Pupil premium strategy statement: The Alderton Junior School

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	233
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	63 = 27%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)**	2024-2025 2025-2026 **2026-2027**
Date this statement was published	December 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	Kirsty Johnson Head Teacher
Pupil premium lead	Sarah Finn Deputy Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Andrew Jobling Disadvantage Lead

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£81,271.76
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years *(enter £0 if not applicable)*	£0
Total budget for this academic year *If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year*	£81,271.76

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

The Alderton Junior School vision is to provide an exceptional education that is inclusive and ambitious for all learners and provides wider opportunities for all. We hold high aspirations for all our children and believe all children should be given every opportunity to reach their full potential irrespective of their background.

We recognise that some pupils are entitled to the pupil premium funding and we use this money to support disadvantaged pupils to:

- Make good progress and attain well across the curriculum (including those who are already high attainers)
- Ensure children are being provided wider opportunities to diminish the gaps between them and their peers.

We are part of the Essex-wide Disadvantage Strategy that promotes a whole school approach to tackling disadvantage which focuses on early intervention and accountability to pupils and families first. This approach acknowledges that long term socio-economic disadvantage has an impact on learning for many children, not just those in receipt of funding. To that end, our strategies focus on quality first teaching and interventions that will benefit many pupils in our school. This is based on a robust assessment of need to identify those who are at risk of underachievement to ensure a learning led rather than label led approach.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Internal assessments and end of KS2 results indicate that writing attainment remains a significant challenge for disadvantaged pupils in all year groups. The gap in writing at Y6 in 2024 was 27% (47% PP pupils achieved ARE compared to 74% of non PP pupils).
2	Lower levels of reading fluency and phonological awareness, along with more limited vocabulary and language acquisition continue to be seen in disadvantaged pupils across the school, particularly in Year 3. This has been noticeable through observations and assessments of pupils. Historically, pupils enter the linked Alderton Infant School with lower levels of PSED than expected.
3	Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues, especially anxiety, have been on the rise amongst a proportion of our pupils, many of whom are disadvantaged. Pupils often lack resilience and a readiness to learn on entry. This has been rising since the Covid-19 pandemic and noticed in discussions with pupils and families by our pastoral support team. Currently 24 pupils, of whom 13 (54%) are disadvantaged, require

	additional support with SEMH needs through 1-1 counselling, including with our school therapy dog or learning mentor sessions.
4	Although there have been significant improvements over the last 3 years (down from 5% in the previous strategy), disadvantaged pupils and their families find regular attendance more of a challenge than their peers. Current attendance is at 95.8% for non Pupil Premium pupils but is only at 94.35% for Pupil Premium pupils, a difference of 1.45%. Persistent absence amongst some disadvantaged pupils continues to be a challenge. Our overall school PA rate was 6.6% for 2023-24. With medical conditions and religious observances removed from the data, this becomes 4.4% which equates to 10 pupils. However the persistent absence rate of Pupil Premium pupils is significantly higher than non Pupil Premium pupils (at 9.6% compared to just 2.8% for non Pupil Premium pupils).
5	Despite many clubs on offer, both at lunchtime and after school, disadvantaged pupils participate in fewer wider opportunities than non pupil premium pupils (46% compared to 52%).

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 improve the progress in writing of disadvantaged pupils so more Pupil Premium pupils achieve EXS by the end of KS2	KS2 outcomes in 2027 show that the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in writing is in line with National standards for disadvantaged pupils (National = 59% in 2024)
To increase the number of Pupil Premium Pupils achieving EXS in Reading	KS2 outcomes in 2027 show an increase in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard, in line with National standards for disadvantaged pupils
To develop language, oracy and vocabulary to diminish the language gap between disadvantaged and other pupils	Ongoing monitoring demonstrates that pupils are able to reason and explain across the curriculum in a range of subjects using full sentences and a range of tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary
To improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils with identified SEMH needs through reducing anxiety and improving learning behaviours and engagement	Pupil and staff voice indicates an improvement in behaviour for learning and engagement in lessons for pupils with SEMH difficulties. That pupils feel confident at school, show progress in their learning and a reduction in referrals to the pastoral team is seen
To support and build relationships with families with attendance issues to improve attendance for all pupils but particularly our disadvantaged pupils	Sustained high attendance for all pupils is seen. Attendance is further improved and persistent absence is reduced so that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the rest of the school.
A greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils attend extra curricular clubs	A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils is seen. (Evidenced through participation data).

To raise the aspirations of high achieving disadvantaged pupils from families with no prior history of Higher Education attendance	Pupils are exposed to the possibilities of higher education by participating in The Scholar's Club and are able to develop their metacognition, critical thinking and creative writing skills as evidence through the Scholar's Club impact report

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: £ 6,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To continue to embed the Jonathan Bond English Unit Writing Kit introduced in 2025 as a structure for writing. With effective CPD for teachers through year group planning with JB and 1-1 coaching sessions to continue to implement this effectively across across the school	The programme is based on a mastery approach that recent EEF research indicates is a key model in reducing the attainment gap in English. EEF Research also advocates teaching sequences as a means of scaffolding the 'cognitively complex' skill of writing. The 'Real Writers project' in Essex has also influenced the Writing Kit approach with a focus on real purpose as it has been seen to have *'a huge impact on both the quality of writing and pupils' willingness to write'.*	1
CPD for teachers and LSAs in structured reading interventions and to deepen staff understanding of analysing individual pupils' reading skills and how to best support them in the classroom.	EPS paired reading from ECC (see 'interventions' for evidence) Faster Read project from the University of Sussex for Y5 and Y6 https://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/centres/centre-for-international-education/projects/fasterread https://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/centres/centre-for-international-education/projects/fasterread/impact	2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 22,500

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

To run targeted Reading interventions with pupils across Years 3 to 5 for children who have completed the phonics 'rapid catch up' to bridge the gap 4.5 hours p.w	The EEF toolkit states that 'Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+7 months). Alongside phonics this is a crucial part of early reading instruction.'	2
Paired Reading interventions (ECCmodel) with daily sessions of 5-15 minutes over 8-12 weeks	Examples of research-based outcomes: (e.g. Topping 2011,Miller et al 2010, Brooks 2016) • Six months to 1 year's progress in reading accuracy and comprehension over the intervention period. • Positive psycholinguistic outcomes affecting reading style and language skills. • Improvements in emotional and motivational aspects of learning. • Pupil Helpers made the same or more progress as Readers.	2
Implementation of the Faster Read project from University of Sussex for Y5 and Y6	https://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/centres/centre-for-international-education/projects/fasterread https://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/centres/centre-for-international-education/projects/fasterread/impact	2
To run small group tuition sessions to targeted pupils after school, focussed on Y6 20 weeks x 5 teachers	Tutoring targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be effective in supporting lower prior attainers in small groups. The EEF toolkit shows that targeted small group interventions have an average of +4 months in primary schools.	1,2
EPS Maths intervention- small group intervention for maths in Y4 and Y5 Separate intervention for those pupils who have completed the EPS programme but still have gaps- lead by Maths lead and 2 experienced LSAs 4.5 hours + 3 hours p.w	Tutoring targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be effective in supporting lower prior attainers in small groups. The EEF toolkit shows that targeted small group interventions have an average of +4 months in primary schools.	1,2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 52,800

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Counselling sessions including a therapy dog, and young carers support for targeted pupils Access to Healthy Families and the EFSPT Wellbeing service Employment of a Learning Mentor for 6 hours per week to work with specific pupils ELSA	EEF toolkit shows targeted approaches for social and emotional learning has an impact of 4+ months progress. This is combined at school with our overall school approach using TPP in our Relationships and Behaviour policy and also supports enabling pupils to reduce anxiety and therefore learn better.	3
Provide 10% discount for school trips for all PP pupils, including Activity week and after school provision certain pupils	This enables pupils to participate in activities and opportunities outside their experience that they may not otherwise have access to and develops their cultural capital.	5
Target attendance and punctuality issues of disadvantaged pupils through weekly attendance monitoring with the EWO and BPSM	When the DfE guidance on 'Improving School Attendance' approach is followed, it has been shown to significantly reduce levels of absence and persistent absence.	4
Target disadvantaged pupils for extra curricular clubs by offering free places for school run clubs and encouraging external providers to give discounts	Research by Newcastle University through the Nuffield foundation on the value of after school clubs for disadvantaged children found that: *'Teachers, parents and children identified a range of positive outcomes from participation in after school clubs, including increases in confidence, self esteem and fitness, as well as providing opportunities for new experiences, socialising and enjoyment'. link*	5
Continue to invest in the Scholar's Club Programme for 14 High Achieving disadvantaged pupils in Year 5 and year 6	The impact data from the Scholar's Club shows an average 25% increase in Critical thinking and written communication over the course of the programme. The programme also fulfills the Gatsby benchmarks for careers provision (3 and 7). Qualitative data from pupils showed high levels of engagement and pride in their project work and so demonstrates we should continue the project with a new cohort of pupils.	5

Total budgeted cost: £ 81,800

Part B: Review of the previous academic year (2025-26)

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

KS2 data at the end of Year 6 in summer 2026 showed 63% (65%) of our overall Y6 cohort achieved the Expected Standard in Reading. For Pupil Premium pupils, whereas last year our Pupil Premium reading results were are above both Essex and National figures, this year only 35% (41%) (7/17) of our PP pupils achieved ARE compared to 60% in Essex and 62% nationally. On analysing the data, this is due to all but one of the PP pupils who did not achieve ARE having either a SEND need or another disadvantage (for example, new EAL, a refugee pupil).

There has been a continued school focus on oracy, vocabulary and language, and we are in the second year of a new scheme of work for writing. Our overall writing results for all pupils are at 71% in line with both National (73%) and Essex (74%) and the same as last year's results. For our Pupil premium pupils 53% achieved ARE in writing (up from 44% in 2025) compared to 58% in Essex and 60% nationally showing that we are closing the gap.

In maths, 71% of our cohort reached ARE (in line with both National and Essex results). 59% of PP pupils achieved ARE again in line with National (62%) and Essex (59%). For the last few years, our gap between PP and non-PP pupils in maths has been smaller than both national and local results. This shows a continuation in the effective teaching of mathematics and the success of small group tutoring for pupils in Y6.

Year 6 Catch up: maths and reading have both been a focus for intervention for this cohort. There was a difference in success between maths and reading this year. 25 pupils received targeted in school Maths interventions or as part of a small after school tuition group. 52% of this group achieved ARE overall. Of the Pupil Premium pupils receiving maths tuition, 62% achieved ARE. 18 pupils had targeted extra comprehension interventions. 5 pupils achieved ARE of which 2 were PP.

LSAs CPD to strengthen phonics teaching: LSAs have received specific training on Little Wandle rapid catch up and visited a beacon school to see this in practice, enabling them to teach phonics catch up more confidently and accurately to pupils.

The continuation of **Breakfast Bagels** through the Magic Breakfast programme has enabled all pupils (and particularly disadvantaged pupils who may not have had breakfast) to start the day ready to learn and focussed as all pupils have access to breakfast. (Evidenced from qualitative data from staff surveys and conversations with pupils). For 2026-27, we have moved over to the new DfE free breakfast club provided on site for all pupils. However, we will continue to support disadvantaged pupils that may not be able to access this offer with a breakfast alternative.

We have continued to provide strong **wellbeing provision** for our pupils. All pupils during their time here received Brain Buddies sessions from MiND and we have a range of counselling services (in school learning mentor sessions, ELSA, FACCS and our counsellor with a support dog). All of which are helping to support pupils with SEMH and wellbeing needs to regulate and engage with learning. In 2025-26, 37 pupils received at least one of the above interventions of whom 23 (62%) were Pupil Premium pupils.

Attendance has been a key focus of our Pastoral Lead. Rigorous and relentless work with parents about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality, plus the engagement with the Education Welfare Service has had a positive impact. In our previous strategy, the gap between disadvantaged pupils' attendance and non-disadvantaged stood at 5%. For 2025-26, the gap was 3.4% (91.5% for PP pupils, 94.9% for the whole school) and while this is an improvement on the start of the strategy, it is lower compared to the previous 2 years- in 2024-25, the gap had reduced to 2.9%. Persistent Absence rates (PA) were significantly higher for PP pupils this year than in the past at 28.3%. This is 13/46 PP pupils being classed as persistently absent. However, 3 PP pupils had medical conditions requiring significant amounts of time out of school who would not have been PA without their medical absences. A further 4 PP pupils were on needs-led reduced timetables due to complex SEND and SEMH needs, all of whom attended their expected timetabled sessions. With these pupils removed from the data, the PA rate for PP pupils reduces to 13%.

Clubs: At the start of this strategy in 2024, 46% of pupil premium pupils and 52% of non pupil premium pupils were engaged in clubs. Through increasing the variety of our offer, including an extended amount of free lunchtime clubs, along with both paid for and free after school clubs, we have increased this to 75% of all pupils being involved in at least one club.The number of Pupil Premium pupils being involved in a club has increased to 64%. (79% for non PP pupils). There is no difference between the percentage of boys and girls and SEND/ non SEND pupils (all over 70%). As part of the strategy, all pupils have free access to one paid club and also receive a 10% discount on all trips, including for the Y6 residential to Stubbers/activity week, enabling all 17 Y6 PP pupils to participate.

The Scholars Programme: For the past 6 years, we have engaged with the Scholar's programme in a university style learning programme for high achieving disadvantaged pupils in Y5 and Y6. Due to a small cohort size in 2025, all eligible pupils have already taken part. Therefore, it was decided to do something else this year and return to the Scholar's club for Y5 and Y6 in 2026-27. Instead, PP pupils from Y4 to Y6 engaged in a 6 week public speaking and drama programme. 16 pupils participated. Pupil voice feedback showed pupils responded enthusiastically to the sessions and described the positive impact the sessions had had on their confidence in speaking in the classroom and in front of a larger audience. In response to the positive feedback, this year, we have now added drama/public speaking sessions as

an after school club.

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
Little Wandle Rapid Catch up	Little Wandle

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year**
n/a
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
n/a

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.