



## Pupil premium strategy statement – The Howard School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2022 to 2023 academic year) 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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

### School overview

Detail	Data
School name	The Howard School
Number of pupils in school	1502 (1252 excluding Sixth Form)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	26.6% of pre-sixth form cohort
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended</b> )	2022/2023 -2025/2026
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed again	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Caron Johnson, Director of Inclusion
Pupil premium lead	Richard Hillier
Governor / Trustee lead	Joanna Matthews

### Funding overview

Detail	Data
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£294,630
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0

<b>Total budget for this academic year</b>	£294,630
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## **Statement of Intent**

### **Objective**

Our objective is to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and personally. We aim to close attainment gaps, secure strong progress across all subjects, and prepare pupils for successful post-16 destinations. Beyond academic achievement, we are committed to developing resilience, confidence, and essential life skills so that pupils can overcome barriers and engage fully in school life.

### **Key principles**

Our Pupil Premium strategy is built on the principle that disadvantage should never limit opportunity, that if we get it right for the most disadvantaged, we get it right for all pupils.

The strategy focuses on:

- Closing attainment gaps through high-quality inclusive teaching and a curriculum that challenges and inspires.
- Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence, ensuring every pupil is present, engaged, and ready to learn.
- Reducing suspensions and promoting positive behaviour through proactive pastoral support and strong relational and inclusive practice across the school.
- Building confidence, character education, and aspiration through enrichment opportunities and strong pastoral care.
- Preparing pupils for successful next steps in education, training, or employment, supported by careers guidance and mentoring.

### **How does your current pupil premium strategy plan work towards achieving those objectives?**

Significant progress has already been made at The Howard School in supporting disadvantaged pupils, we recognise that challenges remain. Our strategy continues to adapt and is designed to address these barriers through a combination of high-quality inclusive teaching, targeted interventions, robust pastoral support and provision of enrichment opportunities.

Key actions include:

- The previous appointment of a Vice Principal for Behaviour and Attitudes, the creation of an Internal Exclusion Unit (IEU) as an alternative to suspension, and establishment of “The Base”, staffed by specialist HLTAs to provide wellbeing and academic support for vulnerable pupils.
- A revised behaviour policy and consistent whole-school approach is now fully embedded ensuring that staff are equipped to manage behaviour effectively and maintain a positive learning environment where all pupils can make good progress..
- We have prioritised strategies that place disadvantaged learners at the heart of classroom practice. This has included CPD focused on high-quality teaching including live feedback, modelling & gauging whole class understanding. We have introduced Purple zone in all

subjects as part of the Scheme of Work to promote resilience & independence in the classroom. Literacy checks are being introduced to improve feedback and our reading strategy continues to grow year on year.

- Our Reading strategy continues to build, we have embedded D.E.A.R. (drop everything and read) during PM registration, early intervention in KS3 using the Base facility informed through baseline testing and annual reading assessments and intensive reading in KS3. Pupils participate in intensive reading each term, where we aim to improve reading comprehension through the application of our reading strategy 4P's and an E (Prepare, Predict, Perform, Probe, Evaluate). This year we are extending Intensive reading into KS4, using BRAGS (our coded support strategies for readers based on their reading age on SPDs), and working with staff through CPD to embed the strategy of 4P's & anE (Prepare, Predict, Perform, Probe, Evaluate) in their subject classroom teaching.
- Our Assistant Principal Lead on attendance has put in place rigorous attendance monitoring procedures, analysing data on a daily, fortnightly (hotlist) and termly basis which has contributed to improvements in attendance. The systems implemented ensure diligent application of attendance procedures, early intervention to address barriers and promote working in partnership with parents. Overall attendance and the PA gap for PP learners has improved and is now in line with National. There remains an in school gap so attendance will continue to be an area of focus. This year we have implemented form board attendance documents that encourage all staff to celebrate good attendance, spot trends early and convey early concerns about pupils in their form to the attendance team.
- In 2024-25 we also introduced the 100% club, a rewards programme recognising pupils with good attendance and attitude to learning through the award of certificates and eligibility to participate in end of term reward trips.
- In September 2025 we launched our Ascent programme led by an Assistant Principal directly responsible for all Disadvantaged pupils in our school. The programme reflects our commitment to providing every pupil with enriching experiences that widen horizons, provide strong academic foundations, equitable and carefully planned support and opportunities that promote belonging, ambition and personal growth. The ascent programme encompasses a wide range of areas including
  - A tier system based on holistic data to identify those most in need of support.
  - Improving engagement with Disadvantaged families via initiatives such as fish n chip supper evening and inviting guardians into school to tour and visit lessons. Reviews take place with guardians at least annually to identify and address any barriers to learning or attendance.
  - Higher tier pupils are visited daily in lessons by our Pastoral Support Officers to check engagement, offer support and promote learning.
  - We aim to build a comprehensive range of extracurricular activities for each year group to promote a love of learning, widen horizons and increase aspirations. So far this has included university-led workshops, trips to the local university, STEM subject

- based workshops, Life in the Trenches, an Army led team building workshop, a visit to Kent Life and visits for two year groups to the Houses of Parliament.
- o Part of the Ascent strategy is to recognise and reward pupils who have good attendance and a positive attitude to learning. We have already taken pupils to Cineworld and the pantomime as rewards.
  - o Improved holistic analysis of progress, attendance, behaviour and engagement will facilitate better tracking of where pupils need support so early intervention can be put in place.
  - o Intervention plans for disadvantaged pupils already in place in addition to whole school practices include mentoring by members of the senior leadership team for pupils in Y11, a reading support group led by our sixth formers, an after school study club for pupils in need of support to complete independent study in key stage three and Y11 pupils acting as mentors for KS3 pupils.

### Challenges

Challenge number	Details of challenge
1	<p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>Overall attendance remains a challenge, despite a three year positive trend in closing gaps. Rates for disadvantaged pupils are lower than those of their peers, and persistent absence is a concern. Improving attendance is a priority, with targeted interventions and early support in place to ensure pupils are in school, engaged, and learning.</p>
2	<p><b>Attainment Gaps</b></p> <p>We have worked hard to improve attainment across all levels, and recent data shows our A8 / P8 scores for Disadvantaged pupils continue to improve year on year. There does remain an in-school gap although this can fluctuate yearly due to cohort context, and in-school monitoring highlights that disadvantaged pupils remain at risk of underachievement. The school Disadvantaged gap when compared to Non-Disadvantaged Nationally is far narrower than the national gap. Our focus is on early identification and intervention. Our Ascent lead track pupils holistically through attendance, attainment, behaviour, engagement and other pastoral indicators. This is supported by our Raising Standards meetings. Parents are engaged through targeted meetings and regular communication to address barriers, motivation, and engagement.</p>

3	<p><b>Behaviour</b></p> <p>Overall behaviour across the school is exceptionally positive, some disadvantaged pupils show lower engagement and motivation in lessons. This impacts progress and is reflected in higher internal suspension rates compared to their peers although the gap is closing. Addressing these barriers through targeted support and proactive strategies remains a key priority.</p>
4	<p><b>Internal suspension</b></p> <p>Although overall exclusion and suspension rates are low, monitoring shows that disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately represented in both suspensions and internal exclusions. Reducing this gap through targeted support and proactive behaviour strategies remains a key priority. IDSR 2025 indicates rates of one or more and two or more suspensions for FSM6 are below National.</p>
5	<p><b>Curriculum</b></p> <p>Although overall progress across the school is strong, analysis shows that disadvantaged pupils who are High Prior Attainers do not achieve as well as their peers. These pupils remain a focus and are being targeted through our Aspire strategy aimed to improve the outcomes and aspirations of High prior attainers. The number of pupils that fall in this category are small and therefore outcomes can fluctuate dependent on the cohort</p>

## Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming to achieve, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
<p>1. Improve attendance for learners who are eligible for Pupil Premium so that it is in line with the attendance of their non-disadvantaged peers.</p>	<p>a. Attendance for Pupil Premium learners is within 1% of non-disadvantaged peers.</p> <p>c. Persistent absence for Pupil Premium learners is reduced to be in line with the whole school.</p>

<p><b>2.</b> Sustain high-quality inclusive teaching that actively engages all learners, ensuring disadvantaged pupils access ambitious curriculum, participate fully in lessons, and achieve strong outcomes.</p>	<p><b>a.</b> Learning walks consistently show teachers are using effective feedback for all learners.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Monitoring confirms staff can accurately identify Pupil Premium learners and adapt teaching to meet their specific needs.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Lesson planning, preparation and seating plans clearly reflect personalised strategies for disadvantaged pupils.(SPDs)</p> <p><b>d.</b> Assessment and progress data demonstrate that outcomes for Pupil Premium learners are in line with their peers.</p>
<p><b>3.</b> Low attainment of PP is identified quickly and addressed</p>	<p><b>a.</b> Raising Standards meetings consistently prioritise Pupil Premium learners, with clear actions.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Impact of interventions for PP pupils is evidenced through measurable improvements in progress and attainment.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Data drops and learning walks confirm that underperforming target groups make sustained progress over time.</p> <p><b>d.</b> Monitoring demonstrates frequent and effective stretch and challenge strategies for HPA learners in lesson planning and delivery.</p>
<p><b>4.</b> Improve the behaviour for learning of targeted PP pupils, reducing the gap between PP and non-PP learners in key behaviour indicators, including internal suspensions and recorded behaviour incidents, so that rates for disadvantaged pupils are in line with their peers.</p>	<p><b>a.</b> Learning walks and monitoring confirm that staff consistently manage low-level behaviour effectively, ensuring a calm and focused learning environment.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Targeted pupils are clearly identified, and personalised support plans—including external agency involvement where appropriate—show measurable impact on behaviour for learning. The tiered Inclusion framework support systems and parental engagement are embedded.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Behaviour data demonstrates a sustained reduction in sanctions for targeted pupils, evidencing improved engagement and learning.</p>

## 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:

**£65000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue the CPD programme focusing on curriculum pedagogy which incorporates the elements of HQT.</li> <li>▪ CPD on further developing whole class feedback, live feedback, thinking time and the impact of this from teachers on their planning and delivery through review of LW data.</li> <li>▪ Continue to provide reading support for those with the greatest need following annual Reading Tests and published Reading Ages.</li> <li>▪ CPD to continue developing PPPPE practice in the classroom explaining our Intensive reading programme from KS3 into KS4.</li> <li>▪ CPD to continue developing staff practice of using SPD as a live document for staff to track individual student needs, progress and support they intend to provide</li> <li>▪ CPD to review and improve quality of feedback and application of department feedback policies to include literacy checks and purple zone.</li> <li>▪ Reading support for those with the greatest need following Reading tests.</li> </ul>	<p>High Quality inclusive teaching is a clear factor in developing progress of pupils. The SLT, Middle leaders and focused CPD are key in supporting teachers to achieve this. <a href="#">EEF High Quality Teaching Pupil premium Guidance</a> <a href="#">EEF Teaching &amp; Learning Toolkit</a></p> <p>The impact is clear for developing children as learners and being responsible for their actions.</p> <p><a href="#">Metacognition and self-regulation</a> <a href="#">EEF Teaching &amp; Learning Toolkit</a> <a href="#">The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment</a> <a href="#">Improving educational outcomes for learners with specific learning difficulties</a></p>	<p>2 3 5</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The expansion of the Raising Standards process to include pupil review meetings to ensure accountability and progress in all year groups.</li> <li>▪ Establish regular Raising standard progress meetings to ensure early intervention for students at risk of underachievement.</li> <li>▪ Ensure all teaching staff identify Pupil Premium learners on lesson and seating plans and consistently apply targeted strategies to support their learning.</li> </ul>		<p>2 3 5</p>

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

Budgeted cost: **£141630**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain a strong, consistent focus on Pupil Premium attendance, led by the Attendance Officer, with regular monitoring and follow-up.</li> <li>▪ Provide free breakfast club access for all PP learners to support punctuality and engagement.</li> <li>▪ Actively engage parents of PP learners where attendance concerns have been identified, ensuring collaborative strategies for improvement.</li> <li>▪ Identify and track PP persistent absentees (PA) in each year group, implementing targeted interventions promptly.</li> </ul>	<p>Children being in school is the biggest factor in attainment.  <a href="#">Research into How Attendance can impact Attainment</a>  <a href="#">Research into How Attendance can impact Attainment</a>  <a href="#">Breakfast clubs work their magic in disadvantaged English schools</a></p> <p>Linked with the High-Quality teaching, the impact of TAs can be high when used effectively.  <a href="#">EEF High Quality Teaching Pupil premium Guidance</a>  <a href="#">EEF Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants EEF Teaching &amp; Learning Toolkit</a>  <a href="#">FFT Small Group Tuition</a></p>	<p>1 2 3 5</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Targeted reading programme for pupils falling behind in reading following baseline and annual assessment.</li> <li>▪ Purchase additional reading programme - Sparx Reader to be rolled out across KS3 this year as part of our independent study programme.</li> <li>▪ TA led intervention groups to support pupils in each core subject area to fill gaps.</li> <li>▪ Core HODs deliver targeted termly intervention programmes to fill gaps and improve progress in KS4.</li> </ul>	<p>The vocabulary teaching and Reading mileage are key. There is a clear gap in this for children who are disadvantaged.  <a href="#">EEF Blog: Five evidence-based strategies to support high-quality teaching for pupils with SEND</a>  <a href="#">The Matthew Effect – why literacy is so important</a>  <a href="#">EEF Phonics</a></p>	<p>2 5</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain IEU provision and The Base to provide structured support for vulnerable learners</li> <li>▪ Robust raising standards process embedded across all year groups.</li> <li>▪ Highlight PP students at priority intervention meetings, in particular for those who are higher tiered (more concerns).</li> <li>▪ Continue to use the behaviour system to ensure high expectations of all students. This expects the very best from all students.</li> <li>▪ Conduct regular lesson checks through senior staff Learning Walks to monitor quality and engagement daily.</li> <li>▪ Appointment of Pastoral Officers who track tier 3 Disadvantaged pupils in lessons, dropping into a number of lessons each day to monitor engagement, behaviour and provide support.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Reading wise Accelerated Reader</a></p> <p>There is evidence to suggest that CBT can have a high impact on risk behaviours and behavioural difficulties:</p> <p><a href="#">Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - Youth Endowment Fund</a></p> <p>EIF's report on adolescent mental health found good evidence that CBT interventions support young people's social and emotional skills and can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression:</p> <p><a href="#">Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions</a></p>	<p>2 3 4 5</p>
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: **£89000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Allocate dedicated release time for the Vice Principal (Behaviour and Attitudes) to lead and drive improvements in behaviour culture and student attitudes.</li> <li>▪ Provide focused release time for the Assistant Principal (Ascent) to strategically plan, monitor, and evaluate progress of our Pupil Premium learners across attainment, behaviour, attendance and engagement.</li> </ul>	<p>Working with parents has always been key for the school. Through upskilling parents and supplying them with materials to support at home</p> <p><a href="#">EEF Parental Engagement</a>  <a href="#">EEF Teaching &amp; Learning Toolkit</a>  <a href="#">Review of Best Practice in Parental Engagement Do parental</a></p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deploy the Attendance Team to proactively monitor and support Pupil Premium (PP) learners, ensuring timely interventions for those at risk of persistent absence.</li> </ul>	<a href="#">involvement interventions increase attainment?</a> <a href="#">Ofsted's judgement of parental engagement: A justification of its place in leadership and management</a>	1 2 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ascent Lead and Pastoral Team to maintain and track proactive engagement with parents of Pupil Premium learners, fostering strong home-school partnerships to support attendance, behaviour, and academic progress.</li> </ul>		1 2 3 4 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Pupil Premium remains a standing agenda item in key meetings and is embedded as a core priority within the Whole School Development Plan under the strategic aim: Diminish the Difference.</li> </ul>		1 2 3 4 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a contingency fund to address urgent and unforeseen needs, ensuring swift support for Pupil Premium learners facing acute challenges that could impact attendance, wellbeing, or learning.</li> </ul>		1 2 3 4 5
<p>Ascent Lead will plan and deliver engaging enrichment opportunities to raise aspirations and widen horizons.</p> <p>The Ascent Lead will also plan reward trips &amp; other reward initiatives specifically targeted at Disadvantaged pupils to improve attendance and attitude to learning.</p>		

Total budgeted cost: **£294,630**

## **Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year**

### **Pupil premium strategy outcomes**

#### **November 2025 Review**

##### **Attendance**

Attendance outcomes for our Disadvantaged pupils are better than the national average for SA and PA and remain in line with national averages overall. The 2025 IDSR indicates that FSM6 attendance is above national average and has been for the last three years.

The school has a positive three year trend showing continuous improvement in all three indicators (overall attendance, SA & PA) for our disadvantaged pupils. It is our belief the reward opportunities being offered as part of the Ascent programme will lead to further improvement in 2025-26. This alongside the continued focus on data analysis on a daily, weekly and termly basis (hotlist & form boards) and the drive to increase parental engagement will result in a continued positive trend at the end of the 2025-26 year.

##### **High Quality Teaching for all**

Data from our Quality Assurance processes (Learning Walks and Work Scrutiny) demonstrate there is no difference in the quality of work produced by Disadvantaged pupils and our HQIT practices including live feedback and adaptive teaching are embedded in lessons. Staff make adjustments to their teaching strategies to ensure all pupils make progress in their lessons including Disadvantaged pupils. Reading data indicates the gap between Disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils closes as they progress through the KS3 & KS4 with no gap evident by Year 11. This is evidence of the impact of our evolving Reading strategy, DEAR and intensive reading(KS3) are already embedded with BRAGS, the expansion of Intensive reading to KS4 and the application of PPPP&E into classroom teaching expected to be embedded by the end of 2025-26.

##### **Attainment & Outcomes**

The outcomes for 2024–25 remain very strong and the school achieved its highest A8 scores both overall and for our disadvantaged cohort. Whole school progress continues to be above the national average for boys despite our selective local context with several grammar schools in Medway. The outcomes for Disadvantaged students also remain above national average, demonstrating the continued impact of targeted academic and pastoral support. In 2025 the A8 score was above National boys overall, and in the English, Ebacc and Open buckets.

The 2025 IDSR achievement indicators are all at or above average for the last three years, this is a particularly positive outcome considering our context of all boys, especially disadvantaged white British boys who consistently underperform when compared to girls.

The three year trend of improving A8/P8 scores for Disadvantaged pupils and our forecast for 2025-26 indicates A8 for Disadvantaged will increase again to our highest ever point score demonstrating continuous improvement. The gap between the whole cohort and Disadvantaged pupils continues to close, but remains a focus. The introduction of the Rasing standards process

to Key Stage three is expected to make an impact as we aim to close gaps much earlier than in previous years.

### **Behaviour**

Behaviour three year trends continue to show a positive decline in the incident of suspensions and exclusions for our Disadvantaged pupils, although there remains an in school gap to the whole cohort which will continue to be a focus for 2025-26. The 2025 IDSR indicates that suspension rates for FSM6 are well below the national average for one or more and two or more suspension rates.

Behaviour and engagement have improved, supported by consistent use of positive recognition and restorative practice. The pastoral and inclusion teams continue to work closely with teaching staff to maintain high expectations and ensure that all Disadvantaged pupils have the opportunity to thrive both academically and personally. The introduction of tracking tier 3 pupils during lessons to check engagement and provide support is expected to have an impact and initial indicators from term 1 data show a reduction in overall incidents for Disadvantaged pupils. Three Pastoral Support Officers now operate a daily timetable of in-class check-ins with tier 3 pupils. Their observations feed directly into the SLT tracker, which is reviewed each morning to ensure early identification of students requiring additional support or intervention.

### **The introduction of the *Ascent strategy***

Ascent builds on our previous work in 2024-25 and will provide a clear focus and framework for both staff and pupils, helping to raise the profile of our Disadvantaged cohort and strengthen a shared sense of belonging. Staff are now able to identify and support Ascent pupils more precisely, enabling timely intervention when engagement or progress dips. Raising Standards meetings now introduced across all year groups maintain academic focus and ensure a swift response to underachievement from Year 7. The meeting cycle for each year group includes a specific Ascent focus, allowing stakeholders to review progress, attendance, and behaviour, and to adjust interventions as needed.

The ASCENT programme is already securing sustained, measurable improvement for disadvantaged pupils across attendance, behaviour, academic outcomes, personal development and engagement. For Term 1, attendance for disadvantaged pupils is consistently better than national figures, for overall absence, persistent absence and severe absence Behaviour is improving, with disadvantaged incidents falling from 2.59 to 1.69 per pupil in the first term.

Academic outcomes show a clear upward trajectory. Our Y11 forecast following the recent mocks will be the highest A8 score the school has achieved for our Disadvantaged cohort and has narrowed the gap to overall A8 again.

Personal development is exceptionally strong. Feedback from pupil voice for our Disadvantaged pupils shows 92.7% feel safe (national 58%), 86.2% feel they belong (national ~47%) and 67% like school "a lot" (national 16%).

Engagement of our Disadvantaged pupils exceeds that of the whole cohort across rewards, clubs and events, demonstrating that Disadvantaged pupils are fully included and thriving within the school community