

Pupil premium strategy statement – Durham Trinity School & Sports College 2025-26

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 | 255 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 55% (141) |
| 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) | 2025/26 – part continuation from 2024/25 |
| Date this statement was published | 6 November 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | April 2026 (in line with budget setting) |
| Statement authorised by | Full Governing Body |
| Pupil premium lead | Rachel Grimwood |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Joanne Turnbull |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|--|----------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £151,295 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i> | £0 |
| Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i> | £151,295 |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is to use pupil premium funding to help us achieve and sustain positive outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils. We aim to continue to improve their academic attainment and prepare them for life, however due to their special needs there can be many barriers that they require support and can impact on their ability to access the curriculum due to their:

- low levels of communication,
- high sensory needs
- social and emotional needs.
- limited life experiences
- limited ability to retain and transfer learning

At the heart of our approach is high-quality teaching to ensure that staff provide an education that is taught at the appropriate level, whilst having high expectations. This will include strategies within the teaching to ensure all pupils are ready for learning and the curriculum is accessible for all our disadvantaged pupils.

Although our strategy is focused on the needs of disadvantaged pupils, it will benefit all pupils in our school where funding is spent on whole-school approaches, such as high-quality teaching. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that outcomes for non-disadvantaged pupils will be improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

We will also provide support to our disadvantaged pupils to enable them to live an independent life as much as possible whilst supporting them to develop their social and problem solving skills.

Our strategy will be driven by the needs and strengths of each young person, based on formal and informal assessments, not assumptions or labels. This will help us to ensure that we offer them the relevant knowledge, skills and experience they require to be prepared for life.

At Durham Trinity School and Sports College we see the raising of attainment for disadvantaged children as part of our commitment to help all children achieve their full potential by:

- Promoting an ethos of high expectations no matter the barriers to learning.
- Having individualised approaches to address barriers to learning at an early stage through intervention.
- Focusing on high quality teaching and effective deployment of trained staff to support disadvantaged children.

- Make decisions based on detailed data analysis and responding to evidence.
- Providing rich learning experiences to replicate and transfer learning.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|---|
| 1 | Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium have low communication levels therefore experience difficulties accessing the world around them – include speaking, reading and writing. |
| 2 | Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium have high sensory needs impacting on their ability to regulate, concentrate and engage in learning activities. |
| 3 | All children have SEND and need high quality teaching and feedback to ensure they make progress and develop appropriate skills and knowledge. Ongoing training needs for our specialist staff team to ensure they have comprehensive understanding of the complexities of SEND and are appropriately skilled to undertake their role. |
| 4 | Children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker Social and Emotional Learning(SEL) skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment. This is likely to be linked to trauma that then can affect their ability to concentrate and engage in academic activities, especially when working with others or when tasks are challenging. |
| 5 | Significant medical and health issues for some pupils, some of which are life limiting; including difficulties in mobility, motor skills, sight and hearing, in addition to conditions such as epilepsy and co-morbidity of ASD, ADHD and OCD. We realise that attendance may be erratic due to changing or challenging health circumstances. |

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 |
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| An increase in staff skill set will then increase the number of Outstanding Teachers. This will | Staff are supported by attending specialist SEND training (in-house, online and offsite) |

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| <p>focus upon specific areas of SEND CPD, including early writing- whilst staff will have opportunities to share good practice within the school and other special schools. Following CPD, classrooms will be resourced to enable teachers to carry out specific teaching practices/interventions.</p> | <p>whilst sharing good practice and resources within Durham Trinity and through visits to other local generic special schools. CPD evaluations will identify how effective specialist training will be within their teaching practice.</p> <p>Lessons are differentiated, resourced and planned to meet needs of all pupils. There will be an improvement in quality of teaching and learning in specific areas (play, continuous provision and early writing) evidenced through pathway/ individual Teacher QA trackers.</p> <p>Evidence for Learning – evidence of progress towards Learning intentions.</p> <p>A higher percentage of End of Key Stage data is good/outstanding compared to 2024/25.</p> |
| <p>Pupils in receipt of PPG will make good progress on an individual level by accessing additional support/interventions inside and outside the classroom or an adapted curriculum when this need has been identified through Insights Assessment system and RAP meetings or school referral system.</p> | <p>HTAs/TAs will lead some interventions for individuals/groups of pupils through the referral system and direction of the Pathway Lead using Insights.</p> <p>HTAs will cover more specialist trained staff who will deliver a specialist intervention such as Thrive, Sensory Attachment and Play Therapy.</p> <p>Impact of interventions will be monitored by Pathway Leads and Assessment Leads. Progress information through monitoring, indicates there is no difference between those pupils in receipt of PPG and non-PPG in terms of progress.</p> <p>Evidence for Learning/Insights/ Intervention trackers– evidence of progress towards Learning Intentions</p> |
| <p>Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) will have access to Outdoor Learning experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supporting their Social Emotional Wellbeing, - opportunities to develop their problem solving skills - opportunities to transfer learning - making good progress on an individual level. | <p>Through achievement of Learning Intentions working towards their EHC plan outcomes.</p> <p>Evidence for Learning – will evidence pupils engagement, taking risks, developing life skills whilst providing opportunities to play and learn in the outdoors.</p> <p>Pupil voice and observations – pupils feel confident, happy and safe.</p> |

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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: £58,875

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Further develop specialist SEND teaching through research, training, modelling and purchase of resources – focusing on Play, Music Therapy and Early writing.</p> <p>Purchase of Insights to support the Quality Assurance process for leaders to identify good practice and identify where additional support is required for teachers.</p> | <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send</p> <p>The research suggests a group of teaching strategies that teachers should consider emphasising for pupils with SEND. Teachers should develop a repertoire of these strategies they can use flexibly in response to the needs of all pupils.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/toolkit/play-based-learning</p> <p>On average, the studies of play that measure impact found that play-based learning approaches improve learning outcomes by approximately four additional months. However, there is substantial variation in effects, suggesting that additional, high-quality research is needed in this area. Positive outcomes have been identified for a range of early learning outcomes including language, early literacy, early numeracy and a range of other cognitive outcomes. Play-based approaches can have substantial benefits for children who are identified as having social, emotional, or educational difficulties.</p> <p>EEF toolkit: Play-based learning, additional 4 months of progress (mainstream)</p> <p>The emphasis on education needs to be seen as a means of fostering pupils' opportunities to maximise their potential to do the very best they can do and to be the very best they can be, irrespective of their individual level of disability (Imray, P and Colley, A, 2017, Inclusion is Dead: Long Live Inclusion).</p> <p>Pupils learn the process of shopping by doing the act of shopping itself, in real shops using real money and in</p> | <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> |

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| | <p>real time. The more opportunities they have of doing the more secure their learning will be (Imray.P, 2016).</p> <p>There is strong evidence that teachers' pedagogical and content knowledge within specific subjects has a significant impact on pupil outcomes https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Makes-Great-Teaching-REPORT.pdf</p> | |
| <p>To provide a programme of CPD for TAs focusing on curriculum delivery including play and assessment for learning.</p> | <p>Investing in professional development for teaching assistants to deliver structured interventions can be a cost-effective approach to improving learner outcomes due to the large difference in efficacy between different deployments of teaching assistants. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions</p> <p>Teaching assistant interventions have an impact through providing additional support for pupils that is targeted to their needs. In order to have the desired effect schools might consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful assessment of pupils' needs so that teaching assistants support is well targeted • Training teaching assistants so that interactions are high quality – for example, using well-evidenced targeted programmes • Ensuring that any interventions are well-linked to classroom content and do not reduce high quality interactions with teachers • High quality communication between teaching assistants and classroom teachers is likely to support good implementation of teaching assistant interventions. Studies were not included where the TA was assigned as SEND support for an individual pupil as part of an SEND plan. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

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

Budgeted cost: £ 52,420

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
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| Identified staff (HLTA/ Specialist trained staff) | Small-group and one-to-one interventions can be a powerful tool but | 1 |

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| <p>to carry out targeted interventions 1:1 or small groups.</p> <p>Ensure pupils are accessing intervention and sessions are meaningful and appropriate – purchasing of Insights to support leaders and teachers to identify pupils and type of intervention required.</p> <p>Those pupils who have been absent from school due to health and/or medical reasons access targeted intervention and/ or home learning intervention.</p> | <p>must be used carefully. Ineffective use of interventions can create a barrier to the inclusion of pupils with SEN. Interventions should be carefully targeted through identification and assessment of need.</p> <p>The average impact of the small group tuition is four additional months' progress, on average, over the course of a year.</p> <p>EEF toolkit: Small group tuition, additional 4 months progress. (Mainstream)</p> | <p>2 3 4 5</p> |
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £40,000

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| <p>Outdoor Learning opportunities are further embedded and further developed across the different Pathways through:</p> <p>To embed OPAL further; through training, modelling play and resources for OPAL including play types/schemas.</p> | <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/toolkit/play-based-learning</p> <p>Play-based learning takes place across a range of indoor/outdoor, home-based and educational learning environments. On one end of the continuum is free play, where activities are initiated and sustained by the child. In these activities, the adult has a role in planning and setting up the learning provision, providing resources and materials to enhance learning and support play. The adult interacts with intention and a clear purpose in mind but it is the child who leads and directs the activity. In the middle of the continuum is guided play, which has some level of adult involvement. Examples might include a group of children engaged in pretend play where the adult plans a scenario to take the play and conversation in a new direction. On the other end of the continuum are more staff-led or directed activities, such as games with rules or clearly structured activities.</p> <p>EEF toolkit: Play-based learning, additional 4 months of progress (mainstream)</p> | <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> |

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| <p>To incorporate Physical Literacy and the Adventure Learning Framework into the curriculum – providing training, resources and experiences.</p> <p>Enrichment activities and Outdoor Learning further developed across the pathways (includes further training, resources, equipment.)</p> | <p>Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment.</p> <p>SEL interventions in education are shown to improve SEL skills and are therefore likely to support disadvantaged pupils to understand and engage in healthy relationships with peers and emotional self-regulation, both of which may subsequently increase academic attainment.</p> <p>EEF toolkit: Social and Emotional Learning, additional 4 months of progress. (mainstream)</p> <p>Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact on average of 3 months' additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of the year. SEL strategies can have a positive effect on aspects of early literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>EEF Early Years Toolkit Social and Emotional Strategies 3 months progress (Mainstream Early Years).</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning</p> <p>Outdoor Adventure Learning might provide opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to participate in activities that they otherwise might not be able to access. Through participation in these challenging physical and emotional activities, outdoor adventure learning interventions may support pupils to develop non-cognitive skills such as resilience, self-confidence and motivation.</p> <p>The application of these non-cognitive skills in the classroom may in turn have a positive effect on academic outcomes. However, the evidence base linking non-cognitive skills and pupil attainment is weak and schools should therefore carefully evaluate the impact of outdoor learning interventions on pupil achievement, if this is the intended outcome.</p> | |
| <p>Identified pupils supported with Independent Travel activities offsite at least once a week with Enhanced TA.</p> | <p>Small group tuition has an average impact of 4 months' additional progress over the course of a year. Small group tuition is most likely to be effective if it is targeted at pupils' specific needs.</p> <p>EEF toolkit: Small-group tuition +4 months (mainstream)</p> <p>Targeted deployment, where teaching assistants are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals has a high impact.</p> | <p>1 3 4</p> |

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| Cost of travel and staff included. | EEF toolkit: teaching Assistant Interventions - +4 months progress (mainstream) | |
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Total budgeted cost: £ 151,295]

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

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

Teaching & Learning:

Ofsted March 2025:

- “The school gains an in-depth knowledge of the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders identify pupils’ needs with precision.”
- “The outcomes stated in pupils’ EHC plans are at the heart of everything the school does.”
- “Teachers are highly adept at adapting learning to help pupils to meet their targets and to access the curriculum.”
- “The school’s curriculum is ambitious and leaders are aspirational for pupils. This is reflected in the school’s coherent, well-thought-out curriculum.”
- “Preparing for life is a theme that runs from the early years and across all curriculum pathways.”

Curriculum Pathway Data

See Pathway Quality Assurance Trackers for improvements in quality of teaching and learning including assessments.

Learning Intentions are set for disadvantaged pupils that reflect previous attainment yet provide a sufficient level of challenge.

When reviewing and assessing using MAPP assessment tool, pupils are assessed against their own personalised Learning Intentions on a 1 – 10 point scale using 4 key skill areas. These are Independence, Generalisation, Maintenance and Fluency.

Each pupil at Durham Trinity School accesses a Curriculum Pathway which is most accessible for them. Below is a summary of the average points progress and total learning intentions achieved for each Pathway from the period from October to February 2024/25.

| Pathway and Number of pupils | Pre-Formal (20 pupils) | Specialist Autism (42 pupils) | Primary Semi-Formal (72 pupils) | Secondary Semi Formal (86 pupils) | Post 16 (FEU) (25 pupils) |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Average points progress | 16.1 | 17.7 | 15.5 | 15.7 | 15.24 |
| Number of Learning Intentions Achieved | 3 | 2.6 | 1.8 | 3.4 | 2.56 |

Pupils from all pathways achieve at a similar rate in terms of number of point progress made and in terms of the number of learning intentions they achieve on a termly basis.

Pupils accessing Pupil Premium Grant, those accessing Free School Meals and those who access neither.

| | CLA/PP | FSM | Neither |
|---------------------------|--------|------|---------|
| Ave. No of LI achieved | 3 | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| Ave. Points progress made | 15.78 | 14.8 | 15.9 |

Pupils who have access to additional funding achieve in line with their peers (who do not have access to additional funding) as illustrated in the data available above.

Targeted Interventions: Behaviour & Emotional Wellbeing-

- Numbers of physical restraints are very low for a school of our nature and size due to staff training and interventions: 2022-23 (33), 2023-24 (30), 2024-25 (22)
- Ofsted (March 2025): “Pupils’ behaviour is excellent. Highly skilled staff support pupils to manage their behaviour very well”.
- Pupils supported through in house Thrive, Theraplay and Sensory Attachment therapeutic interventions and recorded on interventions tracker.
- PACE approach evident across the school through observations, CPOMS, Governor’s monitoring, MIR’s and Recruitment process.
- Children make outstanding progress in regulating emotions and managing their own behaviour. MIR data comparison from Primary to Secondary - Ratio of Physical Restraints over 3:1 in last 2 years - Ofsted: “Pupils develop ways to manage their emotions and to regulate and calm their behaviour”.

Wider Strategies:

Durham Trinity School and Sports College was awarded **Platinum OPAL Award**.

OPAL assessor/mentor: **“Huge congratulations on achieving your OPAL Platinum Award this afternoon! It was a real pleasure to discuss your transformation of play, and I found it genuinely moving to observe the fantastic play opportunities now available at your school. I felt quite emotional witnessing the change in attitude and the deep commitment to play across your entire staff team. The joyful atmosphere throughout playtimes is a credit to the dedication, creativity, and motivation that have driven your OPAL journey over the past few years. Despite the challenges you have faced, your school has successfully implemented the cultural and practical changes recommended within the OPAL programme — and the results are clear to see. Durham Trinity is now officially a Platinum Award Level OPAL school, meaning every child enjoys an amazing playtime every day. It also demonstrates that play is taken seriously within your school, receiving appropriate leadership, planning, evaluation, and resources. Playtimes at Durham Trinity are inclusive, joyful, and offer a wonderful variety of play experiences.”**

Benefits to date:

- Play skills developing
- Some children are taking risks
- Less behavioral incidents.
- More children are exploring different areas instead of staying at the one they feel more comfortable in.
- Staff are engaging with the children (modelling)
- Classes are enjoying developing their areas.
- Children are learning to wait for short periods of time to use the equipment or areas if they are too busy or closed off
- All areas have play rules produced by the children/young learners.

2024/25 Attendance:

Ofsted report March 2025: 'The school has strong procedures to promote pupils' attendance. Absences are followed up promptly. Leaders work effectively with parents and carers and external professionals to make sure that pupils are safe, well and attend school regularly.'

| | Pupil Premium | Non-Pupil Premium |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Aut 1 | 89% | 92.6% |
| Aut 2 | 84.7% | 90.4% |
| Spring 1 | 87% | 89.3% |
| Spring 2 | 87.1% | 91.1% |
| Sum 1 | 87.3% | 92.3% |
| Sum 2 | 87.4% | 92% |

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 |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Outdoor Play & Learning Programme | OPAL |
| Gestalt Language Processing | Independent SaLT |
| Essential Letters and Sounds | Oxford Owl |
| Thrive | The Thrive Approach |
| Language for Thinking (Blanks) | Stephen Parsons and Anna Branagan (authors) |

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**

Independent SaLT input to support communication needs

Intervention – HLTA – to support his communication with his peers and develop positive relationships.

Referral to Education Psychologist – provided 1:1 support.

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

The pupil is making good progress in line with his peers,