

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement – Riverwalk School

Riverwalk School is an all-through special educational needs school in Bury St Edmunds, serving 221 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.

This statement details how Riverwalk School will use its Pupil Premium funding for the 2026-2027 academic year to improve the educational outcomes and wider experiences for our disadvantaged pupils. It outlines our three-year Pupil Premium strategy (2026/27 to 2028/29), 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	221
Proportion (%) / number of pupil premium eligible pupils	34.84% / 77
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2026/27 to 2028/29
Date this statement was published	October 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2027
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	£111,535
Pupil Premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£111,535

Strategic Approach

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

Review of 2025-26 Outcomes

Evaluation of the previous strategy demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils achieved outcomes broadly in line with their peers:

In July 2026, 88% of disadvantaged pupils made expected progress or better towards their EHCP outcomes, compared with 89% of non-disadvantaged pupils.

Ninety percent made progress in English, 92% made progress in phonics and 100% made progress in pre-phonics.

Participation in educational visits increased to 79%, while 100% of disadvantaged pupils accessed sensory support or targeted interventions.

Attendance improved across the year, although attendance and behaviour remain priorities for further development.

Part A: Pupil premium 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 2026-27. 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:

- Sustain the strong academic outcomes already achieved by disadvantaged pupils, ensuring they continue to make expected or better progress against EHCP outcomes and across literacy, communication, phonics and early reading.
- 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	In line with SDP Priority 1 and Priority 2, disadvantaged pupils require continued support to access ambitious curriculum sequencing, communication development, literacy and assessment-led learning pathways. Disadvantaged pupils continue to require targeted support to sustain progress in literacy, communication, interaction, phonics and early reading due to the complexity of needs across the school.

2	Attendance for disadvantaged pupils remains below the whole-school average despite improvements across 2025-26. Persistent absence, medical needs and family circumstances continue to affect a minority of pupils and reduce access to learning opportunities.
3	Access to educational visits and enrichment opportunities has increased significantly, but continued investment is required to ensure all disadvantaged pupils consistently access experiences that build cultural capital, independence and preparation for adulthood skills.
4	Some disadvantaged pupils require additional support to engage in community learning, work-related learning and preparation for adulthood opportunities, reflecting SDP Priority 4.
5	Despite strong overall outcomes, some disadvantaged pupils require consistently high-quality adaptive teaching and curriculum implementation to ensure strong progress across all pathways and subjects, reflecting SDP Priority 1.
6	Disadvantaged pupils continue to be disproportionately represented in behaviour incidents and frequently require support with regulation, emotional wellbeing and communication. Improving readiness for learning and self-regulation remains a key priority.
7	Many disadvantaged pupils experience sensory processing differences that affect engagement, communication, regulation and learning. Continued access to sensory support, sensory circuits and specialist intervention is required to improve availability for learning and pupil wellbeing.

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 2027)
Pupils making at least expected progress in Literacy	At least 90% of disadvantaged pupils will make progress in literacy, communication and reading, with outcomes remaining broadly in line with or exceeding those of their non-disadvantaged peers. Disadvantaged pupils will continue to demonstrate strong progress in phonics and pre-phonics through consistent implementation of the school's phonics programme and reading curriculum.
Pupils make expected progress towards their EHCP outcomes	At least 90% of disadvantaged pupils will make expected or better progress towards their EHCP outcomes, building on the 88% achieved during 2025-26. Progress will continue to remain in line with that of non-disadvantaged pupils.

Reduction in pupil absence	Attendance for disadvantaged pupils will improve from 89% to 91%, with at least 80% of disadvantaged pupils achieving attendance above 90%. The attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and the whole-school cohort will continue to narrow through targeted support and family engagement initiatives.
Improvement in students' regulation, resulting in better resilience strategies and social interaction skills.	Disadvantaged pupils accounted for 48% of recorded behaviour incidents during 2025-26. Through the continued implementation of Continuous Provision, trauma-informed practice, sensory circuits and targeted regulation strategies, disadvantaged pupils will demonstrate improved self-regulation, resilience and engagement. Behaviour incidents involving disadvantaged pupils will reduce from the 2025-26 baseline.
Development of a rich and broad curriculum, that offers opportunities that build on cultural capital.	In 2025-26, 79% of disadvantaged pupils participated in educational visits. By July 2027, at least 80% of disadvantaged pupils will access educational visits, community learning opportunities and enrichment activities that build cultural capital and support preparation for adulthood.
Pupils have increased access to sensory-focused experiences to overcome sensory barriers to learning and support pupil wellbeing.	All disadvantaged pupils identified as requiring sensory support will have access to appropriate sensory interventions, sensory circuits and sensory resources. Targeted sensory provision will improve engagement, self-regulation, communication and readiness for learning. Staff will receive regular training to ensure sensory strategies are embedded consistently across all classes. The school will maintain 100% access to sensory support for disadvantaged pupils where need is identified.

Activity in this academic year

This section details how we intend to spend our pupil 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. A reading culture is developed, with the creation of timetabled reading times, spaces and new books being ordered/ library being developed. The impact of this investment is demonstrated through 92% of disadvantaged pupils making progress in phonics and 100% making progress in pre-phonics during 2025-26.	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. music applications, Twinkl phonics.	1, 2, 5
<i>Staff Professional Development (CPD)</i>	Investment in CPD for all staff on priorities such as adaptive teaching, continuous provision or consistent use of EfL for curriculum-aligned assessment. This includes training on effective curriculum delivery and assessment strategies.	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,	1, 2, 5

	physical communication and emotional well-being.	
<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.	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

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 the 'Lack of cultural capital' and 'Lower involvement in community access'. Participation in educational visits increased from 40% in October 2025 to 79% by July 2026, demonstrating the impact of reducing financial barriers to participation.	3, 4
<i>Well-being and SEMH Support</i>	Continued implementation of Continuous Provision, sensory circuits, sensory diets and designated regulation spaces supports communication, engagement, emotional wellbeing and readiness for learning. Staff training in Norfolk STEPS and trauma-informed approaches provides a consistent whole-school approach to behaviour and regulation. During 2025-26, 100% of disadvantaged pupils accessed sensory support or targeted interventions.	2, 6, 7

<i>Attendance Monitoring & Intervention</i>	Attendance for disadvantaged pupils increased from 86.9% in October 2025 to 89% in July 2026. Continued targeted attendance monitoring and family engagement will support further improvement.	2
<i>Enrichment Activities</i>	In 2025-26, 79% of disadvantaged pupils participated in educational visits, exceeding the school's target of 75%. Continued investment will ensure participation remains high and opportunities continue to broaden.	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.	2, 6

Monitoring and Review

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

Frequency and Responsibilities
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 2027.

Data Sources for Monitoring
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.
Participation rates in educational visits, enrichment activities and community access opportunities for disadvantaged pupils.
Monitoring of sensory interventions and their impact on pupil engagement, self-regulation and availability for learning.
<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

An evaluation of the 2026-2027 Pupil Premium strategy will be conducted by November 2027 in preparation for the annual review and publication of the updated strategy by 31st December 2027.

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

Key points learned from the 2026-2027 strategy, including successes and areas for further development, will directly inform the planning for the 2027-2028 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.