Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2025 to 2026 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	North Durham Academy
Number of pupils in school	974
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	52% (509 students)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3-year plans are recommended)**	2025-26 2026-27 2027-28
Date this statement was published	Academic year 2025-26
Date on which it will be reviewed	Termly review of progress
Statement authorised by	Mark Gray
Pupil premium lead	Claire Ogden
Governor / Trustee lead	TBC

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£581,046
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£581,046

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our Aims

At North Durham Academy, **teaching and learning are at the heart of our approach**. Pupil Premium funding is used to:

- Provide high-quality teaching for all pupils.
- Target support where vulnerable groups need it most.
- Address barriers to learning and life opportunities.
- Raise aspirations so every pupil can fulfil their potential.
- We want every student to embody our Trust values: **ambitious, respectful, collaborative, inclusive, and resilient.**
- We aim for every student to leave NDA:
- With high expectations of themselves and the skills to achieve them.
- Well-prepared for further education, apprenticeships, or work.
- Mature, confident, and responsible young adults.
- Aware of their rights, responsibilities, and their role in the community.

Evidence-Based Approach

The school draws on **research evidence** (such as the Education Endowment Foundation) and insights from our own experience to allocate funding to activities most likely to maximise achievement. We never confuse eligibility for the Pupil Premium with low ability. Instead, we focus on supporting our disadvantaged students to achieve the **highest possible outcomes**.

Barriers to Learning

We recognise the key challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils, which include:

- Lower academic aspirations.
- Poor attendance.
- Weaker literacy and numeracy skills.
- Limited access to resources (books, IT, internet).
- Fewer cultural and enrichment experiences.
- Complex social, emotional, and mental health needs.

How We Use Funding

Our strategy has a clear focus on **narrowing the attainment gap** through both academic and pastoral initiatives. Funding is directed towards:

- **Quality First Teaching** – ongoing CPD, retention of excellent teachers, and support in core subjects.
- **Literacy Development & Targeted Interventions** – developing reading and writing skills across the curriculum, alongside subject-specific interventions (particularly in English, maths, and science) to address identified gaps.
- **Pastoral & Attendance Support** – strong systems to address SEMH needs, particularly for CLA students.
- **Enrichment Opportunities** – ensuring access to wider experiences that build cultural capital.

Our Objectives for Disadvantaged Pupils

- Ensure all PP pupils access the full curriculum and wider school life.
- Secure sustained progress so that outcomes meet or exceed national averages.
- Tackle barriers such as poor attendance, low literacy, and lack of social capital.
- Improve post-16 destinations, with more students progressing to Level 3 courses and apprenticeships.

Principles Behind Our Strategy

- **Inclusion, Progression, Excellence** are at the core of everything we do.
- Evidence-based decision-making (guided by EEF research and internal data).
- A strong focus on teaching and learning as the most effective way to address disadvantage.
- Literacy development and **subject-specific interventions** to ensure students can access and excel across the curriculum.
- High-quality pastoral and CEIAG support to address non-academic barriers.
- Robust monitoring systems to track outcomes, evaluate interventions, and respond rapidly to need.
- Funding used to benefit all pupils where possible, while maintaining a sharp focus on the disadvantaged.
- A culture of **high aspirations**, ensuring disadvantaged pupils are supported to achieve at the highest levels.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	In our school, pupil premium students achieve significantly lower attainment levels in maths and English GCSE outcomes compared to their non-pupil premium peers. Nationally, these students also perform at lower levels, and the attainment gap continues to widen throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.

2	In our school, aspirations of Pupil Premium students can be significantly lower than those of their non-Pupil Premium peers, due to external factors, such as community and social issues. This reflected nationwide.
3	The attendance gap between pupil premium students and their non-pupil premium peers is 8.1% (83.5% attendance for PP in comparison with 91.6% for non-PP). This challenge is reflected nationwide.
4	The reading ages of pupil premium students in our academy are significantly lower than those of their peers upon entry into Year 7.
5	Pupil premium students' attitude to learning is on average lower than their peers, which is reflected both in behaviour and effort. This is evidenced through our behaviour incident figures in 2024/5. 473 incidents of suspensions were for Pupil Premium students, compared with 108 for non-Pupil Premium students. Consistent quality first teaching is a focus across all areas of the school.
6	Parental engagement among our pupil premium students is significantly lower than that of their non-pupil premium peers. This is evidenced by reduced attendance at parents' evenings and whole-school parental events.
7	Nationally, pupil premium students are significantly more likely to have social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs, often linked to their home and social backgrounds. This is reflected in our student intake.
8	Pupil Premium students are more likely to lack the sense of belonging within a school setting, due to difficulties outside of the educational establishment.

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
Pupil premium students make sustained progress across all year groups and key stages, with access to the full curriculum and wider school life,	Data for Pupil Premium students at KS3 students is in line with the progress of non-Pupil Premium students.

so that outcomes meet or exceed national average	Attainment data for GCSE students illustrates a diminished gap between Pupil Premium students and non-Pupil Premium students. Pupil Premium students attend Enrichment activities and take an active part in after-school clubs/events.
Improve student outcomes at GCSE	End of Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 scores for Pupil Premium students are consistently positive and in-line with those of their non-Pupil premium peers across the curriculum
Sustained improvement of literacy and numeracy levels in Pupil Premium students to be in line with those of non-Pupil Premium students	Embedded Reading and Writing strategies in all lessons, enabling all students to access the curriculum and raise literacy levels. Tutor programme has dedicated DEAR/Reading for Meaning sessions twice weekly, dedicated numeracy session once per week. Each year group (Years 7-9) has a dedicated literacy tutor group for those with Reading barrier One and targeted reading intervention for those with Reading barrier Two.
Pupil Premium students to be a key focus of all staff within school to encourage sense of belonging in line with non-Pupil Premium students	Tutor programme fosters a sense of belonging for all students. House System enables students to work as a team and foster pride in a common goal. Pupil Premium will be a standard item in all subject-, pastoral-, and Leadership meetings, Whole school weekly bulletin to include strategies and CPD to engage Pupil Premium students. Parental contact to made daily/weekly to provide positive feedback on students displaying Trust Values.
Attendance of Pupil Premium students will improve to be in line with national average.	Whole school focus on attendance – target of 97%. Contact with parents/students with focus of lost learning and impact on future aspirations. House attendance competition/Year groups attendance competition Weekly wheel of attendance Termly/Yearly prize draws.

	Rewards trips/events for those achieving positive attendance. Parental Engagement events for PA/those at risk of PA.
Improve attitude to learning of Pupil Premium students and reduce number of FTE and negative choices given to Pupil Premium students to bring them into line with non-Pupil Premium students	Sustained use of Learn-to-Learn books in all lessons to enable all students to access learning. Use of Learn-to-Learn strategies to assist all students with revision techniques. Behaviour data illustrates a significant reduction in the gap between Pupil Premium students and their non-Pupil Premium peers. Reward/Praise data illustrates no gap between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students. Significant reduction in the number of suspensions given to Pupil Premium students.
Provide high quality CEIAG provision to all Pupil Premium students i.e.: • Improve access to further education paths into post-16 education • Ensure all PP students provided with at least two meaningful encounters with a career's adviser • Improve attendance of PP students to careers-related trips and experiences	Attendance of Pupil Premium parents/carers and students at College and Sixth Form open events in line with non-Pupil Premium students. Apprenticeship and college information event provided to all year 11 students, with attendance of PP students in line with non-PP students. All Year 9-11 students to have 1 career related trip / experience per school year. Tutor Groups in all year groups to have weekly careers sessions in tutor time. Work Experience to be included in Year 10 for all students. Years 7-8 to have opportunity to visit higher education establishments. All curriculum areas to include regular information on careers linked to subjects within lessons, with links to local businesses. Whole school careers event to be held annually. College and Sixth Form providers to attend Open Evenings and Parents Evenings.

Significantly raise parental engagement	Attendance at parents evening for Pupil Premium students is in line with non-Pupil Premium students. Attendance to whole school events by Pupil Premium Parents is in line with non-Pupil Premium.

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)

Specific Focus on Literacy and Numeracy Support through Outstanding English and Mathematics Leadership and T&L

Budgeted cost: £304,097

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Senior Leader – Assistant Head Teacher, to oversee the PP Disadvantaged student strategy	Successful schools have clear responsive leadership. DFE "Supporting the Attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice". EEF Implementation Guide states "school leaders play a central role in improving education practices through high quality implementation by "defining both	8

	vision for, and standards of, desirable implementation".	
Recruitment and retention of key specialist teachers - Making sure students have leaders and teachers who are consistency good practitioners. • Team of directors to support improvements in key areas: maths, English, Science, MFL, and SEND • Two seconds in subject in English and Mathematics with specific responsibilities to support pupil progress and outcomes. • Lead Practioners in English and Maths to raise the levels of literacy and numeracy	Research reported by the DFE (2016)suggests that student attainment in core subjects such as maths is greater when delivered by a specialist teacher. This is reiterated in the Interim Curriculum and Assessment Review (March 2025)	1, 4
Teaching and Learning focus on evidence-based strategies to support Quality First Teaching.	Supporting the Attainment of Disadvantaged Pupils (DFE, 2015) suggests high quality teaching as a key aspect of successful schools. EEF Toolkit (2021) "significant improvement in learning through interleaving and questioning and assessment for learning and feedback".	1, 4
CPD and T&L working party to develop a consistent high-quality behaviour for learning approach in all lessons impacting on pupil engagement and progress for all.	Effective CPD (EEF Toolkit 2021) "effective behaviour management strategies have a benefit of significant improvement in learning".	1, 4, 5
Literacy Lead/Lead Practioner to support whole school approach to raising literacy levels for all students with specific focus on Pupil Premium Disadvantaged students	EEF Toolkit "Raising levels of literacy for pupils has a significant impact on pupil progress".	1, 4
Continued development of the Accelerated Reader programme for year 7 and 8 students in 30-minute "Reading Time" sessions each day.	EEF Toolkit – "Reading comprehension has a significant impact on pupil progress".	1, 4

Regular assessments to identify underperforming students and to signpost interventions.	EEF Toolkit 2021 “effective assessment has a significant improvement in learning”.	1, 4
QA led by teaching and learning Team, SLT and Subject Leaders to provide developmental feedback, identify training needs and to share best practice.	DFE guidance on Teachers Standards “Systems of appraisal and monitoring of teaching are necessary and can help to determine starting points for professional development”.	1, 4
Targeted In-School Intervention and small group tutoring – English and Maths 1 hour Period 6 targeted intervention and revision to support high levels of pupil progress in Core Subjects with specific impact on targeted Pupil Premium students.	EEF Toolkit “Small group tuition has a significant impact on pupil progress”.	1, 4, 5
Targeted In-School Intervention and small group tutoring – English and Maths through weekend and planned revision sessions for targeted students with specific focus on year 11 and examination preparation.	EEF Toolkit “Small group tuition has a significant impact on pupil progress”.	1, 4
Targeted In-School Intervention and small group tutoring – English, Maths and science through Walking Talking Mock exam style rehearsal sessions for targeted students with specific focus on year 11 and examination preparation.	EEF Toolkit “Small group tuition has a significant impact on pupil progress”.	1, 4

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

Specific Focus on Other Subject Intervention, Opportunities and Socialisation

Budgeted cost: £179,818

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

Providing subject specific revision and intervention sessions. 1 hour each week “Get Exam Ready” after school study support and revision for all year 11 students to support student progress in Science and non-core subjects. Tutor time small group study support and lunchtime catch-up / revision. Provision of specific revision material e.g., revision guides and IT support / laptops to ensure high levels of engagement.	Engagement of Pupil Premium students during Period 6 lessons has been lower than that of non-Pupil Premium students. Gaps in knowledge and understanding widened resulting in the need for increased support for Pupil Premium students.	1, 4, 5, 8
Targeted In-School Intervention and small group tutoring – English, Maths and science through Walking Talking Mock exam style rehearsal sessions for targeted students with specific focus on year 11 and examination preparation.	EEF Toolkit “Small group tuition has a significant impact on pupil progress”.	1, 4
Targeted In-School Intervention and small group tutoring – Science and other non-core subjects through weekend and holiday revision sessions for targeted students with specific focus on year 11 and examination preparation	EEF Toolkit “Small group tuition has a significant impact on pupil progress”.	1, 4, 8
Dedicated Careers Lead to develop a strategy to support students with “Next Steps and reduce NEETSs through a programme of increased 1:1 career adviser Interviews	CEC Report 2020 highlights the importance of careers guidance. Careers interventions have a positive on student achievement. Gatsby 8 benchmarks detail the need for all students to access CEIAG from years 7-11. Disadvantaged or SEND students should have additional access to Careers Guidance and support.	1, 2
KS3 Accelerated Reader/Reading lessons for year 7 and 8, 9 students in twice weekly tutorial “Reading Time” sessions (Reading for Meaning and DEAR)	EEF Toolkit – “Reading comprehension has a significant impact on pupil progress”.	1, 4

Dedicated tutor groups in Years 7-9 for children with REading Barrier One. Dedicated tutor time intervention with Literacy Leads for children with Reading Barrier 2. Promote programme to staff across the school through dedicated CPD to ensure a consistent approach and high-quality support from Tutors in addition to specialised English teaching staff.		
Reading interventions for students who are below target and chronological reading age with whole school CPD for reading. Lexia/Lexonik Leap intervention groups run by TAs for students requiring specific phonics support.	EEF Toolkit – Reading comprehension has a significant impact on pupil progress".	1, 4
Small group tuition using National Tutor Programme to support students in all subject areas through in-school intervention, after school "Get Exam Ready" and after school Homework and Study Support for KS3 students in the library, intervention and weekend / holiday study support for targeted students.	EEF Toolkit (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021) suggests that small group tuition has +4 months benefit and 1:1 tuition can have a benefit of +5 months benefit for pupil progress.	1, 7

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

Budgeted cost: £ 238,872

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Provide high quality pastoral care including mentoring and support of vulnerable students by Year Managers	EEF Toolkit (2021) reports that pastoral support to communicate with parent / carers regarding students'	1, 5, 6, 7, 8

	welfare and dedicated mentoring programmes has a positive effect on pupil well-being and pupil progress.	
Development of The Bridge/Interventions to support continued learning for students who display challenging learner behaviours. Bridge with dedicated staff team to support students with a wide range of behaviour problems in addition to Internal Suspensions and students returning to school after External Suspension. • Inclusion Team and SLT staff to provide INSET to class teachers for individual pupils they work with. • Bespoke curriculum package established for learners at risk of PEX. • External trips for pupils who are at risk of PEX. • Reduce the number of External Suspensions and PEXs.	Behaviour intervention programmes have a significant impact on reducing behaviour issues and suspensions. This has a direct effect on improving pupil progress and raising attainment.	1, 5
Targeted attendance activities, including: • Review and update attendance policy • Attendance Officer to closely monitor all Pupil Premium students' attendance and build relationships with families with support from the dedicated YMs (Year Managers x1 for each year group) and implement strategies to improve attendance. • SLT Link and Attendance Officer to deliver CPD to YMs (Pastoral team) and the Tutor teaching team to	DFE 2016 Research – The higher the overall absence rate across KS4 the lower the likely level of attainment at the end of KS4. "Overall absence had a statistically negative link to attainment. Research presented by organisations such as the Durrington Research School (2018) suggest that the identified activities all have a significant impact on attendance outcomes for PP students and therefore an impact on pupil progress and attainment.	1, 3

ensure delivery of a consistent approach to improving attendance across the school. • Dedicated transport to support home visits for targeted students. Potential provision of an attendance car to ensure all YMs can complete home visits for their year groups. Driver training as required. • Incorporate attendance into transition planning. • Work with Pupil Premium parents and students to identify specific barriers to attendance. • Target support based on specific barriers.		
Support for students requiring daily access to laptops as their normal way of working and provision of I-Pads for those with specific needs (EAL)	DFE: Pupil Premium students have been significantly affected by the digital divide.	1, 4, 5, 6, 7
Increase Parents Evening engagement by: • Developing early online booking for Pupil Premium parents. • Where Pupil Premium parents have not attended, encourage alternative contact via Pastoral staff YMs.	Internal research suggests that many Pupil Premium parents are unaware of parent evenings or are reluctant to engage with school resulting in poorer attendance EEF Toolkit (2021) reports that effective parental engagement can have a significant impact on pupil progress.	6, 1
Develop buddying system for students who are In-Year transfers with student mentors to ensure a successful transition.	EEF - Buddying is suggested as an effective way of supporting the integration of students into schools because of mid-phase transfers.	8
Ensure that students can access a wide range of after school taught (academic support) and extra-curricular activities (arts, and sports) through our personal development programme of enrichments.	EEF Toolkit reports +2 months benefit from both arts and sports participation.	5, 7, 8

Implementation of Class charts and Arbor to aid engagement and raise awareness of rewards and attendance.	EEF Toolkit – Increased parent engagement supports student progress and outcomes	1, 6
Increase number of careers events attend by all students in Yr8 -11 students to 1 per year.	CEC report (2020): highlights importance of careers guidance. Effect sizes reported by Hattie (2016) show that Careers interventions are likely to have positive effect on student achievement	1,2
Pupil premium Capitation Fund – to prevent individual Pupil Premium students from being unable to access enrichment opportunities, have resources and equipment required for learning and cultural growth.	EEF – Arts and Sports participation support progress and outcomes	1, 3, 5, 7, 8
Sustained use of “data team” to ensure robust tracking systems are in place. This team includes the Senior Leader AHT to oversee the Pupil Premium Disadvantaged student strategy, Heads of Year for each year group to closely monitor academic progress and YMs (Pastoral Support Officers) for each year group to monitor attendance, behaviour and student well-being.	The EEF’s guide “Putting Evidence to Work, A Guide for Implementation” (Sharples, Albers, & Fraser, 2018) – highlights the importance of building teams such as “data teams” to improve leadership capacity and deliver school improvement	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8

Total budgeted cost: £ 722,786

Funded via Pupil Premium - £578,528

Funded via Schools Budget - £144,259

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Outcomes for disadvantaged students in 2025 were lower than students that are classed as non-Pupil Premium. However, in some areas there was improvement. This happened in the following measures:

- Average total Attainment 8 score improved from to 35.97 to 36.16 in 2025
- Average Attainment 8 score for Open Bucket subjects, gap closed by 0.12 (2024 = 0.77 / 2025 =0.65)
- Students achieving 9-4 in Maths gap closed by 1.6%

Attendance gaps between Pupil Premium students and non-Pupil Premium students were still too wide at 8.1%. The continued focus of the academy this academic year is to minimise the gap with enhanced parental contact from the attendance team, the pastoral team and the teaching and learning staff. This contact will be to focus on lost learning time and the impact of future aspirations when students miss lessons. Interventions will continue to focus on bridging the gaps where learning has been lost. All students have been given a target of 97% attendance, and this will continue to be reiterated across the academy every day.

Throughout 2024-25 North Durham Academy has continued to review (internally through academy subject reviews and trust wide subject reviews including using external colleagues) the curriculum, its intent, implementation and impact. The academy has increased access to a growing school improvement team of subject Directors/Associate Directors in Maths, English, MFL and Science, as well as adding Lead Practioners in both English and Maths, to raise the quality of teaching and learning for disadvantaged pupils.

The quality of teaching and learning at North Durham Academy has seen further improvements through the introduction of the Teacher Insight Programme. There has remained an unrelenting focus on the Teaching and Learning Policy. This year's Pupil Premium Strategy will continue this focus by ensuring that students in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant are the focus of teaching and learning strategies within the classroom, through reading and quality first teaching focusing on metacognition, feedback and high challenge and Teaching to the Top. We believe that this improvement in the quality of teaching and the sharpened focus on Pupil Premium students in the classroom will see a greater and sustained improvement in outcomes for our

disadvantaged students from 2025/6, until Pupil Premium student outcomes are in line with those of non-Pupil Premium students.

Period 6 sessions (formerly “Get Exam Ready”) for key stage 4 students take place every day from 3-4 pm, with targeted and bespoke groupings to raise students’ outcomes.

North Durham Academy has a well-embedded Reading Strategy that has been used consistently over the past twelve months. That, teamed with the Writing Strategy, will remain a key focus this year in supporting students with literacy skills in order to further close the gaps and secure their curriculum knowledge. Students in Years 8-11 have already been assigned reading barriers which will allow teachers to focus on in their interventions. Year 7 students will complete reading assessments and that data will be used to implement key interventions.

Last year, we made changes to our SEND provision with the development of our Enhanced Learning Provision. September 2025 has seen the first group of students (Year 7) enter the ELP for specialist and targeted intervention. This will soon include another small group of students who require interventions on a smaller scale. Our Compass (formerly Harbour provision) will remain for those students requiring support where needed. Teachers have access to Support Plans via Arbor, which include detailed, supportive strategies that can applied practically in the classroom and will improve quality first teaching, whilst allowing the students’ individual needs to be met. Increased monitoring of quality first teaching of SEND students will continue to support those students classed as double disadvantaged with Pupil Premium status and SEND needs. Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children students will continue to be supported by the Pupil Premium plus funding.

Careers Education and Guidance improved in 2024/5 with all students in Year 10 being given the opportunity to visit a Post-16 provision and experience a day in life of a college/sixth form student. All Year 11 students were given individual careers interviews from an external advisor.

CEIAG will remain a key focus of this year’s strategy, with a focus on disadvantaged students and those with SEND to ensure that these students are given the same opportunities as all other students within the academy. The tutor programme will ensure Careers Education is provided weekly to all students from Years 7-11 and there will be a greater focus on promoting careers within subject areas, with time being given to discuss careers in lessons at regular intervals.

We are confident that, by implementing these measures, there will be a vast improvement in the outcomes for Pupil Premium students, with the gaps in all areas reducing significantly until they are in line with non-Pupil Premium students.

Externally 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

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year**
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils