

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	91 at the time of autumn census
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	51% at the time of autumn census
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2024-26 <i>Plan revised and updated in November 2025</i>
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Jo Davey Interim Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Jo Davey
Governor lead	Ruth Griffiths

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 50,430
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 0
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>) <i>*Recovery premium cannot be carried forward.</i>	£ 0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£ 50,430

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is to use Pupil Premium Funding to improve outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils.

As a special school, all our pupils can be considered additionally disadvantaged in terms of SEND and language deprivation, however we recognise that socio-economic disadvantage leads to less favourable outcomes in terms of

- Academic attainment
- Progression to and success within further and higher education
- Employability
- Social opportunities

Our approach encompasses Quality First teaching; providing all students with small group teaching from specialist staff in the pupils' own preferred communication mode.

Following assessment and diagnosis of need, those who are struggling can additionally access learning support, 1:1 sessions and interventions and pre and post teaching 'curriculum support' sessions.

Within all our stated outcomes is the intention that all pupils, disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged, will benefit.

Our strategy recognises the impact of disadvantage on wellbeing, confidence and self-worth which is why the approach is holistic; encompassing mental health support, a trauma informed approach and learning outside the classroom opportunities which build confidence and independence skills. It is our belief that learning can flourish when students are mentally ready to learn and are supported to develop a strong Deaf identity.

Our most disadvantaged students may also require additional support in terms of developing independence and managing their transition into both the world of work and their next transition. We recognise that many of our learners are being educated far from their local area, and we endeavour to support them in gaining travel skills and by providing work experience and careers guidance.

Living far from school and often not sharing a preferred language with family members can have a significant impact on our disadvantaged young people's ability to access their local communities and build social skills. We therefore aim to give young people ample opportunities to develop their interest and mix with others through clubs, trips and competitions. For the same reasons, we also feel that it is important that the young people can gain support for homework from staff on school through homework clubs.

Blanche Nevile is a specialist provision, and it is our belief that the National Tutoring Programme would not enable access to Teachers of the Deaf with whom the young people are familiar. We needed to be mindful and balance the benefits of extra sessions against the impact on their working memory, the potential for cognitive

overload and listening fatigue. Travel is another factor to bear in mind as, with most learners living out of borough, the travelling means a longer day in comparison to their mainstream peers. Therefore, we are not utilising their services.

Blanche Nevile does not believe in labelling young people and will therefore continuously assess – formally and informally – the needs of each of our disadvantaged young people to ensure we are best meeting their needs and closing any gaps.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Communication Our assessments show that disadvantaged pupils make slower/less progress from their starting points in spoken English, BSL and written English. Delayed communication has a significant impact on most academic subjects. A number of pupils join our primary with no language - spoken or signed. Most of our disadvantaged pupils have families/carers with no or limited sign. English can also be an additional language.
2	Attendance Our attendance data highlights that disadvantaged pupils, overall, have lower attendance than non-disadvantaged pupils. Pupils eligible for free school meals – a key measure of disadvantage – have higher absence rates. <u>Reasons for poor attendance:</u> Pupils also have additional medical appointments due to their deafness. Pupils' distance from school can mean that brief appointments necessitate a full day from school. Families who are socio-economically disadvantaged are more likely to take holidays during term time, which affects attendance. This is challenged. Engaging with parents is key to boosting attendance, through raising the profile of education and establishing positive relationships. Between Autumn and Spring 2023/5 and Autumn and Spring 2024/5. Attendance in Special Schools decreased from 13.2% to 13%.

3	Wellbeing Issues with wellbeing and mental health are far more prevalent in the Deaf community - Deaf children are 30% to 50% more likely to experience mental health challenges, compared to hearing children (www.signhealth.co.uk) CAMHS waiting lists are longer than ever and the onus has passed to schools to look at pupil wellbeing, particularly amongst the disadvantaged. Our pupils require access to a specialist CAMHS service for Deaf Children and Adolescents (DCAMHS) which suffers from even longer waiting lists. The additional challenge we face is therapists who have an understanding of Deafness and the impact on wellbeing, and that can also use BSL in order to communicate directly with our pupils rather than through an interpreter. Sourcing specialists is a priority for the school.
4	Parental/Carer engagement This refers to teachers and schools involving parents in supporting their children's academic learning. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) finds that parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. The majority of our pupils are transported to the school by their local authority and therefore there are limited opportunities to engage with parents 'at the school gate'. Many of our disadvantaged pupils come from homes where English is not the primary language, or not a language that is used in the home at all. This is particularly challenging for Deaf students, who rely on multiple factors for communication including access to signed language and lip patterns. Most of the parents of our disadvantaged learners are not fluent signers. Most parents of disadvantaged learners do not live near to the school (out of borough) and find it more difficult to come to school for key meetings and events.
5	Progression to or within further education Disadvantaged Deaf learners are less likely to reach or remain in further education owing to barriers including: - A lack of Deaf awareness in institutions - Inadequate preparation for moving from a specialist to a mainstream environment. - Challenges with progressing academically (particularly within English) - Travel needed to colleges with appropriate support, which may not be their most local college

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
1. Pupils can access a fully sign bilingual education to aid their understanding and to develop expressive communication skills. BSL skills are developed.	BSL assessments show pupils 'meet' or 'exceed' targets. Learning walks and lessons observations consistently show outstanding use of sign bilingual pedagogy in all lessons and interventions. BSL assessments show: - Signed and spoken day to day vocabulary has increased. - Signed and spoken subject specific vocabulary has increased. Students leave secondary with BSL Level 1, and BSL Level 2 and above where they are capable.
2. Improved Attendance	The attendance of all pupils in receipt of PPF will have improved from the start of the year. There is little difference in the attendance figures of those in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding (PPF) and those not in receipt of PPF. The number of persistent absentees reduces.
3. Pupils' wellbeing enables them to attend school and make good progress in their learning	Staff are confident at recognising and responding to pupils struggling with trauma and/or mental health needs. Pupils who are disengaging from school have access to planned 'check ins'. Pupils make at least good progress across the curriculum. The number of pupils with challenging behaviour/behaviour incidents reduces. Pupils (through pupil voice) report that they are happy at school.
4. Improved parental/carers engagement	Fewer annual reviews of Educational Health Care plans need to be re-scheduled. Increasing number of parents/carers attend parent consultations. Increasing number of parents/carers

	attend key school events and coffee mornings. Parental attendance at BSL lessons increases.
5. Pupils feel better prepared for progression to Post 16 provision	Pupils are able to access: - Role models and mentors who are achieving in the Deaf world of work. - Experiences of the world of work. - Supported visits to colleges and sixth forms with a Transitions Teacher of the Deaf (ToD). - Careers support and guidance from a Deaf or Deaf-aware careers advisor.
6. Pupils have opportunities for individual support	Pupils can receive curriculum support from highly skilled Communication Support Workers and ToDs (Teacher of the Deaf) Pupils can have daily/weekly 1:1 pastoral check-ins where needed. Reading and BSL interventions are available 1:1 for students who are new to the school and/or need time limited additional support.

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: £ 29,492

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Pupil BSL lessons, Deaf Studies lessons & BSL exams	‘Most Deaf children have the potential for better levels of spoken language than ever before, and expectations for them should be as high as those for other children of similar ability’. (NDCS, 2012) Disadvantaged pupils with SEND have the greatest need for excellent teaching. Specific approaches to support our pupils include explicit BSL instruction. We require specialist activities and resources to meet the specific needs of deaf disadvantaged pupils. ‘Effective language and communication skills lie at the heart of Deaf children and young people’s social, emotional and intellectual development (NDCS, 2022).	1,2,3,5,
CPD for all staff using school staff and external providers focused on areas of school improvement.	Supporting continuous and sustained professional development (CPD) on evidence-based classroom approaches is important to develop the practice of teachers in our setting. The content of CPD is based on the best available evidence. Quality first teaching is important . In Summer 2025, we introduced the “Walkthrus “ CPD programme to further develop teaching and learning . Effective CPD requires a balanced approach that includes building knowledge, motivating teachers, developing teacher techniques, and embedding practice. ‘Phonics is recognised as a key tool in the acquisition of literacy skills for all children and should be made accessible to Deaf	1,2,3,5,

Train teachers to become Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (ToD), and support them thereafter.	children.....having ongoing opportunities to develop language skills and to read texts is vital for Deaf children as they may have fewer opportunities than other children to learn 'incidentally' (NDCS,2012). Deafness is not a learning disability, yet 65% of deaf children in England fail to achieve five GCSE grades A*-C (including English and maths) https://www.ucl.ac.uk/dcal/news/2013/may/deaf-children-and-development Although schools for the deaf are permitted to have teachers for three years before commencing Tod training, Blanche Nevile is committed to training their staff as early as is suitable. A common form of support for both Early Careers and Newly Qualified Teachers of the Deaf is mentoring.	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 0

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

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

Budgeted cost: £ 33,110

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Recruit mental health support worker from 01/01/26 to enable access to in-school professional support. Currently a vacant post since counsellor left post. It is proving hard to fill with a specialist with deaf experience. Train staff in appropriate techniques, using validating language and applying restorative justice approaches SEND Lead to work with complex EHCP pupils and their families.	‘More than 1 in 3 Deaf people report the pandemic has had a negative impact on their mental health’ (Sign Health, 2021) Deaf children are 60% more likely to experience mental health problems compared to other children. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/dcal/news/2013/may/deaf-children-and-development According to Ofsted (2022) ‘The pandemic’s impact on some pupils’ mental health and wellbeing remained a concern. Leaders talked about pupils having lower levels of resilience and confidence, and increased levels of anxiety.’	1,2,3,
Provide Interpreters to support with Annual Reviews, Parent Consultations and school events. HSLO (Home School Liaison Officer) to identify hard to reach parents and make home visits. Translation of letters and school communications. Signed safeguarding information for visitors upon arrival. Combine events, where appropriate, to save on travel time for families.	The EEF emphasises the importance of early parental engagement, and the flexibility of approaches. Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months’ additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps. Consider how to tailor school communications to encourage positive dialogue about learning. There is some evidence that personalised messages linked to learning can promote positive interactions. Parental engagement strategies are typically more effective with parents of very young children. It is important to consider how you will maintain parental engagement as children get older. For example, providing flexible communications (e.g., short sessions at flexible times) might create opportunities for parents of older pupils to engage with the school. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement	2,3,4

SLA with Haringey EWO	The NSPCC recommends parents and carers work with their children to create routines that provide structure to their day, partake in activities together, and assist children in expressing their emotions: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/supporting-children-special-educational-needs-disabilities/	
Increase parental attendance at BSL lessons by using online platform.	• Around 600 deaf babies are born in the UK every year. • 90-95% of deaf children are born to hearing parents, the vast majority of whom do not have sign language skills. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/dcal/news/2013/may/deaf-children-and-development A literature review entitled 'Emotional wellbeing in Deaf children and young people, and their families' reports an association between lower language ability (whether spoken or signed) and an increased likelihood of emotional wellbeing difficulties. (NDCS, 2020) In research into the attainments of deaf pupils, carried out in the 1970s and 80s, a number of studies indicated that deaf children of deaf parents were more successful academically than those with hearing parents. These results emerged in studies of reading, writing and academic achievement and, in some instances, spoken language. Attributing this to the early use of signing in these families led to the conclusion that sign language could be beneficial in the education of deaf children. https://www.batod.org.uk/information/sign-language-and-the-education-of-deaf-pupils/	1, 3, 4
Increase flexibility of BSL classes for staff so that they can learn over a longer period/in smaller cohorts as needed. In 2024 we have built capacity by having 3 BSL Tutors	Importance of staff as sign language role models: 'The Open University research suggested that pupils achieved good communication in sign language, but not all were developing complex structures necessary for high level education...Most young deaf children have hearing parents, thus they learn their sign language from people who are themselves learning it. At school, most of their teachers will be hearing and thus, although they may have good signing skills, are not native users of the language...and thus they do not always provide good models of the language'. (Gregory, 1996)	1

Pupils to have personalised transition plans and timetables for Post 16 provision. All year 11 leavers to have 1:1 supported college/sixth form visits. Vulnerable pupils to have a programme of handover to next provision.	'Less than half (48%) of Deaf children now achieve a grade 4 or above in both Maths and English, compared to almost three quarters (71%) of other children'. (NDCS, 2019) Exposure to careers education can challenge students to consider their educational experiences in a new light, making connecting themselves between what happens in the classroom and how it can relate to future workplaces which were previously harder to make. The-impact-of-career-development-activities-on-student-attitudes-December-2016-2.pdf (educationandemployers.org) There is a strong association between socio-economic background and educational attainment (Hills et al., 2010; Wyness, 2013)	5
Blanche Nevile funds and provides its own Exams Access Assessor, to ensure that deaf and disadvantaged pupils are awarded all additional support in exams and assessment to which they are entitled. Invigilator training specific to deaf learners	Information on the rights of Deaf pupils to specific exam arrangements: https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/education-and-learning/additional-support/england/exam-access-arrangements/#:~:text=Are%20you%20worried%20your%20deaf,tests%2C%20assessments%20and%20exams%20fairly.	5
Subsidised breakfasts at both Primary and Secondary	The provision of a Breakfast Club led to an improvement in Key Stage 1 outcomes of around two months' progress. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/projects/Magic_Breakfast_report.pdf?v=1671010373	2,3
Pupils who are socio-economically disadvantaged are no longer expected to pay for ingredients for Cookery classes. This principle is also applied to other activities, trips and experiences.	Supporting children in accessing extra-curricular clubs increases inclusion, cultural capital and raises self-esteem. This is supported by evidence from The Social Mobility Commission; "An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular Activities, Soft Skills and Social Mobility" Newcastle University (Nuffield Foundation) after school clubs and academic performance. https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/project/out-of-school-activities-and-the-education-gap	2,3

Total budgeted cost: £ 62,602

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

2024 – 2025 Total number of pupils: 82 at the time of Autumn Census Total pupil premium budget: £ 58,121 (£0 carried over from previous years) Pupil eligible for pupil premium: 44 at the time of Autumn Census Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils 53.66% <i>Per pupil amount received Primary - £1,480</i> <i>Secondary - £1,050</i>	
Pupils can access a fully sign bilingual education to aid their understanding and to develop expressive communication skills. BSL skills are developed.	BSL accreditations received: Level 1= 11 entered / 11 passes Level 2 = 7 entered / 7 passes <u>Qualified Teachers of the Deaf(ToD) status:</u> Qualified = 13 In Training (Year 1 of 2) = 1 Not Qualified or training = 6 Agency (not qualified) = 2 All teachers have at least <u>Level 1 BSL</u>, except 3 (including agency) who are all attending Level 1 sign classes. <u>BSL Tutors:</u> 1 x Fulltime in post at Primary 1 x 0.4 in post at Primary 1 x Fulltime in post at Secondary who can teach BSL Level 3. All pupils receiving high quality BSL lessons.
Dip in attendance figures	2022-2023 PP 88.00% 2023-2024 PP 89.66% / Non-PP 90.71% 2024-2025 PP 88.20% / Non-PP 89.80% The gap has slightly increased between our advantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils – however last year there were two Pupil Premium pupils who significantly impacted attendance figures: one who lost 31 days due to transport not in place by their LA, and one who left the country but had to remain on roll as absent for 30 days (until permission to off-roll). As a small school, just one pupil's attendance data can impact the statistics quite significantly. Despite that, we still aspire to improve pupil attendance and are optimistic that the recent recruitment of a SEND Lead (from 01/12/2025),

	will positively impact our attendance figures this year. Their roles and responsibilities include full oversight of pupil attendance, and close working with our EWO. Meanwhile work continues in reducing parents taking holidays during term time, and evidence for any absence continues to always be sought.
Pupils' wellbeing enables them to attend school and make good progress in their learning	The Senior Teacher for Behaviour / DHT and Head of School regularly check-in with key pupils. There is a strong and skilled Wellbeing Team and an experienced DSL team. The recent implementation of the WalkThru programme will also assist in narrowing the attainment gap. We have had a long-term vacancy for a mental health support worker since our previous counsellor left, but are struggling to find someone with the knowledge and experience of working with deaf children. Staff are regularly trained in student wellbeing. This has meant all staff are more confident to recognise and respond to low level mental health concerns.
Improved parental/carers engagement	Increasing range of events offered (coffee mornings, open mornings, NDCS events, e-safety etc.) Increase in parental/carers attendance at face-to-face consultations and events. Increased HSLO engagement with parents/carers through face-to face and Zoom meetings.
Disadvantaged pupils feel better prepared for progression to further education	100% of pupils transitioned to a suitable college. School is implementing the Gatsby Benchmarks and working with the NDCS and parents to ensure co-production of outcomes.

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
N/A	N/A