

Pupil premium strategy statement – 2023-26

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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Erasmus Darwin Academy
Number of pupils in school	942 (Y7-11) 1133 (Y7-13)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	20.6% (Y7-11) 18.1% (Y7-13)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023-2026
Date this statement was published	22 nd November 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	First review: December 2024 Second review: December 2025 Final Review: December 2026
Statement authorised by	Phil Walklate (Headteacher)
Pupil premium lead	Olivia Conolly
Governor / Trustee lead	Stephanie Smith

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£251,085
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£33,363
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	£284,448

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Erasmus Darwin Academy, our key value is Excellence and we are passionate about providing a truly excellent education for all of our young people. For us, an excellent education means a well-rounded education which prepares young people for their future lives as well-rounded citizens in modern Britain. Our disadvantaged mission is incredibly important to us; we will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable students and support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not. We will prepare our young people to **achieve their full potential**, to broaden their horizons in order to become **confident and independent** individuals, and develop their cultural experiences to transform their futures in a manner that is in no way different to their non-disadvantaged peers. We will ensure **inclusion is at the heart of our broad and balanced curriculum**, delivered by **staff who are invested** in their responsibility towards providing the highest quality support. At Erasmus Darwin Academy we want all students to feel they have as much chance and right to succeed as the next student, irrespective of any disadvantage, and the focus of this strategy and all staff associated with implementing it, have that at the forefront of all that they do.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on adaptive teaching strategies. Adaptive teaching is simply: understanding the needs of all pupils and adapting the teaching in response to those needs. This means that a responsive-focused approach in all classrooms allows a learning experience that is harmful to none, beneficial to all yet critical for some. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school.

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

- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve,
- ensure disadvantaged students are challenged and staff act early to intervene at the point need is identified,
- ensure the school is a harmonious and well-ordered community, where warm and respectful relationships characterise life and where inclusion and equality are explicitly taught through our well-designed behaviour curriculum.

Together, in an environment where all students feel they belong, we will make **excellence accessible for all**.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance and persistent absence of disadvantaged students is lower than their non-disadvantaged peers.
2	Academic performance of disadvantaged students, including uptake of the EBACC, is not currently in line with that of their non-disadvantaged peers nationally.

3	Percentage of disadvantaged pupils with a reading age in line with their chronological age is lower than their non-disadvantaged peers.
4	Parental engagement (attendance & correspondence).
5	Self-regulation, self-esteem & resilience is a current barrier to the behaviour and well-being of disadvantaged students in achieving their full potential.

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

	Intended outcome	Success criteria
1	Improve attendance of disadvantaged students	Improve attendance of disadvantage students (on or above 92%) Reduce the attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students (below 2%) Reduce the number of disadvantaged students who are persistently absent (below 20%)
2	Improve academic performance and outcomes for disadvantaged students including uptake of the EBACC.	Progress 8 score of 0 or above for Y11 disadvantaged students. At least 70% of disadvantaged students achieve 4+ in Best English & Maths. At least 45% of disadvantaged students achieve 5+ in Best English & Maths. At least 80% of disadvantaged students are on or above target in Y7-10.
3	Improve reading age of pupils in Y7 – 10.	At least 40% of disadvantaged students are reading on or above their chronological reading age. At least 70% of disadvantaged students are reading within 12 months or above their chronological reading age. At least 60% of disadvantaged students improve their reading age. At least 90% of disadvantaged students, receiving phonics intervention, show improvement in their phonological reading score in Y7&8.
4	Improve attendance and engagement of disadvantaged students' parents.	At least 70% of disadvantaged parent/carers engage in events such as: - Parent Consultation Evenings - Academic Success Evening - Options Evening - PP Key Worker Meetings - Parent Surveys - Educational Visit Bookings
5	Self Regulation, Self Esteem and Engagement act as a barrier to effective behaviour, well-being and student destinations.	Disadvantaged students are inline with or better than non disadvantaged students in the following areas: - Behaviour Incidents (including level 1 & level 2 detentions, isolations, suspensions and exclusions) - Rewards - Attendance at Extra Curricular activities/events. - Destinations post 16. - Work Experience uptake - Student leadership and representation

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £10,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole-school staff CPD focused on Adaptive Teaching (cognitive science principles, misconceptions & modelling), Culture & Ethos (responsive to needs of disadvantaged) & Reading/Phonics	The Early Career Framework, which entitles new teachers to continued training following their Initial Teacher Training, references “adaptive teaching”, moving away from the term “differentiation” altogether, which is an important distinction to explore further. Having a full understanding of every child is extremely important in adaptive teaching. Time needs to be diverted to identifying reasons for learning struggles, not just the struggles themselves. As such, pupils’ physical, social, and emotional well-being, including their relationships with peers and trusted adults, are fundamental. Schools need systems that ensure regular communication between teachers, families and the young people themselves to understand barriers and to share effective strategies. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/moving-from-differentiation-to-adaptive-teaching Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics Behaviour interventions seek to improve attainment by reducing challenging behaviour in school. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	1, 2 & 3

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

Budgeted cost: £150,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional staffing:	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one:	1, 2 , 4 & 5

Head of House (TLR x3) Engagement Mentor Pupil Premium Lead	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition In England, positive effects have been found in studies where teaching assistants deliver high-quality structured interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mentoring https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions	
ELSA programme	Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average, of 4 months' additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	1, 2 & 5
Phonics programme & reading intervention with targeted students.	Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum that emphasises the importance of subject specific support. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4 The average impact of reading comprehension strategies is an additional six months' progress over the course of a year. Successful reading comprehension approaches allow activities to be carefully tailored to pupils' reading capabilities, and involve activities and texts that provide an effective, but not overwhelming, challenge. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics	1, 2, 3 & 5
PP Key Worker Programme	Mentor programme designed to support all year 11 PP students with academic, attendance, behaviour and careers based support in the lead up to summer examinations. Students are allocated a familiar adult who oversees all aspects of their education and maintains regular contact with home. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mentoring	1, 2, 4 & 5
Alternate Provision	Bespoke placements at alternative provisions where students are struggling to access a mainstream education. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision	1 & 5
School Led Tuition	1-1 and/or small group tuition provision that provides both academic and emotional support to students with complex needs, requiring support to reintegrate back into the classroom.	1, 2, 3 & 5
Targeted Behaviour Interventions	Behaviour interventions seek to improve attainment by reducing challenging behaviour in school. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	1, 2 & 5

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

Budgeted cost: £120,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional staffing: Attendance and Engagement manager School Counsellor	DfE guidance on improving school attendance sets out a range of principles and strategies that should be implemented by schools in order to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence. Our attendance and engagement manager will be used to oversee the effective implementation of these principles at Erasmus Darwin Academy and carry out the bespoke, targeted intervention and support students and families require in order to improve their school attendance. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/framework-for-securing-full-attendance-actions-for-schools-and-local-authorities Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are prone to experiencing life circumstances that can cause them a range of different stresses, worries, anxieties etc that can impact on their learning, progress and emotional wellbeing in general. Access to a trained and qualified counsellor 2 days per week allows students who experience these issues to be supported in the appropriate manner and ensure their progress and wellbeing is addressed as effectively as possible.	1, 2 & 5
Reading books	Purchasing of reading books relevant to pupils reading age will be used to support in developing reading comprehension in line with the Bedrock Literacy Programme, Phonics Programme and various other avenues of reading support including trials of the EPAT. Evidence indicates it is important to identify the appropriate level of text difficulty, to provide appropriate context to practise the skills, desire to engage with the text and enough challenge to improve reading comprehension. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Access-to-learning/Graduated-response-toolkit/School-toolkit/EPs-school-support-information-and-resources/EP-Recommended-Approach-to-Literacy/EP-Literacy-Approach.aspx	3
Survival & Social Skills programme FUN Club	Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average, of 4 months' additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year. Alongside academic outcomes, SEL interventions have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	1, 2 & 5
Educational Visits inc Y8 challenge week	Outdoor Adventure Learning provides 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 can support pupils to develop non-cognitive skills such as resilience, self-confidence and motivation.	4 & 5

	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning	
Music lessons	Arts participation approaches can have a positive impact on academic outcomes in other areas of the curriculum. Wider benefits such as more positive attitudes to learning and increased well-being have also consistently been reported. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation	1, 2, 4 & 5
Educational visits inc DofE Award Scheme/NCS	Educational visits and external awards such as the DofE and NCS are an integral part of the Broadening Horizons curriculum at Erasmus Darwin Academy and we strongly believe in the value of these experiences for the students and support disadvantaged students to be able to access the same opportunities as their non-disadvantaged peers.	2, 4 & 5
Resources to enable students to access curriculum (e.g. equipment, uniform)	Pupils from lower socioeconomic households are less likely to be able to afford the cost of school uniforms. Wearing a uniform is not, on its own, likely to improve learning, but can be successfully incorporated into a broader school improvement process which includes the development of a school ethos and the improvement of behaviour and discipline. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/school-uniform	1 & 5
Breakfast club	Evidence shows that providing a healthy school breakfast at the start of the school day can contribute to improved readiness to learn, increased concentration, and improved wellbeing and behaviour. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-school-breakfast-club-programme	1, 2 & 5
Work-experience provision	Transition into post-16 education or training is something we endeavour to provide students with as much advice and guidance as possible and aim to give disadvantaged students bespoke support to access the right pathway for them. As part of this selected disadvantaged students are supported to take part in work-experience over the course of the academic year, giving them an insight into what the world of work looks like and raising their aspirations for success and encourage them to achieve as highly as possible to reach their chosen goals.	1, 2, 4 & 5
The Dog Mentor	The Dog Mentor programme (introduced in October 2024) offers a unique intervention in schools with the aim to create a nurturing and inclusive environment that fosters emotional resilience, enhances academic success, and equips students with the tools to manage stress, anxiety, and other challenges effectively. https://www.thedogmentor.co.uk/	1, 2, 3 & 5
Street Whyze	Street Whyze Project is an informal educational delivery and consultancy service for schools, educational establishments, and other sectors specialising in violence reduction, antisocial behaviour reduction, knife crime, mentoring and school engagement initiatives.	1, 2 & 5
Targeted Behaviour Interventions	Behaviour interventions seek to improve attainment by reducing challenging behaviour in school. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	1, 2 & 5

Total budgeted cost: £280,000

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 2024 to 2025 academic year.

1) Improve attendance of disadvantaged students (Year 2 Review)

Attendance of Disadvantaged Students			
22/23	23/24	24/25	2026 Target
PP - 88% Non PP - 93%	PP - 87.6% Non PP - 92.4%	PP - 87.8% Non PP - 93.2%	92%
Attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students			
5%	4.8%	5.4%	2%
Number of disadvantaged students who are persistently absent			
42%	41.1%	37.8%	20%

Support Provided:

- Transport to and from school to support with attendance issues (use of staff car or provision of bus tickets)
- Support in the Engagement Hub when being in the classroom becomes a barrier, comprising of 1-1 or group support
- Differentiated timetable to support a variety of needs, including out of hours provision on a 1-1 basis
- Meetings in the family home when coming into school is an issue or barrier for the family.
- High priority contact for PP students when absent.
- Priority for intervention and support from external providers to address EBSA concerns

2) Improve academic performance and outcomes for disadvantaged students including uptake of the EBACC (Year 2 Review)

22/23	23/24	24/25	2026 Target
Progress 8 score of 0 or above for Y11 disadvantaged students			
PP - -0.4	PP - 0 Non PP - +0.3	N/A	0
% of disadvantaged students achieve 4+ in Best English & Maths			
68%	54%	42%	70%
% of disadvantaged students achieve 5+ in Best English & Maths			
36%	33%	31%	45%
% of disadvantaged students are on or above target in Y7-10			
73%	77%	72.8	80%

Support Provided:

- Quality First Teaching for All including Adaptive Teaching, worked examples & adapting in the moment.
- 1-1 learning conversation every lesson
- Y11 Students receive PP mentor to support with Academic, Careers, Attendance and Behaviour barriers.
- Morning and After school intervention
- Data Analysis to target underperforming students.

3) Improve reading age of pupils in Y7 – 10 (Year 2 Review)

22/23	23/24	24/25	2026 Target
% of disadvantaged students are reading on or above their chronological reading age			
27%	33%	39%	40%
% of disadvantaged students are reading within 12 months or above their chronological reading age			
23%	25%	61%	70%
% of disadvantaged students improve their reading age			
47%	54%	48%	60%
% of disadvantaged students, receiving phonics intervention, show improvement in their phonological reading score in Y7&8			
N/A	77%	N/A	90%

Support Provided:

Y7

- Universal Teaching provision of the four reading fundamentals.
- Tutor reading programme
- Access to Bedrock Reading Programme
- Sixth Form Reading Buddy Intervention (students paired with a Sixth Form volunteer to work on fluency, comprehension and confidence with reading logs to track patterns and common misconceptions with pronunciation and/or understanding.).
- LSA Phonics Intervention in groups of three. Working through bespoke booklets to improve decoding, spelling and sight-reading words.

Y8

- Universal Teaching provision of the four reading fundamentals.
- Tutor reading programme
- Access to Bedrock Reading Programme
- Sixth Form Reading Buddy Intervention (students paired with a Sixth Form volunteer to work on fluency, comprehension and confidence with reading logs to track patterns and common misconceptions with pronunciation and/or understanding.).
- Short stories intervention in groups of three. Working through bespoke booklets to improve decoding, spelling and sight-reading words and allowing opportunities to practise pronunciation and fluency.

Y9 & 10

- Universal Teaching provision of the four reading fundamentals.
- Tutor reading programme
- Sixth Form Reading Buddy Intervention (Year 9 PP students ONLY - paired with a Sixth Form volunteer to work on fluency, comprehension and confidence with reading logs to track patterns and common misconceptions with pronunciation and/or understanding.).
- LSA-led bespoke reading mentoring on a one-on-one basis with reading logs to track patterns and common misconceptions with pronunciation and/or understanding.

4) Improve attendance and engagement of disadvantaged students' parents (Year 2 Review)

Event	22/23	23/24	24/25	2026 Target
	% of disadvantaged parent/carers engage in events			
Parent Consultation Evenings	64%	67% (incl other)	56.4% (incl other)	70%
Options Evening		PP - 67%	PP - 65%	
Educational Visit Bookings		PP - 50% Non PP - 61%	PP - AF Non PP - AF	

5) Self Regulation, Self Esteem and Engagement act as a barrier to effective behaviour, well-being and student destinations (Year 2 Review)

Key Information	22/23	23/24	24/25	2026 Target
	Disadvantaged students are inline with or better than non disadvantaged students in the following areas:			
Behaviour Level 3		PP - 42% Non PP - 58%	PP - 37% Non PP - 63%	
Behaviour Level 4		PP - 58% Non PP - 42%	PP - 34% Non PP - 66%	
Average Behaviour Points	PP - 11.6 Non PP - 3.7	PP - 10.9 Non PP - 4.5	PP - 7.8 Non PP - 4.2	
Rewards	PP - 29 Non PP - 26	PP - 30.0 Non PP - 24.5	PP - 16 Non PP - 16.6	
Extra-Curricular	PP - 32% Non PP - 29%	PP - 27% Non PP - 31%	PP - 33% Non PP - 35%	
Destinations Post 16		PP - 96% Non PP - 99%	PP - 100% Non PP - 99%	
Work Experience Uptake		PP - 87.5% Non PP - 97%	PP - 100% Non PP - 100%	

- Culture and Ethos support through accessing a range of interventions from the intervention menu.
- Financial support for visits
- Monitoring of attendance at extra curricular to improve uptake from PP students.
- PP students are actively encouraged to participate in student leadership opportunities.
- Targeted support provided to those struggling to access work experience placements and destinations Post 16.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

level 3, 4, average points & rewards

Programme	Provider
Bedrock	https://bedrocklearning.org/

Further information (optional)