



## Bristol Free School

### Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2025 - 2026

This statement details our school's use of pupil 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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

#### School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Bristol Free School
Number of pupils in school	Total 1300 Y7-11 = 1021 Y12-13 = 279
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	157 students /15%
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	Nov 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	Sept 2026
Statement authorised by	S King
Pupil premium lead	J Fernandes
Governor / Trustee lead	A-M Boyle

#### Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£171,365
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	£171,365

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

Bristol Free School believes every child, regardless of socio-economic background, deserves equal access to opportunities that enable future learning, strong outcomes and career choices. Our pupil premium strategy acknowledges the pandemic widened the national attainment gap. While our disadvantaged students outperform national averages, they still lag behind their peers. There is no single solution; support must be tailored to individual needs. Our priority is quality first teaching, supported by evidence-based approaches. Research confirms this has the greatest impact on outcomes, especially for disadvantaged pupils. To deliver our ambitious curriculum, we invest in professional development, early career teacher support, and staff recruitment and retention. Cognitive science and memory recall strategies underpin our teaching to ensure focused, efficient learning. Recognising the social and emotional challenges of recent years, we continue to invest in mental health and wellbeing through our PLUS team, which has contributed to strong KS4 outcomes.

Our three-year plan aims to close the attainment gap and ensure all students make good progress. We will regularly review impact, refine strategies, and assess value for money. Ongoing assessment, student voice, and parental engagement will guide our approach.

### Challenges

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

Challenge Number	Detail of Challenge
<b>1. Girls with complex SEMH.</b>	In 2025 this group made substantially less progress. Evidence suggests that girls with SEMH needs from disadvantaged backgrounds in KS3 often struggle to engage fully with school. Common challenges include reduced engagement, anxiety masking, and a low sense of belonging.
<b>2. Low reading and literacy attainment on beginning KS3</b>	The average reading and literacy age of incoming KS3 pupils in Bristol is among the lowest nationally, particularly for disadvantaged students. Many arrive with reading ages well below their chronological age, limited vocabulary, and weak comprehension and fluency.
<b>3. PP Attendance</b>	Our experience shows that the most disadvantaged pupils are more likely to have low attendance in KS3. In KS4, this often escalates to persistent absence, which negatively impacts GCSE outcomes.
<b>4. Raising aspirations</b>	Disadvantaged pupils are more likely to come from families with little experience of higher education. As a result, university-level study can feel unrealistic. These pupils also participate less in enrichment activities and often have a narrower understanding of post16 options, requiring additional support to explore pathways after Year 11 or Year 13.
<b>5. SEND / PP interface – multiple vulnerability students</b>	An increasing proportion of disadvantaged learners are also on the SEND register. Without coordinated planning, this creates a risk of double disadvantage.

## 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
Improved engagement, belonging, and progress of PP girls with SEMH	KS3 ATL and Progress within 5% of cohort Lesson monitoring shows greater engagement and fewer lessons removals PP girls Progress 8 $\geq$ 0.1 of cohort
Reduce gap between Non-PP and PP literacy levels – particularly reading, oracy and writing	97% Y7 and Y8 PP reach 12 years reading age. Reading time built into the curriculum KS3 to KS5 Tracking of reading history. Lesson observations and monitoring show teachers engaging PP students in oracy and talk for write strategies.
Higher proportion of PP multiple vulnerability Y11 making positive P8	60% and above of PP Y11 with positive P8
Increased uptake to BFS Sixth Form	Over 15 PP students meeting entry requirements to BFS Sixth Form.
PP and SEND vulnerable students meet national progress levels	Robust integrated plans & classroom practice PP / SEND Progress 8 $\geq$ 0.1 of cohort

## 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: £60,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach from the Education Endowment Fund Toolkit	Challenge number(s) addressed
1. Homework/independent study culture support by digital software and after school clubs KS3 and KS4 – staffed by cover supervisors and UPS staff	<b>Lengthening the school day</b> Adding before- or after-school sessions (including small-group or one-to-one tuition) Average Impact: +3 months' additional progress  <b>Oral Language Intervention</b> Reading comprehension strategies. Disadvantaged students often start school with weaker oral language skills. Targeted interventions help close this gap.  <b>Metacognition</b> Oral language interventions have an average impact of +6 months' additional progress for pupils compared to standard practice. This makes them a high-impact strategy for improving attainment.	2, 4 and 5
2. Oracy whole school initiative with Voice 21 – developing talk to read and write strategies to improve comprehension from academic text		
3. Retrieval practice embedded into all lessons - using grids, interleaving and quizzing		
4. Benchmarking at start of Y7 to create small nurture English and maths groupings to narrow gap in Y7 and Y8		
5. In Y11 and Y10 additional groups and class support given to English and maths PP students who have fallen behind		
6. Development of TEAMS curriculum to provide a keep		

them up and catch them up for PP students in English, maths and science		
7. Accelerating progress for examination groups and developing cultural capital across curriculum to increase uptake into the sixth form and support destinations.		

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

Budgeted cost: £28,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach from the Education Endowment Fund Toolkit	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b>1. Reading Strategy and Accelerated Reader Programme – Year 7 and Year 8</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated library manager, senior leader and teacher who manage reading and AR programme – linking with English department, tutors and parents/carers</li> <li>Drop everything and read running twice a week for 20 minutes</li> <li>Termly data tracking of reading ages linked to reading interventions with sixth form students and TAs</li> <li>Dedicated English lesson once a fortnight to support AR programme and ensure PP learners are being exposed to a rich reading culture to boost cultural capital</li> <li>Reading groups which talk about a commonly read book and are read aloud to.</li> <li>Reading aloud and follow along books during tutor time</li> <li>Thinking reading consultation to develop extensive coherent literacy strategies with maximum impact for the most stubborn readers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accelerated Reader</b> adds + 3months and more to progress compared to peers who do not participate.</p> <p><b>Reading comprehension strategies</b> High impact, with an average of +7 months of additional progress for pupils compared to those who did not receive the intervention. This makes it one of the most effective literacy approaches.</p> <p>Disadvantaged pupils often have less exposure to books and academic language at home, making comprehension harder. Explicit instruction helps them develop meta-cognitive skills—planning, monitoring, and evaluating their reading—which research shows they are less likely to acquire independently.</p>	2 and 5
<p><b>2. SEMH Girls Support</b></p> <p>Staff training to support strategies for regulation of SEMH girls.</p> <p>Academic mentoring for students identified at risk of falling below nationally expected progress in English and maths.</p>	<p><b>Mentoring</b> With a focus on confidence, resilience, character development, and aspirations. On average, mentoring leads to +2 months' progress</p>	1 and 4

<p>Small group interventions for vulnerable disadvantaged students at risk of low attendance.</p> <p>Running Y11 Study Hub to provide an afterschool opportunity for students to extend their day, complete academic work and receive academic and pastoral interventions.</p>		
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#### Wider strategies (attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach from the Education Endowment Fund Toolkit	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>1. <b>Attendance Interventions PP in persistent absence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased hours and focus on PP students below 90% - use of attendance officer and year leaders</li> <li>Improved communication with PP families and the consequences of not attending regularly</li> <li>Earlier contact with families to develop attendance support plans</li> </ul>	<p><b>Attainment and Parental Engagement</b> Attainment evidence shows that students who attend school above 95% of sessions do statistically better than those lower than 95%. Involving parents through regular communication and shared strategies improves attendance.</p>	3
<p>2. <b>Development of BFS promise to provide supported trips and cultural experiences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracker from Y7 and Y13 ensuring all PP access a range of non means tested cultural experiences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cultural and Arts participation</b> Positive impact, equivalent to +3 months of additional progress in core academic subjects (literacy, mathematics, and science) compared to similar pupils who did not participate.</p>	1 and 4
<p>3. <b>Support with trips/uniform etc. to make students comfortable in school and boost attendance</b></p>		

#### Wider strategies (Engagement)

Budgeted cost: £77,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach from the Education Endowment Fund Toolkit	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>1. <b>Increase extra-curricular offer and increase participation rates of disadvantaged students.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved tracking and feedback about extra-</li> </ul>	<p><b>Parental engagement</b> Involving parents through regular communication and shared strategies improves attendance and outcomes.</p>	4 and 5

<p>curricular offer and target all students to attend at least 1 activity a week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy in staffing to increase range of extra-curricular</li> <li>• Track the PP families who have SEMH needs and put on a support programme that will support them. Use the Success Together strategy to provide parent/carers guidance and support on a range of issues families may encounter when raising teenagers – link with external agencies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Behaviour strategies</b></p> <p>Behaviour interventions including whole-school approaches to improve ethos and discipline and universal classroom programmes to promote positive behaviour can lead to +3 months of additional progress in academic attainment on average</p>	
<p>2. Involve parents and students with behaviour support plans to help students struggling with emotional and mental health.</p>		

**Total budgeted cost: £195,500**

## 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 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Initiative	Intended outcome	Impact	Evaluation
Narrow Gap at KS3 so PP students equipped for GCSE years	Gap in Year 7 – 9 to reduce so 85 - 90% PP making expected progress.	Y7 – PP 61% Non 61% Y8 – PP 49% Non 49.5% Y9 – PP 40.1% Non 53.5%	Strategies including student focus groups, targeted maths and English intervention reduced gap in Y7 and Y8 by EOY.  Continue to review PP progress and ensure that robust interventions are put in place after key assessment points so that gaps do not widen.
Reduce gap between Non-PP and PP literacy levels – particularly reading, oracy and writing	97% Y7 and Y8 PP reach 12 years reading age. Reading time built into the curriculum KS3 to KS5 Tracking of reading history. Lesson observations and monitoring show teachers engaging PP students in oracy and talk for write strategies.	Students moderately behind in their reading age have made progress through current interventions (mentoring, DEAR, English library lessons). Those furthest behind on entry do not on average reach age expected levels and robust interventions need implementing. There is evidence through lesson observation of teachers embedding oracy strategy and engaging PP students.	Whole school reading approach is embedded.  Developed reading strategy for academic year 24-25 to provide greater opportunities for structure reading within curriculum.  Robust plans in place to support the most stubborn readers with reaching age expected reading age.
High proportion of PP Y11 making positive P8	50% and above of PP Y11 with positive P8.	<b>23</b> out of a possible <b>39</b> with evidenced prior attainment made positive progress. <b>(59%)</b> .	Increased to 59% achieving positive progress in 2025 from 50% in 2024.
Increased uptake to BFS Sixth Form	Over 15 PP students meeting entry requirements to BFS Sixth Form.	<b>18</b> PP students met the entry requirements for BFS Sixth Form. <b>15</b> took up place. 2 went to alternate sixth form centres and 1 to college.	More students reaching entry requirements choosing to remain at BFS for their post-16 studies than in previous years.

### Externally provided programmes

*Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England*

Programme	Provider
Accelerated Reader	Renaissance Learning
Seneca Learning	Seneca Learning
Dr Frost Maths	Dr Frost Learning
Edukey	TES
Thinking Reading	Thinking Reading