

Pupil premium strategy statement 2024-2027

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium and recovery 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
St Piers School	St Piers School
Number of pupils in school	101 students in total
Percentage CLA	7.1%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	Ginnie Batten-Evatt
Pupil premium lead	Danny Hulme
Governor / Trustee lead	Gwen Godfrey

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£10,872.5
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£22,586
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£9,126.48 (due to coding error)
Total budget for this academic year	£45,584.98

If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	
*Note Due to a coding error, school were not aware of a large sum of money available through PPG. This error occurred as the money provided by local authorities had inadvertently been coded as 'Education', and not 'Restricted' This is a sum of over £9126.48 which will be carried over into the next academic year. Please see details below of plans to spend this.	

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

St Piers is a mixed, 5-19, non-maintained, residential and day special school for children and young people with epilepsy and a range of related co-morbidities such as complex medical and psychological disorders. Our students have a range of needs from moderate learning difficulties to profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Our aim is to use pupil premium funding to help us achieve and sustain positive outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils. Whilst socio-economic disadvantage is not always the primary challenge our pupils face, we do see a variance in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school when compared to their peers (and those who join us at similar starting points), particularly in terms of:

- Academic attainment
- Progression to further and higher education and employability
- Mental health and behaviours, including self-regulation
- Social opportunities

At St Piers, we main aim to provide specialist support for all our students to help them to develop their skills in learning and independence to give them the quality of life they deserve. PPG enables us to target our approaches on a personalised level and provide resources to help our students in their daily lives for them to progress well. 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

We will also provide disadvantaged pupils with support to develop independent life and social skills and continue to ensure that high-quality work experience, careers guidance and further and higher education guidance is available to all.

Our students who are looked after (CLA) have termly PEP meetings, enabling professionals to come together in planning support needs and resources that will be best placed to help them achieve and develop.

The funding has enabled us to close gaps in attainment in core subjects, as well as supporting our CLA students in developing their personal skills and independence, overcoming their

barriers to effectively learning. This could be through therapeutic approaches, sensory regulation resources and learning packages designed to engage those who struggle to focus.

Current data shows that students in receipt of PPG are either achieving or exceeding their current targets. This has been supported by the personalised resources we have been able to provide our students through PPG and by the team around the child working closely together. Our strategy is 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 skills and experience they require to be prepared for adulthood.

We recognise that our students may face several barriers to their learning, and we pride ourselves on using PPG funding in innovative ways to support our students and their families. PPG enables us to minimise the impact of, or potentially even eliminate some of the barriers to learning our students may face. We hold high expectations for all our students and aspire to do all we can to ensure those most in need, receive the levels of support they deserve, in order to progress academically, socially and work towards a more independent future.

St Piers aims to focus on these areas to ensure our students have a wide variety of experiences and opportunities to help them grow and develop their skills. Staff at all levels of St Piers are dedicated to ensuring PPG funding is spent with maximum impact on the progress and personal development of our students.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Complex educational, medical and behavioural needs of students that impact on attainment and progress. Internal and external assessments show that disadvantaged pupils generally make less progress from their starting points when entering the school. Whilst the types of barriers to learning and the difficulties disadvantaged pupils experience vary, their overall academic progress tends to be lower in most subjects compared to non-disadvantaged pupils. This trend is most recognisable in maths outcomes.

2	Social, Emotional and Behavioural (mental health) barriers to progress and attendance Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families demonstrate that the education, wellbeing and wider aspects of development of many of our disadvantaged pupils have been affected by the impact of the partial school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to a greater extent than for other pupils. These findings are backed up by several national studies. St Piers has seen an increase in students developing mental health issues following the pandemic and younger students who are just starting school are demonstrating far more behaviours, due to a lack of social understanding and opportunity in their formative years.
3	Communication Difficulties i.e., pupils who are non-verbal, those with limited language and pupils with social communication difficulties. Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils show that disadvantaged pupils generally have greater challenges around communicating and expressing their needs than their peers, including non-verbal, limited language and social interaction difficulties. St Piers aims to further develop the work done around communication and interaction, supported by speech and language therapists
4	Parental engagement – Given the change in the cohort of the school (moving from 80% residential to 80% day student over the past year), school have identified the need for better parental engagement, especially for families/carers where additional support is in place. All CLA students at St Piers are in a care provision but spend time with their families at home. School recognises the potential impact of this and works with our CLA students to ensure their mental health and wellbeing needs are being met, alongside their academic progress.

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
Pupils make expected or better progress in their reading and literacy targets with the use of Lexia software.	Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium make accelerated progress by the end of the year assessments so that they reach or exceed their literacy and reading targets by the end of the strategy in 2026/27.

Pupils make expected or better progress in their Maths and early numeracy targets through targeted teacher development opportunities	Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium make accelerated progress by the end of the year assessments so that they reach or exceed their Maths and early numeracy targets by the end of the strategy in 2026/27.
Reduction in social, emotional and behavioural (mental health) barriers to progress.	Pupils equipped with the strategies to support themselves in managing challenging situations. Providing necessary sensory and calming resources to those students who need them in order to self-regulate. Through professional development and training, teaching staff further develop their understanding and skills to support these additional needs. The implementation of the THRIVE approach across the school over the academic year will enhance the strategies in place to support all students. Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium reach or exceed their termly ECHP small steps/Annual goals and end of year targets by the end of the strategy in 2026/27.
Pupils to make expected or better progress in communication and social interaction.	Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium make accelerated progress by the end of the year in their specific expressive and receptive communication targets and therefore reach or exceed their end of key stage targets. Support from speech and language therapy and purchasing of new technology and communication devices is part of the school development plan.
Student's learning is not impacted due to financial disadvantage	By the end of 2026/27 Students receiving PPG will have learning opportunities enriched through visits to the community, working with other professionals as part of a multidisciplinary team and further access to home learning opportunities. STEM activities will be funded for PPG students to ensure they have access to enrichment visits as well as work experience as part of their preparation for adulthood programmes.

Activity 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.

Expected budgeted for year: £30,000 (approx.)

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £12,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
The THRIVE approach, including staff training Whole school training 3 x practitioner training 2 x leading mentally healthy schools training	The Thrive Approach has proven to be highly beneficial in special schools across the UK. By embedding Thrive, schools can create a supportive environment where children feel safe and engaged. This approach helps address the unique needs of students with learning difficulties, autism, and complex needs by providing targeted strategies and interventions. THRIVE's trauma-informed methodology focuses on improving mental health and wellbeing, which is crucial for students who may have had negative educational experiences in the past. Schools that have implemented Thrive report significant improvements in social engagement, emotional regulation, and overall learning outcomes. For example, Leeds' Elland Academy saw an 80% reduction in exclusions and increased attendance after adopting Thrive. Overall, Thrive helps special schools foster a nurturing environment that supports both academic and personal growth, making it an invaluable tool for educators and students alike. Research behind Thrive The Thrive Approach	1, 2, 3
Makaton training	Makaton training offers significant benefits in special schools across the UK by enhancing communication for students	1, 2, 3

15 staff across the year	with learning and communication difficulties. This language programme uses signs, symbols, and speech to provide multiple ways for students to express themselves, which can reduce frustration and build confidence. Makaton supports the development of essential language skills, enabling students to better understand and be understood by others. It also fosters social interaction and inclusion, as both students and staff can communicate more effectively. By integrating Makaton, special schools create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, helping students to thrive academically and socially. The benefits of Makaton for children with disabilities The Children's Trust (thechildrenstrust.org.uk)	
First News Subscription	First News newspapers provide age-appropriate reading material to engage our students in further engaging with reading in order to develop their skills. The newspapers provide a beneficial resource which has shown to be enjoyable to our students. Government guidance suggests that an enjoyment of reading helps students to become better and more confident readers. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284286/reading_for_pleasure.pdf	1, 2, 3
Twinkl phonics subscription	DfE validated, Twinkl phonics is the reading scheme used in the school. School subscribe to Twinkl to access the phonics programme, used across school. Twinkl also provide a number of other resources and training opportunities to continue to support staff in furthering their knowledge and understanding of teaching fundamental areas of the curriculum. CPD for all staff provided by Twinkl to ensure teaching staff are competent and confident in the correct delivery of phonics to our learners. https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/twinkl-phonics/level-2-twinkl-phonics	1, 2, 3, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £8000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
LEXIA reading intervention Software	Lexia is a widely used literacy software in the UK, especially beneficial in special schools. Here are some key benefits: Personalized Learning: Lexia provides tailored instruction that adapts to each student's individual needs, making it particularly effective for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Engagement and Motivation: The program includes age-appropriate content and graphics that engage students and keep them motivated to learn. Independent Learning: Lexia promotes independent learning by providing instant feedback and allowing students to progress at their own pace. Support for Teachers: It frees up teachers' time by providing detailed reports on student progress, which helps in planning and delivering targeted instruction. Proven Effectiveness: Research, including studies by the Education Endowment Foundation, has shown that Lexia can significantly improve literacy skills, particularly for disadvantaged students. Accessibility: The program can be accessed from home, ensuring continuous learning outside the classroom.	1, 2, 3, 4
STEM and Enrichment Day activities	STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and enrichment activities offer numerous benefits for students in special schools in the UK. Here are some key advantages:	1, 2, 3, 4

	1. Enhanced Engagement: STEM activities are often hands-on and interactive, which can be particularly engaging for students with special educational needs. This helps in maintaining their interest and motivation. 2. Skill Development: These activities promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. They also help in developing fine motor skills and cognitive abilities. 3. Inclusivity: STEM activities can be adapted to meet the diverse needs of students, ensuring that everyone can participate and benefit. This inclusivity fosters a sense of belonging and boosts self-esteem. 4. Real-World Applications: STEM education connects learning to real-world scenarios, making it easier for students to understand and relate to the material. This practical approach can be particularly beneficial for students with learning difficulties. 5. Social Skills: Enrichment activities often involve group work and collaboration, helping students develop social skills and learn to work as part of a team. 6. Future Opportunities: Exposure to STEM subjects can open up future educational and career opportunities for students, providing them with a strong foundation in essential skills. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/635002/Extended_Activity_Provision_in_Secondary_Schools.pdf	
Grid 3 player	The Grid 3 software, developed by Smartbox, is a powerful tool used in special schools across the UK to support students with communication difficulties. Here are some key benefits: 1. Enhanced Communication: Grid 3 provides a range of symbol and text-based vocabularies, enabling students with speech and language difficulties to communicate more effectively. 2. Independence: The software includes features for environmental control, allowing students to	1, 2, 3

	operate devices and technology around them, fostering greater independence. 3. Customizable Access Methods: Grid 3 supports various access methods such as eye gaze, touchscreens, and switches, making it adaptable to the specific needs of each student. 4. Engagement and Motivation: The interactive and user-friendly interface helps keep students engaged and motivated to use the software regularly. 5. Support for Learning: By facilitating better communication, Grid 3 helps improve overall learning outcomes and social interactions for students with special educational needs. Assistive technology: we review communication software Grid (disabilityhorizons.com)	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £10,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Sensory and self-regulation equipment	Sensory equipment has been shown to benefit learning with SEN and sensory processing needs in their learning and day to day lives. https://tlcpediatrictherapy.com/posts/therapy/how-sensory-toys-help-children-with-special-needs/ Our own experience as a school and in working alongside therapy teams has shown that sensory items can benefit many of our students to self-regulate and be in a calm from of mind, enabling them to be more effective learners.	1, 2, 4
Laptops or iPads to support learning in class as well as home learning for those who need access	Research has shown that children with SEN benefit from the use of technology to aide their learning and can be an engaging tool to help students remain focussed on their activities. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/digital	1, 2, 4

Alternative communication devices	Alternative communication devices, also known as Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices, offer numerous benefits in special schools in the UK. Here are some key advantages: 1. Enhanced Communication: AAC devices provide students with additional ways to express themselves, especially those with speech impairments or non-verbal communication needs. 2. Increased Participation: These devices enable students to engage more actively in classroom activities and social interactions, fostering a more inclusive environment. 3. Reduced Frustration: By offering alternative means to communicate, AAC devices can significantly reduce the frustration and anxiety that students might feel when they are unable to express their needs or thoughts. 4. Personalized Learning: AAC devices can be tailored to meet the individual needs of each student, making learning more accessible and effective. 5. Boosted Confidence: As students become more capable of expressing themselves, their confidence and self-esteem often improve, leading to better overall emotional well-being. 6. Support for Diverse Needs: AAC devices are versatile and can be used by students with a variety of conditions, including autism, cerebral palsy, and learning disabilities. Assistive technology: we review communication software Grid (disabilityhorizons.com)	1, 2, 3, 4
Zones of regulation resources	Zones of Regulation is a widely adopted framework in special schools in the UK for several compelling reasons: 1. Improves Emotional Awareness: The Zones of Regulation helps students identify and understand their emotions by categorizing them into four color-coded zones (blue, green, yellow, and red). This makes it easier for students to recognize their feelings and communicate them effectively. 2. Enhances Self-Regulation Skills: By teaching students' strategies to manage their emotions and behaviours, the	1, 2, 3, 4

	framework supports the development of self-regulation skills. This is crucial for students with special educational needs, as it helps them maintain focus and control in various situations. 3. Promotes a Positive Learning Environment: Implementing the Zones of Regulation can lead to a more positive and productive classroom atmosphere. Students learn to manage their emotions, which reduces disruptive behaviours and enhances overall classroom harmony. Supports Social-Emotional Learning: The framework integrates social-emotional learning by encouraging students to understand and manage their emotions, set positive goals, show empathy for others, and maintain positive relationships. Customisable and Inclusive: The Zones of Regulation can be tailored to meet the individual needs of each student, making it an inclusive tool that supports diverse learning and emotional needs. These benefits make the Zones of Regulation a valuable tool in special education settings, helping students develop essential life skills in a supportive and structured environment. Zones of Regulation - Teaching Autism	
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Total budgeted cost: £ 30,000 (approx.)

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

Data comparison and analysis

This above data details the impact that our pupil premium activities had for our pupils in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Each chart represents a key stage area in either My Communication, My Maths or My Personal Development, with a comparison against those that are not in the PPG category.

As you can see in all but one case, the PPG students have either met or exceeded their targets, indicated by the pink lines. The one student who have not yet fully achieved all targets are already having further input to support them this year.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Therapeutic Horse Riding	Riding for the disabled (RDA)
Introduction to further education programme	Crawley College

Further Information

Over the academic year 2023-2024, recovery funding was used to support students from low-income families who did not have the resources needed to access home learning effectively. Laptops and office packages were purchased to allow students to access the internet and home learning set by the class teacher while not in school along with work packs that were sent home to use and resources purchased for classrooms to enable catch up on return to class.

This has enabled many of our students to continue to access appropriate learning and make progress towards their targets. It has also provided many of our students with the opportunity to remain in touch with friends and staff at school, so they felt less isolated and continued to feel part of our school community.

The addition of class dojo has supported the school to enhance communication with parents, ensuring they are informed of what is happening at school, as well as building on the school/family community and relationships.