Pupil premium strategy statement – Sawston Village College

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1194
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	15.6%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-5, 2025-6, 2026-7
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Jonathan Russell, Principal
Pupil Premium Lead	Erika Wagstaff, Assistant Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Isabel Thomas

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£199,950
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£199,950

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our mission at Sawston Village College is to unlock potential, create opportunity and achieve excellence in all aspects of our work. As a result, we expect all learners to leave school having: achieved to their highest academic potential; embraced all available opportunities; learned how to value, respect and care for each other; and, taken responsibility to support their school and the wider community.

Our CARE values exist to underpin a school culture that enables our pupils to achieve these expectations. This is supported by our strong pastoral structure, which allows for high quality, holistic pastoral care for all pupils according to their individual needs. We strive to be a school which is community driven, where everybody is a learner, and where equity and diversity are valued. It is important that all pupils, irrespective of their background or other additional needs, are part of this culture.

It is our ambition that all pupils make good or better progress across the curriculum. Our Pupil Premium strategy aims to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve this goal. This includes for Pupil Premium pupils across all levels of attainment as well as those with additional needs, such as SEND. Our aim is that the gap in performance between those who are disadvantaged and those who are not should be narrowed and eventually closed, without any reduction in performance for those who are not disadvantaged.

High quality teaching is therefore central to our approach. By focusing on strategies that benefit all, but should disproportionately benefit disadvantaged pupils, we aim to close the disadvantaged progress and attainment gaps. Key Stage 4 outcomes in recent years suggest that we have made progress towards this, with improvements in outcomes for Pupil Premium pupils. Our approaches to teaching and learning are underpinned by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, as well as by the findings from cognitive science, and aim to foster an inclusive approach to teaching and learning where all pupils can achieve. In order for these approaches to be successful, it is important that we continue to refine our robust curriculum, with a clear focus on improving levels of general and subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding for all pupils. We must also ensure that our curriculum is understood by pupils, staff and parents.

Our Pupil Premium strategy is also integral to wider school plans for continued education recovery following the pandemic, and our support for pupils and families who are struggling due to the cost of living crisis.

In the years following the pandemic, we have seen a significant rise in the number of pupils with additional needs, particularly neurodiversity including autism and ADHD, with disadvantaged pupils disproportionately represented within this. Our Pupil Premium strategy therefore incorporates activities which aim to support the progress of these pupils through appropriate intervention programmes, as well as to ensure that staff are equipped to recognise and meet their needs in the classroom.

In order for our disadvantaged pupils to make good progress, it is essential that they attend school regularly. National and in school data demonstrates that the attendance of Pupil Premium pupils is consistently lower than that of their peers, and that rates of persistent absence are higher for Pupil Premium pupils than for non-disadvantaged pupils. Improving attendance is therefore a core part of our Pupil Premium strategy, aiming to bring the attendance of Pupil Premium pupils in line with their peers. It is also important to develop effective and efficient approaches for teachers to support pupils to catch up on missed work following a period of absence.

However, we recognise that disadvantage does not only manifest itself through attainment and progress. Pupil Premium pupils have an entitlement to the same level of experiences that other pupils have. It is also, therefore, a core focus of our strategy that all pupils should have the opportunity to engage with a rich and varied set of experiences, including educational trips, visits, clubs and music tuition. We aim to maximise the participation of disadvantaged pupils in these experiences that will help to broaden horizons and lead to better life chances.

The approaches we have chosen to take are evidence-based and reflect a whole school approach to disadvantage where Pupil Premium pupils are known by all staff and it is understood that it is a shared endeavour to help them succeed. Where needs are identified, it is important to act early and to put in place appropriate interventions to support.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	While our **attendance** is higher than the national average, data over the last three years indicates that attendance for disadvantaged pupils is lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils also have a higher persistent absence rate than their peers.
2	Many disadvantaged pupils have **reading ages** which are in line with or above their chronological age. However, a disproportionate number of our Pupil Premium pupils have reading ages which fall below this, requiring additional support and intervention to develop their reading. Our most recent reading age assessments (carried out with all Year 7 pupils in September 2024) indicate that approximately 47% of disadvantaged pupils have reading ages below their chronological age, compared with just over 20% of the cohort as a whole.
3	Outcomes are very high for most pupils at Sawston Village College. However, the **attainment and progress** of disadvantaged pupils is generally lower than their peers across most subject areas. On entry, at key stage 2, Pupil Premium attainment is already lower than that of non-Pupil Premium. Analysis, both in school and nationally, suggests that this gap widens during pupils' time at secondary school. While our most recent KS4 outcomes suggest an improvement in the progress of our disadvantaged pupils, the in-school gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers remains.
4	Internal assessments, supported by national studies and evidence from conversations with families suggest that disadvantaged pupils are more greatly affected than their peers by the **long-term impact of partial school closures** during the pandemic. Gaps in learning which may have arisen during this time continue to be seen in the form of misconceptions, which hinder the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
5	National and local evidence suggests that some pupils' **complex social and emotional issues**, such as anxiety and low self-esteem, were exacerbated by the pandemic. We continue to see the long-term effect of this on young people, and our observations suggest a disproportionate impact on disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils.

6	Attendance at parents' evenings and parental events is high. However, in 2023-24, the average attendance at Parents Evenings for disadvantaged pupils was 56%, compared with an overall average attendance rate of 82%. This suggests that **parental engagement** with the College is lower for disadvantaged pupils than their peers.
7	The overwhelming majority of pupils at the College secure ambitious and appropriate **future pathways**. However, some disadvantaged pupils have lower aspirations, often underpinned by a lack of self-confidence, which sometimes limits their post-16 choices.
8	A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils engage in **complex behaviours** that hinder their progress at the College. In more extreme cases, this can lead to a higher level of suspensions.
9	Disadvantaged pupils at the College are less represented in **enriching experiences** such as school trips, visits, music tuition, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and clubs. Disadvantaged pupils are also less likely than their peers to put themselves forward for and take up pupil leadership roles within the College.
10	An increasing proportion of our disadvantaged pupils **do not speak English as their home language**. This creates a barrier which impacts pupils' ability to access learning and make progress. Engagement with the families of these pupils is also a challenge, particularly where there is a significant language barrier.
11	Our observations suggest that some of our disadvantaged pupils find **social and communication skills** more challenging than their peers. National evidence suggests that they are also more likely to be exposed to potentially harmful activity online and on social media. This impacts their friendships and peer interactions in school.

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
To achieve and sustain **improved attendance** for disadvantaged pupils.	Continued improvement in disadvantaged pupils' attendance, including a reduction in the number of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent. Narrower gap in attendance between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
To **improve literacy and reading comprehension** among disadvantaged pupils.	Reading age tests will show that disadvantaged pupils are making progress in their reading, with reading ages improving at an accelerated rate to narrow the gap between reading age and chronological age. Assessments will show that reading interventions are having a positive effect on pupils.

To **improve attainment and progress** for disadvantaged pupils across all subjects at KS4. Attainment and progress gaps (including those which may have arisen as a result of school closures) will have been closed.	By the end of our current plan in 2026-7, disadvantaged pupils will receive a positive Progress 8 score, demonstrating that they are achieving at least as well as on average for all pupils nationally. The in-school gap between the progress of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils will have been reduced whilst maintaining the high level of progress for all pupils.
To **reduce the number of disadvantaged pupils engaging in complex behaviours** leading to sanctions, including incidents of repeated behaviours.	Behaviour data will show a reduction in the number of disadvantaged pupils who are involved in behaviour events and receiving sanctions. This will include a reduction in the number of disadvantaged pupils engaged in repeated incidents, as well as a reduction in the number of suspensions for this group.
To continue to increase the level of engagement of disadvantaged pupils with **enriching experiences** and leadership opportunities and to **raise aspirations**.	There will be an increase in disadvantaged pupils' participation in enrichment activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh, clubs, school trips, visits and music tuition. Careers Guidance meetings will also support pupils to make choices that are suitably aspirational for post-16 study and beyond.
To improve the **sense of belonging and wellbeing** of disadvantaged pupils.	Pupil and staff feedback will indicate a positive impact of interventions for pupils with SEMH needs. This will lead to a greater sense of belonging and a positive change in pupils' behaviour and participation in the life of the College.
To **meet the increasingly complex needs** of disadvantaged pupils, including neurodiversity.	Pupils will have access to a range of appropriate pathways to meet their needs. This will include SEND support to remain in the mainstream school environment, as well as alternative provision where appropriate.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £74,093

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

Continue to invest in training, resources and support to further strengthen the quality of teaching and to continue to improve our broad and balanced curriculum. Training, professional learning and resources based on Rosenshine's Principles of Effective Instruction, will continue to increase teacher knowledge and expertise in the science of learning, enabling them to plan and deliver an inspiring, enriching and ambitious curriculum. Ongoing development and implementation of the Peer Coaching programme. This utilises WalkThrus, an instructional coaching model based on a series of step-by-step guides to evidence-based teaching strategies collated by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli. The coaching programme operates on a number of levels, all involving less experienced members of staff receiving expert feedback, support and guidance from a more experienced colleague.	EEF Cognitive Science Approaches in the Classroom. Ofsted Curriculum Research Reviews. National Institute of Teaching research (July 2023) suggests that mentoring and coaching of teachers can have a positive impact, including improved teaching practice, confidence and self-belief, enhanced teacher-student interactions, and an improved classroom environment. The WalkThrus instructional coaching structure has been recognised as providing all of the EEF mechanisms for effective professional development.	3, 4
Continue to invest in professional learning, staff and resources to further embed our Inclusive Classrooms approach to teaching and learning. The focus of professional learning for staff this academic year will be: • **Memory** – considering evidence-based approaches to reduce memory demands, anticipate memory demands, support memory demands, and strengthen memory. • **Literacy** – further work on disciplinary literacy, strategies to support weaker readers in the classroom, reciprocal reading strategies and incorporating greater use of narrative in lessons to support pupil comprehension. • **Oracy** – piloting 'talk moves' as a strategy to support and develop pupils' oracy and improve the quality of classroom discussion. • **Positive Regard** and **Sense of Belonging** – equipping staff with the tools and strategies to promote positive relationships with pupils.	EEF Cognitive Science Approaches in the Classroom. EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools. Staff training designed using EEF recommendations for effective professional development to maximise impact on pupil progress.	2, 3, 4, 10

Continue to invest in training, development and resources to support a stronger approach to assessment that is better able to identify gaps, provide effective feedback and identify support, such as targeted interventions. Training and development will ensure that assessments support inclusivity, test the knowledge and skills identified as important in the curriculum and lead to ongoing improvements in curriculum design and first teaching.	EEF feedback identified as very high impact for very low cost based on extensive knowledge.	3, 4, 10
Continue to invest in training, development and resources to support staff understanding of specific areas of SEND, including Autism, ADHD and Speech, Language and Communication Needs, as well as further development and implementation of the SVC Ordinarily Available Provision. This training will equip staff with a range of evidence-based strategies which can be implemented in the classroom to meet pupils' needs.	Ensuring that staff have a holistic understanding of individual pupils' needs recognised as a key element of effective provision for pupils with SEND (EEF – Special Educational Needs in mainstream schools).	3, 5, 8, 10
Continue to invest in Edukey Provision Map software, which will provide a streamlined format for mapping and monitoring interventions, targets and strategies to support disadvantaged and SEND pupils. This programme will also be used to document the graduated approach used by teachers to support pupils with SEND. Provide training to ensure that all staff understand how to use this programme effectively. Alongside this, continue to raise staff awareness and understanding of the ordinarily available provision for SEND pupils.	Graduated approach recognised as a key element of effective provision for pupils with SEND (EEF – Special Educational Needs in mainstream schools)	2, 3, 5, 10

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

Budgeted cost: £61,151

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

Budgeted cost: £64,706

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Further embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance document. Staff will get training and release time to develop and implement procedures.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.	1, 3
Mentoring structures to support with breaking down non-academic barriers to progress. This is supported by a pastoral structure with full time non-teaching Year Leads. Each House will have a pool of learning mentors who will conduct periodic learning review meetings with pupils to discuss their academic progress, with disadvantaged pupils prioritised for more regular meetings. This disproportionately supports disadvantaged pupils and those with the most acute needs.	DfE: Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing- a whole school or college approach EEF evidence suggests that parental engagement can have a moderate impact for very low cost. The structure we have in place allows for a much higher level of parental engagement and also allows for a greater degree of social and emotional support and learning.	3, 5, 8, 10, 11
Commissioning external services to work in school to support pupils with their mental health and wellbeing. These services will include: • Counselling through Centre33 (x2 days per week); • 1-to-1 youth work through Sawston and Stapleford Youth Initiative; • Individual behavioural support through Inclusive Development (x1 day per week).	DfE: Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing- a whole school or college approach	5, 8, 11
Continuing to subsidise music tuition, trips, uniform and equipment to enable pupils to fully participate in College life and activities. Ongoing development, monitoring and evaluation of the Sawston Pledges initiative, designed to encourage and reward pupils who play an active role in the College.	EEF lists Arts participation as having moderate impact for very low cost based on moderate evidence. In addition to the benefits for mental and physical health, the EEF recognises that participation in physical activity can have some benefit on pupils' academic progress for very low cost based on moderate evidence.	9

Developing and delivering interventions led by College staff to enhance pupils' resilience and improve wellbeing. These will include: • Year 7 GAME intervention; • Resilience course; • Zones of regulation; • Dog mentoring; • Art therapy; • Transforming lives.	DfE: Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing- a whole school or college approach	5, 8, 11

Total budgeted cost: £199,950

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2024-25 academic year using Key Stage 4 performance data and our own internal assessments across both key stages.

There were no progress measures for the 2025 GCSE results, as the pupils in this cohort did not complete Key Stage 2 SATs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our analysis is therefore based on attainment scores only.

The average Attainment 8 score (a measure of GCSE attainment across 8 subjects) for disadvantaged pupils at Sawston Village College in 2025 was 36.23. To put this into context and better understand the performance of our disadvantaged pupils, we have compared this with national data. The national Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils in 2025 was 34.9. This indicates that disadvantaged pupils at Sawston Village College performed on average approximately one-quarter of a grade better than disadvantaged pupils nationally, across a broad range of subjects.

We have also considered the proportion of pupils who were entered for the English Baccalaureate (a combination of subjects considered to represent a broad curriculum, including English, Maths, Science, a humanity and a foreign language), as well as the average points score for the EBacc. At Sawston Village College, 36.8% of disadvantaged pupils were entered for the English Baccalaureate, achieving an average points score of 3.37. This compares with national figures for disadvantaged pupils of 29% being entered for the EBacc, with an average score of 3.02. This demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils at Sawston Village College are more likely to be entered for the broad range of subjects covered by the English Baccalaureate, as well as attaining a higher average score in these subjects.

There remains a gap in performance between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, both within Sawston Village College and nationally, across all headline measures. Internal data for Years 7-10 pupils during 2024-25 demonstrates that this in-school gap also exists in other year groups and is not limited to final GCSE performance. Closing the gap in progress and attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at Key Stage 4, without any reduction in performance for those who are not disadvantaged, remains a key strategic priority for the College and is identified as a core focus for our three-year College Improvement Plan, the dates of which align with our Pupil Premium strategy. We recognise that earlier identification of barriers, alongside earlier intervention where progress falls below expectations, are key factors in achieving our strategic aims in this area.

One of the main barriers to achievement for some of our disadvantaged pupils, particularly at Key Stage 3, is a lack of reading fluency. Throughout 2024-25, we continued to prioritise Pupil Premium pupils for interventions where appropriate, recognising the potential for this to have a significant impact on their progress, attainment and overall experience of school. We also continued to invest in staff training to equip teachers to effectively support weaker readers and develop high levels of literacy in their classrooms. This has led to the development of whole-

school reading routines, with the aim of achieving more consistent high-quality practice and an increased emphasis on the importance of reading across curriculum subjects.

Our attendance data for 2024-25 indicates that Pupil Premium pupils continued to have higher levels of absence than non-disadvantaged pupils. The overall attendance figure for all pupils at Sawston Village College in 2024-25 was 92.5%, while for Pupil Premium pupils it was 85.2%. Levels of persistent absence are also higher for disadvantaged pupils than for their peers. Developing our understanding of the underlying issues and taking steps to improve the attendance of Pupil Premium pupils are key elements of our Pupil Premium strategy.

We recognise that there has also been a sharp increase in the number of pupils experiencing difficulties relating to their mental health and wellbeing since the pandemic. Our internal records demonstrate that these challenges disproportionately affect our disadvantaged pupils, including Pupil Premium. As part of our strategic approach to improving attendance, we continue to review our provision for the pupils whose poor mental health is a barrier to attendance, providing additional support where possible to enable these pupils to attend school.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Study Skills Programme	Elevate Education
FFT Live	Fischer Family Trust
Work Experience	The Employability Partnership (TEP)
Go4schools ARR Software	Go4Schools
Individual Counselling	Centre 33
Individual Behavioural Support	Inclusive Development
Individual Coaching	Sawston and Stapleford Youth Initiative
Small group tuition	Tutor Doctor
Online tuition	Tute
Individual pastoral support	Creative Mindset
Tutoring and 1-1 programmes	Bridge Education
Small group tuition	ALVIN (Anglian Learning)