

# Pupil premium and recovery grant strategy statement – Riverwalk School

Riverwalk School is an all-through special educational needs school in Bury St Edmunds, serving 225 students aged 3-19 with complex learning difficulties, including severe learning difficulties, autism, profound and multiple learning difficulties, as well as physical/mobility challenges. All students have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). The school holds a 'Good' Ofsted rating (July 2024) and is part of Consortium Multi-Academy Trust (joined Sept 2023).

This statement details how Riverwalk School will use its Pupil Premium and Recovery Premium funding for the 2025-2026 academic year to improve the educational outcomes and wider experiences for our disadvantaged pupils. It outlines our three-year Pupil Premium strategy (2025/26 to 2027/28), detailing our spending intentions for the current academic year and the outcomes we aim to achieve. Our overarching aim is to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their background, achieve their full potential and are well-prepared for their next stage of education. This strategy will be reviewed and updated annually.

## School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	225
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	32%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025/26 to 2027/28
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Lukasz Rumanowski
Pupil premium lead	Christine Adamson
Governor / Trustee lead	Steve Martin

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 106,670
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£ -
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b>	<b>£ 106,670</b>

## Strategic Approach

<b>Our strategy is based on the tiered approach recommended by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to ensure effective use of Pupil Premium funding.</b>	
<b>Tier 1: High-Quality Teaching:</b>	Investing in excellent teaching as the most impactful driver of pupil outcomes for all.
<b>Tier 2: Targeted Academic Support:</b>	Providing additional academic interventions for pupils who need it most.
<b>Tier 3: Wider Strategies:</b>	Addressing non-academic barriers to learning, such as attendance, behaviour, and access to enriching experiences.

# Part A: Pupil premium and recovery grant strategy plan

## Statement of intent

We plan to improve outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils by overcoming identified barriers to learning, ensuring alignment with our whole-school priorities for 2025-26. Our aim is for all students, including our disadvantaged pupils, to make or exceed expected progress, addressing any gaps in achievement and wider development. We will use Pupil Premium funding to achieve the following aims:

- Remove gaps in academic achievement and progress, particularly in literacy, ensuring progress against EHCP targets.
- Reduce gaps in attendance and improve engagement, supporting consistent access to learning.
- Improve access to, and engagement in, a wide range of enriching curricular and extra-curricular learning experiences and activities, building cultural capital.
- Develop stronger links with the local community, promoting inclusion and practical life skills.
- Enhance pupils' social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) and self-regulation skills, developing resilience and positive social interaction.
- Ensure and sustain high-quality outcomes for all our pupils, promoting high ambition and aspiration.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Data indicates some disadvantaged pupils exhibit lower progress in literacy, including phonics, interaction, and social communication. This impacts their foundational skills and overall academic attainment.
2	A subset of disadvantaged pupils demonstrates lower attendance and engagement, disproportionately impacted by unauthorised absence and complex medical needs.
3	Identified lack of cultural capital and limited life experiences for some disadvantaged pupils restrict their broader personal development and aspirations.

4	Disadvantaged pupils show lower involvement in community access, educational visits, whole-school events, and activities, limiting their practical life skills development and wider social integration.
5	A risk of lower achievement expectations exists for some disadvantaged pupils, potentially leading to an attainment gap when compared to their non-disadvantaged peers.
6	Some disadvantaged pupils present with significant social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs, impacting their readiness to learn and ability to self-regulate.

## 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 (by July 2026)
Pupils making at least expected progress in Literacy	Disadvantaged pupils will demonstrate at least expected progress in literacy, as measured by the new, revised assessment framework in EFL, with core subject assessment criteria completed by Autumn Term 2025. All students will consistently access and engage in the new phonics scheme and scheduled reading times, leading to measurable progress in reading. Success criteria for literacy and early reading will be confirmed once baseline data has been fully gathered and analysed in Autumn 2025. Interim milestones will be set following consultation with the English lead (Warren) and assessment lead, ensuring alignment with the revised assessment framework.
Pupils make expected progress towards their EHCP outcomes	90% of all students, including disadvantaged pupils, will make expected or better progress towards achieving their EHCP outcomes as recorded on EFL, building on last year's outcomes, where 85% of students achieved expected or better progress.
Reduction in pupil absence	Last academic year, the attendance rate for disadvantaged students was 90%, compared to 88% for the whole cohort, excluding the subset of students with unauthorised absences and complex medical needs. For 2025–26 attendance will be sustained at 90% or above across the whole school, narrowing the gap. This will place Riverwalk above the most recent national average for special schools, which stands at approximately 87%.

<p>Improvement in students’ regulation, resulting in better resilience strategies and social interaction skills.</p>	<p>Maintained and consistent implementation of Zones of Regulation across classes will develop emotional literacy and self-regulation.</p> <p>Increased staff completion of Step Up/trauma-informed training, will focus on frameworks that improve students’ regulation and social interaction skills.</p> <p>Demonstrable development of sensory circuit standard in all classes will improve social interaction and availability for learning, supported by regular, targeted interventions.</p> <p>Disadvantaged pupils accounted for 54% of all recorded behaviour incidents last academic year. We will reduce the proportion of incidents involving all pupils, including disadvantaged students, by at least 20% by July 2026, through consistent implementation of regulation strategies, staff training, and targeted interventions.</p>
<p>Development of a rich and broad curriculum, that offers opportunities that build on cultural capital.</p>	<p>Resources and equipment will effectively facilitate access to all curricular areas, offering optimal learning experiences to all students.</p> <p>Clear, purposeful mapping and increased participation in educational visits are a priority. In 2024–25, 69% of disadvantaged students took part in such visits; our target for 2025–26 is to raise this to at least 75%, ensuring broader access to cultural and community-based experiences.</p>
<p>Pupils have increased access to sensory-focused experiences to overcome sensory barriers to learning and support pupil wellbeing.</p>	<p>Increased number of students will receive sensory support and focused interventions from Sensory and Physical Champions, guided by Physician and Sensory Coordinator.</p> <p>Resources and equipment (e.g., designated sensory spaces) will consistently improve availability for learning.</p> <p>Sensory diet will be delivered to pupils consistently, using relevant equipment, included in their daily routine through familiar activities.</p> <p>Regular training and support for class practitioners will develop their knowledge of students’ sensory needs and how these can be addressed.</p>

## Activity in this academic year

This section details how we intend to spend our pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding this academic year to address the challenges listed above, structured by the EEF's tiered approach.

### Tier 1: High-Quality Teaching (Universal Provision)

High-quality teaching is the most effective way to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and all pupils. A significant portion of our Pupil Premium funding is invested in this tier.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Phonics and reading development.</i>	New phonics scheme is being delivered in all classes (training to all staff during PD Days in September 2025). A reading culture is developed, with the creation of timetabled reading times, spaces and new books being ordered/ library being developed.	1, 2, 5
<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>	New mobile devices and software being purchased. Staff being trained to work with students, developing their understanding of internet safety. New and subscription-based software is being used to improve engagement and address specific parts of RW curriculum, eg. Lexia, music applications, Twinkl phonics.	1, 2, 5
<i>Staff Professional Development (CPD)</i>	Investment in CPD for all staff on adaptive teaching, differentiation, and consistent use of EFL for curriculum-aligned assessment. This includes training on the new revised curriculum and assessment strategies, especially subject-specific knowledge.	1, 5
<i>Quality First Teaching Resources</i>	Ensuring classrooms are equipped with high-quality, accessible resources (e.g., differentiated texts, visual aids) to support all learners, particularly those with complex learning needs.	1, 5

## Tier 2: Targeted Academic Support

For pupils who require additional support beyond high-quality classroom teaching, we provide targeted academic interventions to accelerate progress and close attainment gaps.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Suffolk Music Therapy Services</i>	Music therapy sessions to improve engagement and lead to increased participation in social communication, physical communication and emotional well-being.	1, 2, 5
<i>Targeted Interventions (Literacy/Numeracy)</i>	Provision of small group or 1:1 tailored interventions in reading, phonics, and numeracy for identified disadvantaged pupils working below age-related expectations or needing accelerated progress, informed by EFL assessments. This could include specific programs like Lexia.	1, 5
<i>Specialist LSA Support</i>	Deployment of Specialist Learning Support Assistants to provide direct, targeted support to disadvantaged pupils with complex needs, ensuring access to curriculum and individualized learning goals.	1, 5
<i>Physical, Learning, Occupational Therapy (PLOT)</i>	Provision of dedicated PLOT support for specific pupils, aiding their physical and learning accessibility, directly addressing complex needs that impact academic engagement and progress.	1, 5

## Tier 3: Wider Strategies

To address non-academic barriers to learning, we implement a range of wider support strategies that promote overall well-being, attendance, and access to enriching experiences.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>School Trips (Travel and Entrance)</i>	All excursions are paid for by the school, ensuring all pupils, including disadvantaged, have equitable access to educational visits and cultural experiences. This directly addresses	3, 4

	the 'Lack of cultural capital' and 'Lower involvement in community access'.	
<i>Well-being and SEMH Support</i>	Implementation and maintenance of Zones of Regulation to develop emotional literacy and self-regulation. Provision of sensory circuits and designated sensory spaces to support pupil well-being and availability for learning. This includes regular training for staff on sensory needs and trauma-informed practice (Step Up/Step On).	2, 5
<i>Attendance Monitoring &amp; Intervention</i>	Proactive monitoring of pupil attendance, with targeted interventions (e.g., home visits, close family liaison, promoting Breakfast Club where applicable) for disadvantaged pupils with low attendance or persistent absence.	2
<i>Enrichment Activities</i>	Participation in programmes like 'AllTogether' and access to extracurricular clubs and community events to broaden experiences, develop social skills, and build cultural capital. This also includes developing meaningful 'work encounters' for students across all key stages.	3, 4
<i>Parental Engagement Initiatives</i>	Targeted initiatives to enhance parental engagement for disadvantaged families, offering workshops, improved communication strategies (e.g., EFL training for new parents), and opportunities for involvement in school life.	

## Monitoring and Review

The impact of our Pupil Premium strategy is rigorously monitored throughout the academic year to ensure effective use of funding and responsive support for our disadvantaged pupils.

<b>Frequency and Responsibilities</b>
The Pupil Premium Lead, Christine Adamson, will oversee this, with regular updates provided to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a half-termly basis.
The strategy will be reviewed annually by 31st December, with the next review scheduled for December 2026.

<b>Data Sources for Monitoring</b>
Pupil progress data from Evidence for Learning (EfL), including EHCP outcomes and curriculum-aligned assessment for subject-specific knowledge.
Attendance and punctuality records, focusing on disadvantaged pupils with persistent absence.
Behaviour logs and incident reports, particularly for physical assault incidents.
Pupil voice (through pupil parliament sessions and surveys).
Parent voice (through surveys, feedback, and attendance at family support events).
Observations of teaching and learning, including lesson visits and planning reviews.
Records of participation in interventions, enrichment activities, and community access initiatives.
<i>Monitoring data will be used to make in-year adjustments to interventions and provision, ensuring responsiveness to pupil needs and a continuous improvement cycle. This includes regular review of EfL with staff to ensure optimal transition and consistent use.</i>

## Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation of the 2025-2026 Pupil Premium strategy will be conducted by November 2026 in preparation for the annual review and publication of the updated strategy by 31st December 2026.

This evaluation will assess the impact against all stated outcomes and key performance indicators, drawing on all monitoring data.

Key points learned from the 2025-2026 strategy, including successes and areas for further development, will directly inform the planning for the 2026-2027 academic year. This ensures continuous improvement and adaptation of our approach to best serve our disadvantaged pupils and maintain alignment with our broader School Development Plan.