Manchester Communication Academy

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2024 - 2027

with you, for you, about you.

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 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	Manchester Communication Academy
Number of pupils in school	1309
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	59.3%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Local Governing Body
Pupil premium lead	Nicky Jones
Governor / Trustee lead	Jenny Muter

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	
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	£770,175

Our intention is to ensure that all pupils, in particular those who experience social and economic disadvantage, have equitable opportunities for success through an academic and enriching curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Through a deep understanding of the many specific challenges that a high proportion of our pupils face beyond those captured in the Pupil Premium measure, we strive to mitigate the impact of social disadvantage.

The focus of our Pupil Premium strategy is to develop and embed our approach to identifying challenges and barriers at a local and individual level so that we provide appropriate support whilst still maintaining the highest expectations of attainment and achievement. This is underpinned by our knowledge that the best bets for student success happen in the classroom as a result of a knowledge rich curriculum, implemented through a teaching and learning approach that is informed by the latest evidence in cognitive science and learning behaviours. We know that in order to deliver on this, an effective professional development offer is integral to ensuring that we consistently bridge the knowing-doing gap of teacher expertise. We know that this approach will benefit all pupils.

Alongside this, the strategy is also fundamental to narrowing the gaps between pupils with SEND and Non-SEND pupils as for many of our pupils with SEND also experience social and economic disadvantage, contributing to an interplay of multiple risk factors and challenges.

In today's environment, our strategy encompasses a commitment to helping all students attend school and participate in lessons, while also providing support for their Social Emotional Learning and offering a variety of enriching experiences beyond the classroom.

The specific approaches we have adopted are evidence informed. To ensure they are effective we will:

– Create and sustain a purposeful learning culture
– Regularly evaluate and review using a range of evidence sources
– Nurture a culture where disadvantage is not viewed as a barrier but high expectations of behaviour, standards and cognitive challenge are celebrated.

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan
Statement of intent

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	**Reading** NGRT assessments show that a significant proportion of disadvantaged pupils arrive at school in year 7 with SAS scores below national average. The average SAS score for year 7 pupils joining the school in the academic year 2023-24 was 94. 37, in comparison to non-Pupil Premium students whose average SAS score was 98.93.
2	**Attendance** In the academic year 2023-2024, a notable disparity in attendance rates was observed between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students. Pupil Premium students recorded an average attendance of 85%, while non-Pupil Premium students achieved a higher average attendance of 92%. This difference highlights the need for targeted interventions to support Pupil Premium students in improving their attendance rates.
3	**Well-being/mental health** In recent years, we have observed a significant increase in the support required for housing and broader financial assistance due to the rising cost of living. Additionally, there has been a notable rise in students exhibiting emotion-based school avoidance. This trend underscores an urgent need to provide enhanced support for students facing challenges related to anxiety, bereavement, and low mood. Addressing these issues is crucial to fostering a supportive educational environment for all students.
4	**Curriculum** We will need to ensure that our curriculum and qualification offerings are thoughtfully designed and effectively tailored to meet the diverse needs of all students. This approach will help foster an inclusive learning environment that supports each student's academic and personal growth. Last academic year, Pupil Premium students had an average Progress 8 score of -0.27, whilst non Pupil Premium students had an average Progress 8 score of 0.72. We aim to significantly reduce this gap.
5	**SEND outcomes** We will need to ensure that SEND students are provided with a wide range of opportunities to succeed via the curriculum offer. In the 2023/ 2024 academic year, SEND Pupil Premium students achieved an average Progress 8 score of -0.8, in comparison to non-Pupil Premium SEND students who achieved 0.7.

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
Improve reading SAS scores for disadvantaged students between year 7 and year 9.	By the end of the 2024-2025 academic year, we aim to achieve a sustained improvement in SAS scores for disadvantaged students in Year 9, ensuring their performance exceeds the national average based on their starting points in Year 7. We aim to sustain this upward trend, as student move through Key Stage 4. This goal reflects our commitment to enhancing educational outcomes for all students.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all students, in particular disadvantaged students and reduce persistent absence.	Attendance data for Pupil Premium students should be in line with national average. | Year	NOR	No. PA	PA %	No. PA PP	PA %	No. PA NON-PP	PA % | |---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---| | Year 7 | 260 | 44 | 16.92% | 36 | 13.85% | 8 | 3.08% | | Year 8 | 254 | 66 | 25.98% | 56 | 22.05% | 10 | 3.94% | | Year 9 | 241 | 59 | 24.48% | 35 | 14.52% | 24 | 9.96% | | Year 10 | 266 | 81 | 30.45% | 53 | 19.92% | 28 | 10.53% | | Year 11 | 234 | 121 | 51.71% | 81 | 34.62% | 40 | 17.09% | | Whole School | 1255 | 371 | 29.56% | 261 | 20.80% | 110 | 8.76% |
To achieve improved well-being and resilience for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, ensuring more students can access mainstream education.	Disadvantaged students requiring support will receive tailored provisions that address their specific needs. This approach will enable them to effectively engage with and access the mainstream curriculum.
Improve and sustain high attainment among disadvantaged pupils, via a thoughtful curriculum offer.	By the end of our current plan in 2026-27, we will see the gap in attainment between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium reduce significantly.
To achieve improved outcomes for SEND students.	SEND outcomes for disadvantaged students should be in line with non-disadvantaged, taking into account their start point.

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: £385,087.50

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number (s) addressed
We will deliver a high quality professional development programme which equips teachers to support pupils to maximise the opportunities for long term learning. This will sustain a focus on developing student oracy, thinking hard and retrieval.	EEF Guidance Report Effective Professional Development: Effective professional development offers a crucial tool to develop teaching quality and enhance children's outcomes in the classroom. PD should include a balanced design of building knowledge, motivating teachers, developing teacher techniques and embedding practice. A focus on social support and using trusted sources will inform our approach. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development EEF Evidence Review: Cognitive Science Approaches in the Classroom. Cognitive science principles can have an impact on the rates of learning in the classroom. The principles of significance here are, managing cognitive load, retrieval practice and working with schemas. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/cognitive-science-approaches-in- the-classroom Voice 21's research highlights how supporting students in the development of their oracy skills significantly enhances their subject knowledge and overall understanding. This focus on effective communication not only deepens their comprehension but also fosters greater engagement with the curriculum. https://voice21.org/oracy-across-the-curriculum-the-evidence/ The report below highlights how effortful thinking, elicited through asking thought-provoking questions, enhances student learning by encouraging long-lasting memory retention and a deeper understanding of concepts. https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/22/03/if-you-want-remember-something-think-hard-and-dig-deep	1, 4, 5

We will sustain a whole-academy reading strategy. Re-visit and refine professional development of literacy strategies, for all teaching staff. Reading time will continue to be resourced centrally and will be underpinned by reciprocal reading strategies. A text-rich curriculum will be further embedded. NGRT assessments will continue to be used to assess reading ages. Reading gaps will be identified swiftly, and appropriate interventions will be implemented to address these needs effectively, across Key Stage 3. Gaps will also be identified a Key Stage 4. Students will be given effective and age-appropriate support.	EEF: Improving literacy in secondary schools. Disciplinary literacy helps to improve literacy, across the curriculum. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4 Teaching Phonemic Awareness and Word Reading Skills: Focusing on Explicit and Systematic Approaches. This study emphasises that explicit and systematic phonics instruction helps students understand how phonemes map to letters and words. This approach is particularly effective for students with reading difficulties, as it provides structured support that can lead to improved reading outcomes. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED604475.pdf	1, 4, 5
We will ensure that the intent of our curriculum consistently provides an appropriate level of challenge (i.e. 'thinking hard') to foster students' self-regulation and metacognitive skills. By setting meaningful retrieval homework, we will explicitly teach pupils how to organise and effectively manage their learning independently.	EEF Metacognition. Implementing metacognitive strategies can lead to an average of +7 months' additional progress for students. This significant impact emphasises the value of teaching students to think about their own learning processes. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/metacognition EEF Cognitive Science. Effective learning strategies should align with how memory works. Techniques such as spaced practice and retrieval practice enhance long-term retention of information. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/cognitive-science-approaches-in-the-classroom	1, 4, 5

By embedding formative assessment, we will support all students to succeed.	Embedding Formative Assessment. This guide summarises how using assessment to adapt what happens in the class can help students to succeed. https://webcontent.ssatuk.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/26155748/SSAT-EFA-Programme-Summary-2024.pdf	

Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)
Budgeted cost: £192,543,75

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number (s) addressed
We will implement evidence-informed, targeted interventions for identified students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). These interventions will include: • Reading and phonics support • A nurture curriculum that enables students to engage with the mainstream curriculum. • Art therapy. • Lego therapy • Speech, language and communications interventions. We will ensure that all staff, including teaching assistants, are appropriately trained and supported.	Evidence-Based Recommendations: The EEF guidance report outlines five evidence-based strategies to enhance support for SEND students in mainstream schools. These strategies aim to help educators create a more inclusive learning environment. The report also emphasises that high-quality teaching is crucial for all students especially those with SEND. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send The report examines the critical role of relationships and staff training in effectively supporting vulnerable children. It concludes that successful nurture practices hinge on understanding behaviour as communication and adopting restorative rather than punitive approaches within a whole-school nurturing ethos. https://www.nurtureuk.org/wp- content/uploads/2021/11/NG-Lancaster-report.pdf EEF-Maximising the Impact of TAs. This guide highlights how assessments can be used to identify appropriate pupils, guide areas for focus and track pupil progress. Effective interventions ensure the right support is being provided to the right child. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidance-reports/teaching-assistants	5

Sustain the effective use of provision mapping to track and evaluate the impact of provision to inform necessary future actions		
We will provide academic interventions to support all children to succeed. These interventions will include: -Providing targeted revision support. -The Brilliant Club.	EEF: Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils with gaps in knowledge. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition Research supporting The Brilliant Club as an intervention highlights its positive impact on students' self-efficacy and academic outcomes. Research from the University of Cambridge found that pupils participating in The Scholars Programme reported significantly higher levels of self-efficacy for university-style learning compared to those who did not participate. https://thebrilliantclub.org/news/the-importance-of-university-self-efficacy-new-rct-findings/	4

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Sustaining of principles of good practise set out in the DfE's improving school attendance advice.	The report, from the DfE, outlines the importance of collaboration among schools, local authorities, and families to improve school attendance, emphasising the need for strong relationships and understanding of individual barriers to attendance. It also details the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, highlighting the necessity of a supportive school culture and effective strategies to address persistent absenteeism. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf	2
Maximise the use of class charts to support tracking of attendance, behaviour, progress and increase parental communications.	EEF: Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning. The report highlights the significant role that parental engagement plays in enhancing children's academic outcomes. It offers four key recommendations for schools to effectively involve parents in their children's learning, emphasising the importance of clear communication and tailored support strategies. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-parents	1, 2, 4, 5
Family partnerships work to support disadvantaged families: – Early help. -Counselling. -Working with 'That Bread and Butter Thing.' Healthy Start breakfasts.	EEF Pupil Premium Guide. This report highlight the need for working with families and building relationships to tackle educational barriers. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/using-pupil-premium	2, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £192,543,75

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year
Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Outcomes Summary

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.

To help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils we compared their results to those for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at national and local level and to results achieved by our non-disadvantaged pupils.

Reading

There is a consistent trend of year 7 cohorts arriving at the school with an NGRT score that is below the national average. The year 7 cohort who started at the school in 2021, were no exception to this- their average SAS score was 95.94- in their most recent test, in July 2024, the average SAS score had increased to 103.50. Similarly, Pupil Premium students who started at the school in 2022 achieved an average SAS score of 93.95. The students' most recent test, in July 2024, showed a significant increase in the year group's average SAS score- it had increased to 100.19. The same trend has been observed for the year 7 students who started with the school in 2023- the Pupil Premium students in this cohort, started the year with an average SAS score of 94.37. The test that they took in July 2024, again, shows significant progress- they achieved an average SAS score of 101.45.

In the 2024 Ofsted report, it was highlighted that:

'The school swiftly and accurately identifies pupils who struggle with their reading. In key stage 3, carefully targeted support helps these pupils to develop into fluent and confident readers.'

This pattern of improvement indicates that the whole academy reading strategy has been impactful. Honing this strategy by creating centralised resources for whole-school reading time, ensuring that Key Stage 4 students are matched to an appropriate reading intervention, and by further embedding a text-rich curriculum, will help to strengthen the reading proficiency of Pupil Premium students. This will help to ensure that their reading scores are in line with age-appropriate benchmarks, as measured by the SAS score.

Attendance

The percentage of persistently absent students Pupil Premium students was 33% in the academic year 2021-22 to 20%. At the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, this number had decreased to 20%.

This shows that the strategy of employing an attendance officer to help with home visits, as well as maximising the usage of Class Charts to support attendance and working closely with to support families, has been impactful. By continuing to embed the strategies recommended by the Department of Education, we aim for the percentage persistently absent Pupil Premium student to decrease even further, and to further reduce the gap, across all year groups.

Wellbeing/ Mental health

Over 170 of our year 10 students completed the #BeeWell in December 2023, many of these had previously completed the same survey in year 8.

The survey results are very positive. Manchester Communication Academy sits within the average for the majority of measures apart from 'Optimism' and 'Psychological Wellbeing' where we are rated as green, or better than average. Even for those where we are average, we sit at the top end of this and compare very favourably with other similar schools.

In the 2024 Ofsted report, it was highlighted that:

'Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging at this vibrant school, which is at the heart of the community. Pupils are encouraged to take active roles of responsibility both in and outside of the school. For example, some train as 'guardian angels' who support their younger peers. Other volunteers pack bags of food to be distributed to local families. This culture of care for others helps most pupils to feel happy in school.'

The survey, alongside Ofsted's findings, provides evidence that despite our concerns over students' mental health, which mirror the national picture, the interventions we have in place to respond, are having a positive impact.

Therefore, we will continue to work with students and families and provide interventions, where appropriate, to support the wellbeing and mental health of our Pupil Premium students.

Curriculum

The data indicates that, in the academic year of 2023-24, Pupil Premium students underperformed in comparison to the national benchmarks for basics measures at 4+ and 5+. This will be a continued area of focus.

However, the data has also highlighted that Pupil Premium students made excellent progress in a range of subjects. In the academic year 2023-24, Pupil Premium students achieved a progress score of +0.73 in Spanish; a progress score of +1.26 in Textiles; a progress score of +2.05 in Physics; a progress score of +1.52 in Chemistry; a progress score of +1.52 in Biology; and a progress score of +0.17 in Science Combined.

In the 2024 Ofsted report, it was highlighted that:

'The school provides a broad and ambitious curriculum for pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have a strong, shared understanding of their subject curriculum. They know precisely what pupils should learn and when this should happen. The school has ensured that the rich diversity of the pupil community is reflected within its curriculum.'

The integration of metacognitive strategies into the curriculum has proven to be effective. By refining our approach to emphasise the components of metacognition and retrieval, we aim to further enhance the academic success of Pupil Premium students over the long term.

SEND

The outcomes of SEND students have improved in recent years. We have seen an improvement in the number of students with SEND achieving basics 4+ and 5+ . The average Progress 8 of SEND students in 2012-22 was -0.81, this has risen significantly to -0.25, in the 2023-24 academic year.

In the 2024 Ofsted report, it was highlighted that:

'Staff provide learning activities that take pupils' different starting points into account. For example, there is a comprehensive programme of support for when pupils who speak English as an additional language join the school. In addition, staff are alert to any additional needs that pupils may have, including those with SEND. There is an appropriate process to identify these needs. Staff adapt the delivery of the curriculum effectively so that pupils with SEND learn well.'

This shows that system in place for matching student need with provision and providing meaningful interventions, is having an impact on student achievement. We want to continue to embed this approach, to help SEND students to achieve success, across the curriculum.

Conclusion

Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils has, in many ways, met our expectations. We are particularly pleased with the progress made in reading, attendance and in student wellbeing. We are hopeful that all of the measures that have been taken will influence final Key Stage 4 outcomes, over time.

As outlined in the action plan above, we are at present, on course to achieve the outcomes we set out to achieve by 2026/27, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above.