to acquire speech (see for example, Kiernan, Reid &amp; Jones 1982), and it appears that signs are easier to learn than spoken words (Reid 1984)."</p> <p>"There is evidence that signing can facilitate the development of speech. Signs may mediate the learning of spoken words when they are consistently paired in teaching"</p> <p>Current research findings to support the use of sign language with adults and children who have intellectual and communication handicaps Nicola Grove, M.Sc., L.C.S.T. Research Information Officer, Makaton Vocabulary Development Project.</p>	4
<p>TEACCH Training for 2 teachers to support structured teaching for ASD pupils.</p>	<p>The TEACCH model and general principles continues to be a valued intervention approach because both are based on an understanding of the culture of autism, and because the Structured Teaching techniques continue to evolve based on the changing world of autism and current research findings. The guiding principles include respect for the learning style of individuals with autism and utilizing assessment information to create a strength-based and individualized intervention to promote independence in the community (Marcus and Corsello <a href="#">1997</a>).</p>	3, 4

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

Budgeted cost: **£13,351**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted Drama based interventions to support oracy, self-confidence and determination through 'finding your voice'. This will also support life skills, PSHE and careers/next steps through role-play based activities	<p>EEF Research: Overall, the average impact of arts participation on other areas of academic learning appears to be positive.</p> <p>Wider benefits such as more positive attitudes to learning and increased well-being have also consistently been reported. There is intrinsic value in teaching pupils creative and performance skills and ensuring disadvantaged pupils access a rich and stimulating arts education.</p>	1,3, 4
Metacognition and self-regulation approaches to teaching support pupils to think about their own learning more explicitly, often by teaching them specific strategies for planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning. To include ELSA and Zones of Regulation.	<p>EEF Research:</p> <p>1. The potential impact of metacognition and self-regulation approaches is high (+7 months additional progress), although it can be difficult to realise this impact in practice as such methods require pupils to take greater responsibility for their learning and develop their understanding of what is required to succeed.</p> <p>2. The evidence indicates that explicitly teaching strategies to help plan, monitor and evaluate specific aspects of their learning can be effective.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4

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

Budgeted cost: **£31,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed

Trust Attendance & Welfare Team	<p>Over the last 3 years, Woodlands' attendance has been broadly in line with other special schools, nationally. However, because of the pandemic, there have been an increase in pupils who have school-related anxieties, which is having an impact on the overall attendance rate</p> <p>High overall absence leads to lower attainment at KS2 and KS4 and those with persistent absence are less likely to stay in education.</p> <p>The creation of a trust wide attendance team will help support the attendance of disadvantaged pupils to bring this trend in line with national figures or better.</p> <p>Research; how attendance can impact attainment; Key for School Leaders, 2019</p>	1, 2
Providing sensory equipment and further developing the sensory provision to support disadvantaged pupils with sensory needs, including autism.	Research suggests that negative sensory experiences in school impact learning, cause distraction, anxiety and limited participation. As an academy we chosen to develop positive sensory experiences for pupils with sensory needs and autism. Research into distraction, distress and diversity: ScienceDirect 2020	5
Providing opportunities for pupils to access learning opportunities outside of school as well as in the school community to develop independence and social skills. This will include the hire of a minibus to access learning in the community	<p>We want to educate our pupils for the life they will lead as adults. We want to remove the school 'bubble' that, though they are safe places to learn, can lead to pupils struggling with their independence skills.</p> <p>Special education and Inclusive Learning</p> <p>DfE; independent travel training;gov.uk</p>	3, 4
Enhanced outdoor learning experiences for all pupils to include Allotment Education	<p>95 per cent of children surveyed said outdoor learning makes lessons more enjoyable</p> <p>90 per cent said they felt happier and healthier</p> <p>93 per cent of schools said outdoor learning improves pupils' social skills</p> <p>92 per cent of schools said it improves pupils' health and wellbeing and</p>	3, 4, 5

	<p>engages them with learning</p> <p>85 per cent of schools saw a positive impact on behaviour</p> <p><a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a> / University of Plymouth research</p>	
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**Total budgeted cost: £65,345**



## Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

### Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

#### **Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)**

Reading progress is entered 3 times per year using the Star Reader programme, with test accuracy confirmed through rigorous one-to-one reading assessments. Data is used to track progress and plan interventions. From 2021-22, a systematic phonics programme, based around the Phenomenal Phonics system used within our Trust, was implemented for all pupils in Green Pathway. This has had a significant impact on pupils, reflected in the progress shown in reading skills and confidence. As a result of this strategy, pupils have improved language comprehension to access the curriculum in their pathway.

All staff completed the introduction to Makaton and following this, 15 members of staff completed Makaton Level 1. The academy purchased Widgit software, and further training (Level 1 and Level 2) took place in 2023/24. All staff trained to at least Level 1 by Spring Term 2 2024. Makaton signs of the week are introduced during weekly assemblies and there is evidence of pupils and staff regularly using Makaton to communicate.

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

The appointment of the Creative Lead has led to a greater number of pupils experiencing opportunities to express themselves, including music, art and performing arts. Pupils were able to work with visiting artists and the academy is engaging in a project with Nottingham Contemporary and Westbury Academy. This resulted in an art gallery at school to display pupils' work to parents and carers. Pupils from the school choir also performed as part of 'Christmas in the City' at the Nottingham Albert Hall, organised by Nottingham Music Hub.

The Cover Supervisor is no longer employed by the academy.

Learning opportunities beyond the school gates: All classes have experienced offsite learning including bike rides (including frequent visits to Bike Works), visits to the local community and city centre to develop life skills, including travel, shopping trips to the local area. Pupils experienced off-site bike riding at a variety of different locations, and some have been learning biking proficiency and road safety, using residential streets near school. Pupils attended residential at Blackwell Adventure and a trip to Poland.

#### **Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, well-being)**

The implementation of the Trust Attendance & Welfare Team, including the attendance strategy, has enabled the academy to maintain whole school attendance levels in relation to special school national figures (DfE weekly figures), as well as increase its ability to support the most hard-to-reach and highly anxious learners.

Identified pupils received appropriate interventions, including an increase in home visits, parental engagement and support. Due to the vulnerability of the academy

pupils, the Attendance & Welfare Team meet weekly with the leaders to identify, plan, action and monitor the impact of all attendance interventions. If further support is required the Attendance & Welfare team will refer to appropriate agencies, including Education Welfare, and social care, if necessary.

The Trust Attendance Team supported with regards to capacity at network meetings, core groups and other safeguarding meetings. Absence rates have dropped over 3 years and in Autumn term 2024 were above NA for Special Schools.

Pupils from all pathways and year groups have engaged well with allotment education and have learned about growing plants. Pupils have tasted new vegetables and cooked with what they harvested.

Sensory equipment: The sensory room, including equipment, was frequently used by Ash class (Yellow Pathway) as well as pupils from Green Pathway. This had a positive impact on the pupils' ability to self-regulate and develop their sensory needs. Leaders will continue to monitor the impact on the pupils in 2023/24.

## Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Bike Maintenance (City and Guilds)	Nottingham Bike Works
Gardening Programme	Allotment Education
Music Lessons	Nottingham Music Hub
Drama Lessons	Contracted drama tutor