

Pupil premium strategy statement – Cedars Short Stay School

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	61
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	48%
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)	2023-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Lee McCartney, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Lee McCartney, Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Phill Evans, Chair of Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£31,110
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£31,110
<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>	

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. Whilst socio-economic disadvantage is not always the primary challenge our pupils face, there is some variance in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school when compared to their peers, particularly in terms of attendance and aspirations.

At the heart of our approach is high-quality teaching focused on helping all pupils to access a bespoke curriculum that balances academic qualifications with practical based subjects, together with enrichment activities to build confidence, as well as developing social and life skills. In addition, targeted support based on diagnostic assessment, will focus on the needs of disadvantaged pupils. 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.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The predominate challenge faced by pupils at CEDARS is their lack of engagement and aspirations. All pupils on roll have been permanently excluded from mainstream secondary schools. Data from Staffordshire County Council indicates that the main reason for permanent exclusion in the Newcastle District in 2024-25 was persistent disruptive behaviour and pupils often present as disengaged and disillusioned with school in general when joining CEDARS.
2	Poor literacy – 52.1% of all pupils on roll have a reading age below their chronological age, with 29.2% of pupils having a reading age at least 24 months below their chronological age. Disadvantaged pupils were slightly more likely to have a reading age significantly below their chronological age, 28.6%, compared to 27.8% for other pupils (based on baseline assessments completed at induction to CEDARS). Disadvantaged pupils were more likely to have difficulty with reading comprehension, with 32.1% of disadvantaged pupils having a reading comprehension age of more than 24 months below their chronological age, compared to 22.2% of other pupils.
3	Learning gaps increase due to poor attendance. In 2024-25, there were 87.5% of pupils on roll with persistent absence. Of these, 48.4% were disadvantaged pupils, compared to 39.1% of other pupils.
4	Underlying undiagnosed mental health and/or learning difficulties affect pupils' ability to effectively engage in learning.

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
To provide a stable and appropriate educational placement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils	Return to mainstream or specialist placement Increase in wanted behaviours Reduction in unwanted behaviours Improved pupil confidence Complete the renovation of the therapy / counselling room
Improved literacy with a clear strategy to improve the reading culture at CEDARS	Create a reading focus group to lead on literacy Strong reading culture across the curriculum promoting improved accessibility to texts Design and create an inspirational reading / literacy space with a wider range of texts / larger library Commence the search for a suitable reading platform Reading ages will increase
Achieve and sustain improved attendance	Attendance increases from baseline indicators e.g. attendance data from previous school
Narrowed learning gaps	From baseline indicators Improved engagement Improved pupil resilience and increase in wanted behaviours around the centre An increase in engagement in the enrichment curriculum

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: £ 8699

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continued development of the reading culture at CEDARS, developing clear strategy and reading opportunities across the curriculum	Wide ranging research linked to learning / outcomes & literacy. <u>Research reports National Literacy Trust</u>	2, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £ 17,336

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Improve pupil confidence and developing self-regulation techniques through offering a confidential counselling service to all vulnerable pupils	Increase of mental health concerns across vulnerable pupils.	1, 3, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £ £5,065

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Further development and implementation of the enrichment curriculum	Based on the context of the PRU and the demographic of our pupils, there is a need to develop life skills and achieve additional certification in addition to academic qualifications.	1, 4

Total budgeted cost: £ 31,100

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the educational performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year. The data demonstrated that of the 5 disadvantaged pupils in year 11 in 2024-25, all achieved at least one qualification, including at least one GCSE and/or Functional Skills English and/or Maths at Grade 1, Grade 2 or Level 1 Pass. All disadvantaged pupils secured a post-16 placement for September 2025. 60% of disadvantaged pupils achieved grades in four or more qualifications, as opposed to 36% of other pupils. All disadvantaged pupils were persistently absent in the last academic year, and work is ongoing to improve attendance for all pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, as we recognise the impact that poor attendance has on pupil outcomes. However, we also note that pupils included in the performance data will have experienced some disruption to their education due to Covid-19 earlier in their schooling, and for many pupils, attendance and engagement in education since this disruption has remained poor, including in mainstream settings prior to joining CEDARS.

Based on all the information above, we are at present on course to achieve the outcomes we set out for improving literacy by 2025/26, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above. A reading focus group was established in 2024-25 to drive an improvement in literacy across the school, which has seen the addition of a timetabled weekly reading lesson for all Key Stage 3 pupils and a focus on literacy in Schemes of Work, embedding subject-specific tier 3 vocabulary. The Reading Café was completed in December 2024 to create an inspirational library and workspace for literacy, with additional books kindly donated by the local Rotary Club. The Staffordshire County Council Educational Psychology Literacy Approach to Phonics (EPATT) intervention has also shown improvements in reading accuracy and fluency for individual pupils with reading ages significantly below age-related expectations, including disadvantaged pupils.

Work continues towards the intended outcomes for providing a stable and appropriate educational placement, improving attendance and narrowing learning gaps, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. The renovation of the therapy/counselling room was completed in 2023-24 to create a sensory room and improvements have been made this academic year to further enhance the space, creating an environment where pupils feel more relaxed, and in which the introduction of the school comfort dog to counselling sessions has helped pupils to talk more openly with the counsellor. In addition, another dog has been added to facilitate the outdoor intervention sessions.

Attendance data is monitored and analysed regularly, and work is ongoing to improve attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils. Our evaluation of the enrichment curriculum and the approaches delivered in the last academic year to support engagement and build pupil confidence indicated that only a small number of pupils benefited from the weekly enrichment activities. Work is ongoing to improve the enrichment offer for all pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, by timetabling daily enrichment sessions for all pupils, as well as half-termly rewards trips.

Further information

The aim of CEDARS is to return pupils to a mainstream setting as soon as they are ready, or to implement a graduated approach with a view to an EHC Needs Assessment. Therefore, not all disadvantaged pupils remain at CEDARS and in addition, CEDARS does not always receive the Pupil Premium funding for pupils who have been permanently excluded, due to the nature of the 6th day provision. This can make financial planning for Pupil Premium challenging.