



# Katherine Semar Junior School Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 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	Katherine Semar Junior School
Number of pupils in school	260
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	11.5%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended</b> )	2021/2022 to 2024/2025
Date this statement was published	December 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2024
Statement authorised by	Julie Puxley, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Rob Aiken, Deputy Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Nick Osbourne, lead for disadvantaged pupils

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£49,650
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£4640
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	£54,290

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal.

We will consider the challenges faced by our vulnerable pupils, such as those whose families have suffered domestic abuse and those who have social and emotional difficulties. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our strategy is also integral to wider school plans for education recovery, notably in its targeted support through the National Tutoring Programme for pupils whose education has been worst affected, including non-disadvantaged pupils. Our pupils received small group tutoring from our teaching staff in 2021/2022. Whilst funding has reduced, we continue to use the recovery premium to deliver high quality tutoring, delivered by our staff, to groups of pupils. The quantity and frequency of this support each year is dependent on funding.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set.
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified.
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils. These are evident from entry to Y3 through to the end of Y6 and in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils than their peers.
2	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils suggest disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with reading fluency and comprehension than their peers. This negatively impacts their progress in reading.
3	Our summative and formative assessments in writing and maths; observations and discussions about pupils with teaching staff (pupil progress meetings) indicate that the education of many of our disadvantaged pupils has been impacted by partial school closures to a greater extent than for other pupils. These findings are supported by national studies.  This has resulted in significant knowledge gaps leading to pupils falling further behind age-related expectations in maths and writing.
4	Our assessments (including SHEU surveys and pupil wellbeing surveys), observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, notably due to lack of enrichment opportunities during the COVID lockdowns, limited uptake of extra-curricular activities and the challenges our families have faced at home. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their ability to regulate their emotions and their resilience to stressors.  Children identified for requiring support have increased during the pandemic. In Autumn 2021 30 pupils received additional support with social and emotional needs (5 receiving therapeutic support out of school, 4 receiving play therapy in school, 18 receiving learning mentoring in school and 3 receiving support from 'the listening project'). 11 of these children were in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.  Our disadvantaged pupils are less likely to engage in clubs or take up an instrument than non-disadvantaged pupils. Our discussions with pupils and families and data showing uptake of sports clubs in school and out of school in Autumn 2021 showed that 20% of pupils were not taking part in any sports clubs. 37% of these pupils were disadvantaged and 56% of our disadvantaged pupils did not take part in any sports clubs.
5	Our attendance data over the last three academic years when this plan was written (2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021) indicated that attendance among disadvantaged pupils was between 1.9% - 4.5% lower than

	<p>for non-disadvantaged pupils. Whilst attendance for disadvantaged pupils was good in 2020/21 (96%), this was achieved through rigorous monitoring systems and the support we established for our disadvantaged families.</p> <p>In the period between September 2021 and November 2021 the percentage gap for pupils that had been persistently absent (under 90% attendance) was 28% more for disadvantaged pupils compared to non-disadvantaged pupils. Our assessments and observations indicated that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.</p>
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## 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 oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evidenced when triangulated with sources of evidence including books scrutinies, pupil subject interviews, engagement in lessons, ongoing formative assessments.
Improved reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	KS2 reading outcomes in 2024/25 to show that more than 70% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard (above National data for disadvantaged pupils in 2019 – 62%) and more than 25% of disadvantaged pupils are working at greater depth (above National data for disadvantaged pupils in 2019 – 25%).
Improved maths attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	KS2 maths outcomes in 2024/25 to show that more than 75% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard (above National data for disadvantaged pupils in 2019 – 67%) and more than 25% of disadvantaged pupils are working at greater depth (above National data for disadvantaged pupils in 2019 – 16%).
Improved writing attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	KS2 writing outcomes in 2024/25 to show that more than 75% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard (above National data for disadvantaged pupils in 2019 – 68%) and more than 15% of disadvantaged

	<p>pupils are working at greater depth (above National data for disadvantaged pupils in 2019 – 11%).</p>
<p>To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2024/2025 to be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations.</li> <li>• A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ul>
<p>To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly for our disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Sustained high attendance from 2024/25 demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the overall attendance rate for all pupils to be 96% or more and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers to be less than 1.5% .</li> <li>• the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent (attendance lower than 90%) to show an improving trend over the next three years and for the gap in persistent absenteeism to close between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.</li> </ul>

## 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: **£28,773**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Develop and embed a vocabulary spine within our curriculum for each subject with a progression of vocabulary from Year 3 to Year 6 and an academic word list for each year group to secure stronger teaching of vocabulary for all pupils.</p>	<p>The EEF guidance, which is based on a range of the best available evidence, recommends explicitly teaching new words, providing repeated exposure to new words and providing opportunities for pupils.</p> <p><a href="#">Improving Literacy in KS2 – Education Endowment Foundation – recommendation 1 - EEF</a></p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Purchase and embed elements of the CUSP (Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership) curriculum into our INSPIRE curriculum to enhance the teaching of vocabulary for all pupils.</p>	<p>The CUSP curriculum is underpinned by evidence, research and cognitive science. Modules are deliberately sequenced for robust progression. There is an emphasis on oracy and vocabulary acquisition, retention and use to break down learning barriers and accelerate progress.</p> <p><a href="http://www.unity-curriculum.co.uk">CUSP curriculum information – www.unity-curriculum.co.uk</a></p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Deliver high quality CPD for teachers on metacognition to develop self-reflection and collaborative learning in our pupils. Embed approaches based on metacognition within the curriculum.</p>	<p>There is strong evidence indicating that explicitly teaching strategies to help pupils plan, monitor and evaluate specific aspects of their learning makes them more likely to manage their own learning and overcome challenges themselves in the future, having a high impact on their progress particularly in mathematics and science. Some evidence also suggests that disadvantaged pupils are less likely</p>	<p>3, 4</p>

	<p>to use metacognitive and self-regulatory strategies.</p> <p><a href="#">Metacognition and self-regulation – Toolkit Strand – Education Endowment Foundation - EEF</a></p> <p><a href="#">Metacognition and self-regulated learning guidance report – Education Endowment Foundation - EEF</a></p>	
<p>Some members of teaching staff to be trained as instructional coaches and fund release time.</p> <p>Train staff to use IRIS technology in order to watch back and reflect upon their practice.</p> <p>Develop and embed an approach, where coaches support teachers to reflect upon and develop specific areas of their practice.</p>	<p>In a pilot study the vast majority of teachers believe the use of IRIS Connect improved their practice and the study found that there was moderate evidence of changes in practice. The evidence suggested that technology interventions appeared to be most effective when they support changes in the nature of teaching and learning.</p> <p><a href="#">IRIS Connect: Developing classroom dialogue and feedback through collective video reflection – Education Endowment Foundation - EEF</a></p>	1, 2, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £15,202

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Trained teachers or teaching assistants to deliver 'reading fluency' interventions based on the Herts for Learning 'KS2 Fluency Project' to targeted groups in Y3-5 to build confidence in reading out loud, fluency,</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that supporting children to develop fluent reading capabilities supports comprehension because pupils' cognitive resources can be redirected from focusing on word recognition to comprehending the text. There is evidence demonstrating that The Herts for Learning KS2 Reading Fluency Project supports progress in pupils'</p>	2, 3

<p>pace resulting in improved comprehension.</p>	<p>reading comprehension age over an eight week intervention.</p> <p><a href="#">Improving Reading Fluency (Michael Cole) – Institute for Effective Education</a></p> <p><a href="#">KS2 Reading Fluency Project – Herts for Learning</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving Literacy in KS2 – Education Endowment Foundation – recommendation 2 - EEF</a></p>	
<p>To engage with the National Tutoring Programme in 2022 to provide school-led tutoring, delivered by teaching staff to small groups of pupils for pupils whose education has been most impacted by the pandemic (funding - £6804 in 2022/23). A significant proportion of the pupils who receive tutoring will be disadvantaged, including those who are higher attainers.</p>	<p>Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, in small groups:</p> <p><a href="#">Small group tuition - Toolkit Strand - Education Endowment Foundation - EEF</a></p>	<p>3, 4</p>
<p>To deploy teaching assistants to run targeted structured small group interventions and in some cases one to one support in reading, writing and maths, following rigorous analysis of difficulties diagnosed through assessments.</p>	<p>Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one:</p> <p><a href="#">One to one tuition   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p> <p>And in small groups:</p> <p><a href="#">Small group tuition   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving Literacy in KS2 – Education Endowment Foundation – recommendation 7 - EEF</a></p>	<p>2, 3</p>



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

Budgeted cost: **£10,315**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Regular training on monitoring and improving attendance and developing our approach towards identifying and working with families where attendance is an issue. This will be based upon the principles of good practise set out in the DFE's <a href="#">Improving School Attendance</a> advice.</p> <p>Family engagement and welfare officer employed (September 2021) to build relationships with families and support them, including issues such as the impact of financial, housing and relationship insecurity on family life, learning and attendance.</p>	<p>The DfE guidance <a href="#">Improving School Attendance</a> has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.</p> <p>Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges The Essex Way (edited by Mark Rowland) – Unity Research School and Essex County Council - 'Relationships' chapter.</p>	<p>4, 5</p>
<p>Maintain and develop ACE, our school-led breakfast club, after school club and school holiday provision, providing families with a low cost option for childcare and enabling flexibility for working parents.</p>	<p>The DfE guidance <a href="#">Improving School Attendance</a> has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Three members of staff to be trained to</p>	<p>TPP is an evidence-based Essex Local Authority approach towards</p>	<p>2, 3, 4, 5</p>

<p>as Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) trainers in 2021/2022 and to lead the school and train staff in 2022/2023 towards becoming a TPP school.</p>	<p>supporting behaviour and understanding emotional wellbeing that, in time, will benefit individuals and families. Benefits will include increased capability and productivity, improved pupil outcomes, reduced absence, reduced demand on services, improved relationships and greater satisfaction and happiness.</p> <p><a href="#">TPP information – Claire Kershaw – Director of Education – Essex County Council</a></p> <p>Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges The Essex Way (edited by Mark Rowland) – Unity Research School and Essex County Council</p>	
<p>One of our Deputy Head Teachers to receive training in 2021/22 as our school ‘disadvantaged champion’ and to establish and embed our school’s strategy towards addressing disadvantage and raising outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Essex’s approach towards addressing disadvantage has been established through working with a group of 14 pilot primary, secondary and special school, plus a range of stakeholders and is underpinned by research.</p> <p>Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges The Essex Way (edited by Mark Rowland) – Unity Research School and Essex County Council</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</p>
<p>Trained ‘learning mentors’ to meet on a weekly basis to provided targeted support to identified children who need support related to social, emotional and mental health and self-regulation.</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged pupils have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than non-disadvantaged pupils. Lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment. SEL interventions are shown to improve SEL skills and are therefore likely to support disadvantaged pupils to understand and engage in healthy relationships with peers and emotional self-regulation, both of which may subsequently increase academic attainment.</p>	<p>3, 4</p>

	<a href="#">Social and emotional learning - Toolkit Strand - Education Endowment Foundation -EEF</a>	
<p>To improve the uptake of extra-curricular activities in school for our disadvantaged pupils through maintaining and developing our offer of clubs, sports opportunities and peripatetic music teachers. To support and encourage disadvantaged pupils to participate.</p>	<p>Evidence shows that there is a small positive impact of physical activity on academic attainment and that it is crucial for the other benefits and opportunities it provides.</p> <p><a href="#">Physical activity - Toolkit Strand - Education Endowment Foundation - EEF</a></p>	4
<p>To ensure that all pupils are able to access a broad and rich experiences including trips, residential in Year 4 and 6, visits, experiences and adventurous forest school all mapped throughout our INSPIRE curriculum. To support and encourage disadvantaged pupils to participate.</p>	<p>Studies have shown that Outdoor Adventure Learning has positive impacts. It provides opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to participate in activities that they otherwise might not be able to access. Through participating in these challenging physical and emotional activities, outdoor adventure learning can support pupils to develop non-cognitive skills such as resilience, self-confidence and motivation.</p> <p><a href="#">Outdoor adventure learning - Toolkit Strand - Education Endowment Foundation -EEF</a></p>	4

**Total budgeted cost:** £54,290

## 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.

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2022/23 academic year using key stage 2 performance data and internal assessments for writing. Our writing was moderated by an external moderator in 2022.

The DfE did not publish data in 2020 or 2021 and end of KS2 assessments were not required to be undertaken. Schools were not required to publish any data in 2022 but end of KS2 assessments were undertaken. The DfE recognised that the impact of the COVID pandemic was still being felt and that schools could not be compared with each other or compare their own data from previous years. However, the DfE shared 2022 national data (KS2) with schools to help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at a national level. Data will be published once again in 2023.

Analysis below largely relates to the last three years of data, where end of KS2 assessments were undertaken – 2019, 2022 and 2023. The number of disadvantaged pupils in 2019 (7 children – 12%) and 2023 (5 children – 6%) was lower than national however it was above national in 2022 (19 children – 28%) – these lower percentages have been taken into consideration when reviewing the data.

2023 end of KS2 assessments show that the percentage of all pupils reaching the expected standard and above and the higher standard is above national in reading, writing and maths.

#### Pupils achieving the expected standard and above at the end of KS2

Our internal end of year assessments in 2020 and 2021 suggested that there had been a drop in performance of disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2 in the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard or above in reading, writing and maths.

However, performance improved in our end of year assessments in 2022 in reading, writing and maths. This cohort had a significantly larger than average number of disadvantaged pupils for Katherine Semar (19 children – 28% of the cohort). The improvement in reading was significant (85%) and the highest disadvantaged pupils have attained in the last five years.

Our disadvantaged pupils have consistently outperformed disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading, writing and maths in 2019, 2022 and 2023. Our disadvantaged

pupils have also outperformed all pupils nationally in reading over the last two years and maths this year.

#### *Maths (expected standard and above)*

End of year assessment in 2023 suggested that the performance of disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2 (5 children) has improved further in maths (80%) since 2022 (70%). Also the gap to non-disadvantaged pupils (-10%) has narrowed in maths since 2020 (-22%) and is smaller than the national gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged (-20%).

#### *Reading (expected standard and above)*

In 2023 we saw a slight drop in reading attainment (80%) compared to 2022 (85%) but an improvement on 2019 (71%). Attainment was 20% higher than national disadvantaged (60%). Also the gap to non-disadvantaged pupils (-9%) has shrunk in reading since 2019 (-20%) and is smaller than the national gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged (-18%).

#### *Writing (expected standard and above)*

Whilst the end of year assessments in 2022 (70%) and 2023 (60%) have shown an improvement in the performance of disadvantaged pupils since carrying out internal assessments in 2020 and 2021 it has dropped overall since 2019 (86%). The gap compared to non-disadvantaged pupils has increased in 2023 (-18%) compared to 2019 (-9%) and 2022 (-15%). The gap is now in line with national (-19%) and we continue to see to narrow this gap through our continued work on oracy.

### Pupils achieving the higher at the end of KS2

#### *Reading (higher standard)*

In 2023 our disadvantaged pupils significantly outperformed disadvantaged pupils nationally (40% compared to 17%) after performing slightly lower than national disadvantaged in 2019 and 2022. All pupils at our school have attained above national in reading in 2019, 2022 and 2023, which has partly accounted for the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged being wider than national in 2019 and 2022. We narrowed the gap in 2023 and it was in line with national (-18%).

#### *Writing (higher standard)*

In 2023 our disadvantaged pupils outperformed disadvantaged pupils nationally (20% compared to 7%) after being more in line in 2022 (5% compared to 6%). In 2023 the number of disadvantaged pupils reaching a higher standard (20%) improved on 2022 (5%) and the gap to non-disadvantaged is the lowest it has been over the last five years (-12%).

### *Maths (higher standard)*

Our disadvantaged pupils have outperformed disadvantaged pupils nationally over the last five years (by 7% in 2019, 2022 and 2023). In 2023 the number of disadvantaged pupils reaching a higher standard (20%) improved on 2022 (15%) and the gap to non-disadvantaged is the lowest it has been over the last five years (-18%).

Having identified the impact that the national lockdowns had had on our higher attaining pupils, in the 2022/23 academic year we put more targeted intervention in place in Year 6 to support all pupils (including disadvantaged pupils) to reach the higher standard in reading and maths, including book groups and maths interventions. End of year outcomes identified that these had a positive impact on supporting children to reach their potential.

Book studies and pupil interviews demonstrated that our disadvantaged pupils continue to use a wider range of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary in their speech and written work, which follows on from high quality training in this area, developments in the teaching of vocabulary and the development of a vocabulary spine within our curriculum for each subject. However, there is still a vocabulary gap between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils and we will continue to build upon the teaching of vocabulary as outlined through the activities detailed in this plan.

Our assessments indicated that we needed to prioritise spending our covid catchup funding in 2021/22 on delivering targeted support to 95 pupils who we identified were not on track to reach age related expectations, including a significant number of disadvantaged pupils. To ensure the highest quality support, our teachers delivered 1425 hours of support (£12000 funding spent) to children in their year group (and in many cases their classes). Teaching assistants, including two who were qualified teachers and a trainee teacher, also delivered targeted interventions in reading, writing and maths over the year. Funding has been significantly less over the last two years, however we have continued to use teachers and teaching assistants to deliver targeted interventions in all year groups. Pupil progress meetings held between the headteacher and deputy headteacher (responsible for assessment) and class teachers have shown that tutoring and continuing targeted interventions have had a demonstrable impact on progress for these pupils. Our higher than national end of key stage 2 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils also highlight this impact.

Our assessments and observations have indicated that pupil wellbeing and mental health (and in a few cases behaviour) have been significantly impacted over the last three years, primarily due to the lasting effects of COVID-19 related issues. The impact was particularly acute for disadvantaged pupils. Our learning mentors continue to provide weekly wellbeing support (for varying periods of time) and they are currently working with 6 disadvantaged children. Three disadvantaged children are also receiving play therapy with a trained play therapist once a week. We are also fortunate to have a member of the Stort Valley Churches Trust who provides a listening service

to 4 individual children on a weekly basis, including a disadvantaged pupil. Our provision for parents has also developed over the last few years. Since last year, we have benefited from having an educational mental health practitioner from the local MIND mental health support team who offers 8 weeks of 1-1 1 hour sessions on a personalised parenting programme.

We continue to grow the extra-curricular opportunities within school and try to engage and enable opportunities for as many pupils to take part as possible. We employ three sports coaches who run sports clubs and squads before school and after school every day. As well as sports we offer a wide range of other clubs, which run before and after school and over lunch including choir, orchestra and art. Over the course of the 2022/23 academic year we had 652 club and squad places available in Autumn 2022, 630 in Spring and 662 in Summer.

We have set up a digital system to help us track and monitor the extra-curricular opportunities that children have had in school including clubs and music lessons. The system helps us to compare the number of disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children engaging in these opportunities and helps us to pinpoint what extra-curricular opportunities each child has had and who we need to target to encourage to participate. Our family engagement champion has built relations with and sends personal invites to our less engaged disadvantaged children and families to encourage and support participation in extra-curricular activities. Our headteacher and Assistant headteacher organised a Book, Buddies and Biscuits club in the 2023 summer term which proved extremely popular and targeted our priority readers (lowest 20 per cent), SEND, disadvantaged and EAL children in the Infant School and we engaged our disadvantaged pupils in upper key stage 2 the Junior school to work with them. The number of disadvantaged pupils taking part in at least one club a year has risen as a result of our ongoing intervention.

National data has shown a decline in overall attendance since the pandemic and a significant increase in persistent absence, particularly amongst disadvantaged pupils.

Since the pandemic and school closures school lower attendance figures has been one of the school's greatest challenges in line with the national picture. School attendance was lower for all pupils in 2021-22 (94.87%) but improved in 2022-23 (96.04%) and the gap to the 2018-19 figure (97.51%), the last year that attendance figures were unaffected by the pandemic and lockdowns, was only 1.47%. Attendance has been better than the national picture (94.7% in 2022 and 92.7 in 2023). The gap in attendance between disadvantaged pupils (91.7%) and all pupils (96.0%) at the end of 2023 was 4.3%. This gap was slightly greater than the end of 2022 – 1.3%, which can partly be accounted for by issues with persistent absence with particular disadvantaged pupils.

2023 end of year attendance figures showed 5.7% of children were persistently absent (less than 90% attendance), which was a drop from 2022 (8.9%) and a better picture

than national (21.2%). End of 2023 figures showed that 10/29 disadvantaged pupils (34.5%) were persistently absent, an increase from end of 2022 – (11/38 disadvantaged pupils - 28.9%). The gap between the percentage of advantaged pupils that were persistently absent in 2023 to non-disadvantaged pupils is significant (32.3% gap) and wider than the previous year (23.3% gap) and national (19.8% gap). Persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils (34.5%) is slightly less than the national picture (35.7%).

This data shows us that the work we continue to implement to address attendance is critical in addressing this gap and supporting improved attendance for our disadvantaged children. We have a family engagement champion who monitors attendance closely with one of the deputy headteachers and takes appropriate action to support our most vulnerable children. A digital system has been developed over the last few years that helps the school to identify children who are persistently absent and patterns in attendance. The attendance team (headteacher, deputy headteacher and family engagement champion) meet monthly to review attendance and punctuality, where they consider effective strategies for any child not meeting our attendance targets. Strategies include support from the family engagement champion, signposting families to external services and supporting them with referrals to other agencies through our SENCo, learning mentoring for children with specific issues that are making them reluctant to attend school, referring parents to work with our education mental health practitioner from the MIND (mental health support team) and issuing attendance letters and inviting families to meetings to discuss solutions.

## 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
N/A	



## Further information (optional)

### Additional activity

Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activity that is not being funded by pupil premium or recovery premium. That will include:

- utilising a [DfE grant to train a senior mental health lead](#). The training we have selected will focus on the training needs identified through the online tool: to develop our understanding of our pupils' needs, give pupils a voice in how we address wellbeing, and support more effective collaboration with parents.
- utilising our ELE (Evidence Lead in Education) to ensure that the most current educational research underpins the activity that we have in place to support our disadvantaged pupils.
- utilising the funding from the school-led tutoring grant alongside pupil premium and recovery premium funding to fund our teacher led school tutoring (as identified as an activity in the 'targeted academic support' section of our current plan).
- rigorous monitoring, which places a focus on disadvantaged pupils including termly pupil progress meetings with class teachers, the deputy head teacher (with responsibility for assessment) and head teacher; termly maths and English monitoring days; regular external subject reviews by our SIP; subject work scrutinies and pupil interviews.
- the senior leadership team carrying out 'student conferences' with every pupil. This involves discussing the pupil's learning and progress on an individual level, celebrating their strengths and successes with them and supporting them to focus on their targets and how they can achieve these.

### Planning, implementation, and evaluation

In planning this pupil premium strategy, we evaluated our approach towards writing the current plan. We utilised the training that our 'Disadvantaged Champion' had received from Essex County Council (2021/2022), which was underpinned by the research carried out by Marc Rowland (Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges The Essex Way – Unity Research School and Essex County Council).

We used the [EEF's implementation guidance](#) to help us develop our strategy, particularly the 'explore' phase to help us diagnose specific pupil needs and work out which activities and approaches are likely to work in our school. We will continue to use it through the implementation of activities.

We have put a robust evaluation framework in place for the duration of our three-year approach and will adjust our plan over time to secure better outcomes for pupils.