Pupil premium strategy statement – Thornhill Primary School

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	442
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	35.9%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024/2025 – 2026/2027
Date this statement was published	October 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Jenny Lewis, Executive Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Paul Robinson, Acting Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Lisa McCrindle (Chair of Governors)

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£245,680
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years *(enter £0 if not applicable)*	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£245,680

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Thornhill our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers.

We will consider the challenges faced by all vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker and/or an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Raising aspirations and providing opportunities for pupils to be enriched through increased cultural capital is also a core principle fundamental to our approach. We want our disadvantaged pupils to have their eyes opened to the opportunities available and to go into the next stage of their education with endless dreams and possibilities ahead of them.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel.

To ensure they are effective we will:

- Ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set.
- Act early to intervene at the point need is identified.
- Adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations and aspirations of what they can achieve.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	**Historical underachievement of disadvantaged pupils** in comparison to their non-disadvantaged peers (with regards to meeting the 'expected' standard at their stage of education).
2	**Fewer 'more able' disadvantaged pupils achieve the higher standard** in reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2 (in comparison to their non-disadvantaged peers.)
3	**A significant number of disadvantaged pupils also have challenges associated with SEN**, for example speech & language and/or BSE (behaviour, social and emotional) difficulties. Furthermore, a small group of pupils have highly complex needs which require a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach as well as some suffering with conditions linked to mental health.
4	**Fluctuating attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils** with wider socio-economic factors impacting parents' ability to sustain regular school attendance.
5	**Parental engagement of disadvantaged pupils** is variable and impacted on by a range of factors from lack of confidence/knowledge of the educational system, historical negative experiences of education and lower aspirations for the next stage of education or entering the workplace.

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 More disadvantaged pupils to meet the expected standard	1.1 The gap in attainment within all year groups between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils is narrowed. 1.2 Disadvantaged pupils at Thornhill to continue to attain in line with or above all pupils nationally.
2 Increase the percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the higher standard	2.1 At the end of KS2, more disadvantaged pupils achieve the higher standard in reading, writing and maths. 2.2 Increase the amount of disadvantaged pupils achieving the higher standard in reading, writing and maths combined. 2.3 The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils achieving the higher standard is narrowed
3 Support disadvantaged pupils with additional needs to access a full, broad and balanced curriculum	3.1 Support SEN

	3.2 Develop social and emotional provision through empowering pupils' understanding of their rights 3.3. Increased participation in extended school provision
4 Improve attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils	4.1 Close gap 4.2 Overall unauthorised absence rate 4.3 Persistently absent
5 Increase positive parental engagement of disadvantaged pupils	5.1 Increased parental engagement through volunteering 5.2 Targeted support 5.3 Increased aspirations

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: £47,890

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments (NTS) Whole school assessment tracking software (Sonar)	When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups: Diagnostic assessment | EEF	1, 2, 3
Subscription and associated training of a DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils (Read Write Inc.)	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading, particularly for disadvantaged pupils: Phonics | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	1, 2, 3
Refining our approach to early mathematical teaching through the implementation of a	The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches:	1, 2, 3

whole school approach (NCETM's Mastering Number in KS1 & Reception programme). We will fund teacher release time to embed key elements of guidance in school and to access Maths Hub resources and CPD (including Teaching for Mastery training).	Mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2	
Introduction of Skills Builder framework across the school	Skills Builder Partnership is a global movement of employers, educators, and impact organisations working together to ensure that everyone builds the essential skills to thrive. The framework provides a route map of skills that can be aligned with the school curriculum and is part of a local authority vision for alignment of skills building across education in Islington.	1, 2, 3
Implementation of a whole school approach to put children's rights at the centre of our curriculum (UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award) This will be driven by our Curriculum Lead.	The RRSA is a universally recognised approach to putting children's rights at the forefront of the curriculum. There is significant evidence that the impact of a RRS impacts on the whole community: - Children are healthier and happier - Children feel safe - Children have better relationships - Children become active and involved in school life and the wider world	3
Providing professional development opportunities for teachers and support staff and the cover implications associated with these opportunities. (The school is currently in a partnership with a	In order to support with the retention of strong members of staff, opportunities are being provided for staff to grow and develop within their current role.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

local school and is providing support at all levels. This is allowing staff to develop their own practice by supporting and leading colleagues.)		
Professional qualifications for teachers and support staff – NPQs, apprenticeships	Supporting the recruitment and retention of staff, for example, providing cover time to undertake professional development such as National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) and apprenticeships.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £143,256

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Engaging with the National Tutoring Programme to provide a blend of tuition, mentoring and school-led tutoring (Action tutoring, small group teaching)	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF And in small groups: Small group tuition | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	1, 2, 3
Support for pupils from specialist professional and/or using specialist interventions - Fred's Teaching - Beanstalk Reading - Nessy - Educational Psychology services, SALT	Technology and other resources can support high-quality teaching, for example software to support diagnostic assessment.	1, 2, 3
University-style tutoring for disadvantaged pupils (The Brilliant club)	The Brilliant Club raises aspirations of pupils and exposes them to university-style teaching i.e. working with tutors and completing a thesis. Pupil engagement is high and testimonies positive.	2, 5

Specialist teaching and learning support from Higher-Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA)	Teaching assistant deployment and interventions, for example by supporting high-quality provision within the classroom or delivering structured interventions with an emphasis on providing speech and language intervention. Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	1, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £70,958

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Support for pupils and staff with their emotional wellbeing. (Art therapy, Artis creative learning)	Targeted interventions and resources to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged pupils is crucial in enabling them to access the full curriculum. Pupils' BSE needs need to be met in order for them to flourish with the school curriculum.	3
Targeted work of Attendance Lead (including rewards and motivators for disadvantaged pupils with improving attendance)	Early identification, real-time tracking and targeted support captures pupils at risk of becoming long-term persistently absent. A support-first approach to tackling attendance is promoted.	4
Access to a rich curriculum offer (including music lessons, residentials, enrichment activities)	Extra-curricular activities, including sport, outdoor activities, arts and culture, for example music lessons and school residentials, plus our nationally recognised enrichment program, motivate pupils to attend regularly and engage parents in their child's education.	4, 5
Extended school access - breakfast club	Providing subsidised access to the extended school provision supports	4, 5

(including magic breakfast), after school clubs and school plus, holiday clubs.	parents with ensuring positive school attendance and wrap around care needs.	
Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Total budgeted cost: £262,104 (including an additional £16,424 of school budget)

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 previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments.

Outcome 1: More disadvantaged pupils to meet the expected standard

The data demonstrated that disadvantaged pupils continue to perform extremely well. 79% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the combined (Reading, Writing, Maths) expected standard in comparison to 62% of all pupils nationally.

There remains a gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils within the school. There is some fluctuation in this gap between year groups but typically it narrows as the pupils move through the school, culminating in a relatively small gap at the end of key stage 2. However on entry, pupils arrive in the Early Years with huge variance in attainment and development, often magnified by disadvantage.

We continue to strive to remove the existence of any gap in attainment between our disadvantaged and other pupils. This remains a challenge for the school due to the consistently high levels of attainment of all pupils (a 3-year average of +20% above national averages in combined RWM) i.e. the removal of such gap would be easier if results were lower across the board.

Ultimately, we will continue to ensure we stretch and challenge all pupils and will ensure that our broad and balanced curriculum meets the needs of all, whilst continuing to provide appropriate and targeted support and intervention for those faced with external challenges (disadvantage).

Outcome 2: Increase the percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the higher standard

The gap between the most able disadvantaged pupils and all pupils nationally is narrowing. Performance in individual subjects at Key Stage 2 is strong, however there remains the need to target the most able disadvantaged pupils to achieve the combined higher standard.

Targeted teaching of more able pupils is effective, for example having a 'more able' maths group. Providing pupils with access to the 'Brilliant club' is extremely well-received and supports in raising aspirations of pupils in potentially attending university in the future.

Writing at the higher standard remains the biggest challenge for our disadvantaged pupils and this is sometimes linked to a lack of cultural experiences, less breadth of reading high quality texts and reduced exposure to, and application of, rich vocabulary.

Outcome 3: Support disadvantaged pupils with additional needs to access a full, broad and balanced curriculum

As an inclusive school, we ensure that disadvantaged pupils with additional needs have access to the full curriculum through the implementation of a thoughtful and evidence-informed approach.

Early and accurate identification of needs including collaboration with families and agencies has ensured that the curriculum has been adapted where necessary, and delivered with high quality differentiation and scaffolding in place. A review of the curriculum to ensure that it remains ambitious for all whilst including texts, topics and experiences that reflect and broaden pupils' backgrounds has been effective.

Evidence based interventions that are carefully timetabled have shown to have huge impact when reviewed and refined regularly. Staff training on areas such as communicate in print and social stories as well as the adoption of a whole-school approach to classroom adaptation has had strong impact on disadvantaged pupils with additional needs.

Outcome 4: Improve attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils

Maintaining positive school attendance of our disadvantaged pupils continues to be a challenge. Data demonstrates that overall attendance figures at Thornhill are positive, particularly in comparison to local schools, however there is a negative gap of over 2% between our disadvantaged pupils and all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils that are persistently absent continue to be a priority for targeted support.

The implementation of robust and effective school absence procedures is effective e.g. timely tracking of absences, consistent first day of absence phone calls, requesting of medical evidence for sickness absence, efficient identification and analysis of persistently absent pupils, partnership work with local schools. The effective deployment of external services to support with good attendance (in order to adopt a multi-agency approach) also demonstrates strong impact – identification of early help, parenting support and workshops, social care referrals if necessary.

Reducing the number of disadvantaged pupils that are persistently absent continues to be a priority. Following the guidance from the DfE regarding attendance, we will continue to offer a 'support first' approach to tackling persistent absence.

Outcome 5: Increase positive parental engagement of disadvantaged pupils

Ensuring positive parental engagement remains a key priority in order to support children's educational attainment and overall well-being, particularly for families facing social or economic disadvantage.

We have fostered inclusive, respectful, and supportive partnerships with our parents that have empowered disadvantaged parents to actively participate in their children's learning, for example through active participation in the school PTA.

We have strived to recognise and value the diverse experiences, strengths, and cultural backgrounds of all families, whilst addressing barriers such as limited access to resources, language differences, or lack of confidence. Effective strategies we have experienced include open communication, accessible events, targeted outreach, and the co-creation of learning opportunities that build trust and mutual respect.

We have found that when disadvantaged parents are meaningfully engaged, children benefit from increased motivation, improved academic outcomes, and a stronger sense of belonging.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Read Write Inc.	Ruth Miskin Literacy
Rights Respecting Schools	UNICEF UK
The Scholars Programme	The Brilliant Club
Tuition	Action Tutoring
Mastering Number at Reception & KS1	NCETM
Skills Builder	Skills Builder Partnership
Artis	Artis creative learning charity
Art therapy	Self Space therapy
Fred's Teaching	Fred's Teaching
Beanstalk Reading	Coram Beanstalk
Nessy	Nessy Learning