

Policy Name	Pupil Premium
Policy Type	Statutory / Non-Statutory
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Author	Naomi Walker

Review Due Date	Review Completed	Amendments Y/N
October 2028		

DESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, to feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other's strengths and differences.

Respect, Aspiration, Resilience

This strategy document details Dacorum Education Support Centre's three-year plan for the use of Pupil Premium funding to help improve the attainment and progress of our disadvantaged learners. 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 provision.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Dacorum Education Support Centre
Number of pupils in school (at time of publication)	49
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	53%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	April 2025
Statement authorised by	Sara Lalis
Pupil premium lead	Dustin King
Governor/Management committee lead	Dave Fisher

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£18,967
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year.	£18,967
If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	

Part A:

Statement of intent

At Dacorum Education Support Centre, our Pupil Premium strategy is designed to raise the profile of all disadvantaged learners and address their individual needs. Our goal is to equip staff with the necessary tools to support learners in overcoming barriers to learning, ensuring they reach their full potential. Our overarching aim is to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged learners and their non-disadvantaged peers, nurturing equity in outcomes for all.

Our Commitment

We are dedicated to fostering high expectations for disadvantaged learners across all areas of centre life. By enhancing their self-esteem, expanding cultural capital, and fostering their ambitions, we aim to inspire learners to set and achieve high aspirations with confidence.

At the core of our strategy is a commitment to high-quality teaching, particularly in areas where disadvantaged learners require the most support. Research consistently demonstrates that this approach has the most significant impact on closing the attainment gap while benefiting all learners. Our focus on continuous improvement in teaching and learning will ensure sustained and enhanced attainment for both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners alike. Progress in terms of communication and interaction All behaviour is communication. Often our learners do not have the communication and language skills to communicate their feelings effectively. Also, poor communication and language skills impact the child's academic progress, especially within reading and this is more evident in learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. Therefore, it is a priority that DESC invests and supports the development of a learner's communication, language and interactive skills.

The key principles of the plan

Nurturing relationships and environments, which support mental health and wellbeing.

To support learners to develop social and emotional skills that will enable them to remove barriers that hinder their access to the learning environment.

Data-Driven Approach

Our strategy is grounded in data-informed decision-making, utilising comprehensive and diagnostic assessments to identify and respond to individual learner needs. We avoid assumptions about disadvantage and instead tailor our interventions based on precise learner requirements.

Key Strategic Actions

To make our strategy effective, we are committed to the following actions:

- Providing disadvantaged learners with the necessary academic, emotional, and social support to thrive.
- Ensuring all staff uphold high expectations for disadvantaged learners, recognising and nurturing their potential.

Embedding a whole-centre approach where every member of staff takes collective responsibility for the outcomes of disadvantaged learners, raising aspirations, and fostering a culture of high achievement.

Through our focused and evidence-based approach, we will work tirelessly to remove barriers to learning, drive academic success, and support the holistic development of disadvantaged learners. By maintaining high standards, fostering ambition, and promoting inclusivity, we will ensure that every learner, regardless of background, has the opportunity to succeed at Dacorum Education Support Centre.

As recognised by Ofsted, Personal Development is vital for the overall development and life chances of a child. Providing the learners at DESC with opportunities to experience a wider curriculum is vital. We also recognise the importance of developing the child's character, ensuring they become respectful, empathic, self-aware, passionate, and able to work within a team.

Our core purpose is twofold, to re-engage young people in their learning whilst improving their attitudes, social skills, behaviour and attendance. This is echoed in all our work with learners enabling them to overcome their barriers to learning and to support them in their next steps.

Our work supports the Hertfordshire emotional wellbeing and behaviour strategy, which promotes a holistic approach to understanding and supporting the emotional wellbeing, engagement and behaviour of learners.

Our work centres on the Tiered Approach:

Tier 1 – Prevention and early identification (Universal) - We provide advice, guidance, signposting and training.

Tier 2 – Getting Advice and Signposting (Universal Plus) – We provide outreach and therapeutic support in schools.

Tier 3 – Getting Help (Targeted) – We provide intensive outreach and therapeutic support in schools.

Tier 4 – Getting More Help (Targeted Plus) – We provide in reach support and provision at our 3 Centres – The Haven (KS1/2), Tenzing Road (KS3) and Barncroft Campus (KS4).

Tier 5 – Getting Risk Support (Specialist) – We provide short- and medium-term provision at our 3 Centres Each individual learner has unique circumstances but most have significant difficulties with social interaction and communication, which, presents as the most significant barrier to learning at DESC.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance / Barriers to attending centre - Decrease the percentage gap between our Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium learners - Identify barriers and implement strategies to support.
2	Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners is not in line with peers, including literacy and numeracy skills - Close the attainment gap for disadvantaged learners - Focus on staff training and CPD to enhance our offering to learners.
3	Lack of parental engagement with DESC - Remove barriers for parents who lack engagement with the service- Encourage strong relations between families and centre, by engaging with the family regularly.
4	Lower engagement for disadvantaged learners in extracurricular opportunities - Work together with local services to increase awareness of Pupil Premium offers locally and increased engagement in enrichment opportunities in centre.
5	Lack of learner awareness of opportunities - Ensure both parents and learners are aware of the pathways post-16 - Increase and enhance cultural capital for our learners.

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. Before deciding on how to spend this additional funding we considered the research carried out by the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) which suggests that the following interventions have the most impact in our setting: Reading comprehension strategies, Small group tuition and Social & Emotional Support through bespoke interventions.

Intended outcomes	Success criteria
(1) Attendance / Barriers to attending centre to identify and reduce barriers for disadvantaged learners and increase attendance	Improved correspondence with learners/parents/carers, exploring and identifying barriers to regular attendance, applying strategies to respond. Celebrating improved attendance within DESC community. A clearer understanding of barriers to regular learner attendance and strategies to respond. Increase the culture and importance of greater attendance as well as engagement in initiatives to improve this for our Pupil Premium learners and families. Launch parent/carer support opportunities, with a focus on empowering greater attendance. Improved attendance of PP learners. Absence rate below national PRU picture. Address logistical challenges by ensuring that transport arrangements are flexible and tailored to the individual needs of the learners, including purchasing of bus passes. Introduce weekly attendance challenges with small incentives.

Intended outcomes	Success criteria
(2) Academic progress for disadvantaged learners is not in line with peers, including literacy and numeracy skills. By Year 11, to close the literacy gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged. By Year 11, to close the numeracy gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners. Increasing the focus and identifying individual barriers for disadvantaged learners across all subjects.	Increased number of learners engaged in Literacy interventions- identified through whole centre baseline testing. Continue to prioritise evidence-based teaching strategies such as metacognition, scaffolding and explicit instruction. Pupil Premium learners to achieve in line with non-Pupil Premium peers. Learners to engage in numeracy interventions - Small group focus on engaging lower-attaining learners in numeracy interventions. Literacy gaps closed with structured reading interventions. Literacy/Numeracy leads to work directly with learners during pod time. Improved practice with information sharing enabling staff to know their parents' and learners' individual needs - CPD for staff - Regular learner updates and information sharing

Intended outcomes	Success criteria
(3) Lack of parental engagement with centre. To increase support for learners with lower parental engagement.	A deeper understanding of parental engagement challenges. Strengthened parent/school partnership Parents to regard education as important and support all centre policies and principles. Parents to have high aspirations for their children and engage in progress meetings. Parents to support and advocate additional tuition options. Regular contact with parents by designated advocates, link tutors and/or Pupil Premium leads. Improve % attendance of parents attending review meetings progress by 20%.

Intended outcomes	Success criteria
(4) Lower engagement for disadvantaged learners in extra-curricular opportunities. To increase engagement for our Pupil Premium learners in additional opportunities within centre and the local community.	Support families to engage with centre life to increase opportunities and cultural capital. Increase awareness of opportunities - Pupil Premium lead and staff to ensure learners know what they have access to, including but not limited to; Uniform, resources, additional curriculum support, and trips & visits. Expand communication with parents/carers to include benefits of extra-curricular opportunities, in line with developmental milestones. To be included in our parental engagement and 'warm space' events. Increased opportunities within the community for our learners and families, through increased local communication and initiative programmes. An increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged learners.

Intended outcomes	Success criteria
(5) Lack of awareness of opportunities to achieve an increase in aspiration and ambition for our disadvantaged learners.	Increased numbers of disadvantaged learners taking part in cultural capital activities, opportunities and visits. Increased engagement with in/out of centre opportunities; trips, visits, guest speakers, ELD, and career opportunities. Increase communication and marketing strategies to widen reach and accessibility. To widen our offer to families in accessing opportunities, exploring accompanying/supporting families to attend; - College open days - Careers events - Employability fairs.

Activity in this academic year

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

Total money received: Breakdown of previous years.

Financial year	PP Funding
2018-2019	£31,614
2019-2020	£21,366
2020-2021	£27,136
2021-2022	£24,443
2022-2023	£23,177
2023-2024	£23,437
2024-2025	£18,967

Teaching for example, CPD, recruitment and retention

Budgeted cost: £3,000

SDP link	Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Academic progress for disadvantaged learners.	Encourage metacognition techniques and promote culture of self-regulation within all learners to support positive attitudes towards learning and behaviour.	EFF research indicates the average impact of metacognition and self-regulation strategies is an additional 7+months' progress over the course of a year.	2
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners.	ELSA individual staff courses	There is some evidence that mentoring can have small positive impacts on mentee learner attainment and literacy.	2
Academic progress for disadvantaged learners.	Core leads training and development	EFF research indicates the average impact of metacognition and self-regulation strategies is an additional 7+months' progress over the course of a year.	2

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

Budgeted cost: £4,000

SDP link	Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners.	Individual interventions to engage learners in enrichment programmes to raise aspiration and learn new skills.	EFF research indicates that aspiration approaches are diverse and may focus on parents and families, teaching practice or out of-school interventions or extra-curricular activities involving peers or mentors.	2
Lack of learner awareness of opportunities.	Purchase of additional Services for Young People time	Senior Leaders ensure the core and wider curriculum provides opportunities to address barriers caused by social disadvantage within (CIEAG)	5
Lack of learner awareness of opportunities.	Careers mentoring – Pupil Premium learners prioritised and receive additional intensive one to one support.	The Gatsby Benchmark sets out a framework of eight guidelines about what makes the best careers provision in schools.	5
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners & Attendance / Barriers to attending centre	Provide appropriate therapeutic support to learners in their emotional and social development.	Therapeutic Support has a high impact on learners' emotional development and mental wellbeing that in turn has a positive effect on their ability to fully access the curriculum.	1, 2
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners.	Reading corner investment (books & resources)	Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on learners' ability to understand a text, and this is particularly the case when interventions are delivered over a shorter time span.	2
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners.	Additional reading pens and visualisation technology	Trial found Key Stage 4 learners using additional resources made 3 months' additional progress in reading compared to other similar learners.	2
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners.	Resources for literacy, numeracy, and social/emotional support	Trial found Key Stage 4 learners using additional resources made 3 months' additional progress in reading compared to other similar learners.	2

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

Budgeted cost: £10,150

SDP link	Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance / Barriers to attending centre.	Other Support: Transport support Breakfast/lunch/pod Technology - Virtual packages, Kings Trust.	Tracking and monitoring progress to implement interventions effectively. Removing barriers to participation increases attendance.	1
Lack of learner awareness of opportunities.	Cultural Capital Enrichment encounters. Increase the levels of Cultural Awareness for all disadvantaged learners	EFF research states that average impact of arts participation on other areas of academic learning appears to be positive (3+ months) progress.	5
Lack of parental engagement with DESC.	Further increase parental engagement and attendance at events.	EFF research states the average impact of the Parental engagement approaches is about an additional four months' progress over the course of a year.	3
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners.	Provide appropriate therapeutic support to learners in their emotional and social development.	Increasing evidence of Social Emotional Mental Health Problems in young people EEF Toolkit Social and Emotional Learning +4 months	All
Attendance / Barriers to attending centre.	Review and implement attendance strategies to include transport to school and out of area learners	DESC to provides Pupil Premium funded bus passes for learners at risk of persistent absence, reducing transport-related lateness.	1
Attendance / Barriers to attending centre.	Weekly assemblies/awards ceremonies (incentives, attendance, learning & values recognition)	Increasing evidence of Social Emotional Mental Health Problems in young people EEF Toolkit Social and Emotional Learning +4 months	All
Academic & Social progress for disadvantaged learners.	SEND resources and improvements to the physical environment	Evidence from the SEND review highlights the positive impact robust alternative provision has in augmenting students' curriculum and on their engagement and progress.	2
Lack of learner awareness of opportunities.	Off-site alternative provision & CEIAG	Evidence from the SEND review highlights the positive impact robust alternative provision has in augmenting students' curriculum and on their engagement and progress.	5

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 learners in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

2023 - 2024 Review 2023 - 2024 was the last year of our first Pupil Premium Strategy (2021 - 2024)

We feel that the Pupil Premium provision is strong in our centre. All staff know who their Pupil Premium learners are and support them accordingly in lessons and with extracurricular development.

High-quality first teaching is effective and Internal data suggests that we are closing the gap between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium learners.

Our work on parental engagement has been really successful and parental/carer responses to a survey in June 2024 were also very positive about DESC's provision and support for their child/children and the way the funding is spent. See response to key questions here We have also worked hard on improving cultural capital for our Pupil Premium learners and on relevant trips, 100% of the eligible Pupil Premium learners have attended.

Poor attendance is a big issue for some of our learners and work on improving this will continue to be a focus for next year. Overall, Non-PP attendance: 85%, PP attendance: 84% so no significant difference between groups and this is significantly above the national figure for PRU's 59.3% DfE attendance figures for PRU's – March 2024.

Pupil Premium learners are making good progress and we are excited about our new three-year strategy and moving forward with a renewed focus on attendance, progress and cultural capital. At DESC we had a total of 20 level 2 qualifications and 62 level 1 qualifications gained.

All Pupil Premium learners have accessed, alternative provision, enrichment, interventions, intensive careers mentoring and counselling support. This has significantly helped with their next steps as of July 2024' all PP and non-PP learners were in further education, employment or training.

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	n/a
n/a	n/a

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	n/a
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	n/a