

# Yewtree Pupil Premium Strategy Statement



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	Yewtree Primary School
Number of pupils in school	313
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	144 pupils – 46%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	23/24, 24/25, 25/26
Date this statement was published	Autumn 25
Date on which it will be reviewed	Autumn 26
Statement authorised by	Karen Yilmaz Headteacher
Pupil premium leads	Karen Yilmaz (Headteacher) and Pascie King-Bushell (SENDCo)
Governor / Trustee lead	Dawn Helfgott

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£210,585
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£210,585

# Yewtree Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

## Statement of intent

At Yewtree Primary School, it is our intention that all pupils—regardless of their background or the challenges they may face—make strong and sustained progress throughout our curriculum. Guided by our school values of Trust, Hardworking, Resilience, Independence, Valued, and Equality, we are committed to supporting the whole child so that every pupil can thrive. This includes promoting good attendance, positive behaviour, strong mental health, and broad access to enrichment opportunities, recognising that each of these factors contributes significantly to educational outcomes.

Our Pupil Premium Strategy focuses on ensuring disadvantaged pupils receive the support they need to achieve highly. While the strategy prioritises those eligible for Pupil Premium, the approaches outlined will benefit all pupils across the school. We also consider the needs of pupils facing multiple challenges, including those with social workers and young carers.

At the heart of our approach is high-quality first teaching, underpinned by targeted staff professional development and a well-sequenced, ambitious curriculum. Research consistently shows that this is the most effective way to close the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils, while also raising outcomes for every learner at Yewtree.

Our strategy is closely aligned with the school's wider improvement plans. We focus on early identification of learning gaps and timely intervention to ensure that pupils can both catch up and keep up, including those who are not disadvantaged and those already achieving at a high level.

We adopt a responsive approach that is informed by robust diagnostic assessment, classroom observations, and professional dialogue. This ensures that provision addresses real needs rather than assumptions about disadvantage.

Our motto, "Choosing to learn, growing success," reflects our belief that all pupils should have the opportunity to become confident, independent, lifelong learners—regardless of their starting points or prior attainment.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Current observations and assessments show that many of our disadvantaged pupils have underdeveloped oral language skills and significant vocabulary gaps. This trend is evident across the school and is having a detrimental impact on learning and progress in all areas of the curriculum. This is reflected in the 2024–25 EYFS cohort, where only 40% of pupils achieved the expected standard in communication and language, with disadvantaged pupils performing lower still at 33%
2	Data and assessments indicate that disadvantaged pupils often experience greater difficulties with phonics and early reading compared to their peers, which negatively impacts their overall reading development. This trend is evident in the 2024–25 EYFS cohort, where only 29.6% of pupils achieved the expected standard in communication and language, with disadvantaged pupils performing significantly lower at 17%. This pattern continues into Key Stage 1, where Year 1 phonics screening outcomes show that only 62% of pupils met the expected standard, with disadvantaged pupils achieving just 38.1%
3	Internal and external assessments show that attainment in Maths and English for disadvantaged pupils remains significantly below that of their non-disadvantaged peers. Year 6 outcomes have been below the national average for several consecutive years, and disadvantaged pupils are not achieving the expected combined attainment measure.
4	Observations, discussions with staff and families, and wider pastoral information indicate that disadvantaged pupils frequently have fewer opportunities to develop key life skills and participate in enrichment activities outside school. This lack of exposure contributes to lower engagement levels, reduced cultural capital, and limited readiness to access the full curriculum.
5	Through sustained engagement with numerous families, it has become evident that the cost-of-living crisis has had a substantial impact on home learning environments and has contributed to increasingly complex family circumstances alongside associated behavioural, health and mental wellbeing challenges
6	Attendance data shows that disadvantaged pupils have persistently lower attendance rates than their peers, which is negatively affecting their ability to make expected progress across the curriculum. Over the past three years, attendance for disadvantaged pupils has remained approximately 2–3% lower than that of non-disadvantaged pupils

## 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
Developed oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils	Assessments and observations indicate improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including lesson visits, book looks and ongoing formative assessment.
Improved phonics and early reading skills amongst disadvantaged pupils	KS1 phonic outcomes improved so that more disadvantaged pupils are reaching the expected standard in line with National data. Pupils will know and remember more phonic sounds.
Improve reading attainment across the school particularly among disadvantaged pupils at the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2	Reading outcomes at the end of each phase show an increasing proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected curriculum and national standards
Improve Maths attainment across the school particularly among disadvantaged pupils at the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2	Maths outcomes at the end of each phase show an increasing proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected curriculum and national standards
Opportunities for life skills to be taught and life experiences built into the school curriculum. All pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils will have access to extra-curricular enrichment opportunities outside of the curriculum.	The school curriculum will build in opportunities for life skills and experiences. Data will show that disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged are accessing our extra-curricular opportunities.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils. To support parent knowledge	Sustained levels of wellbeing demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations</li> <li>• Engagement during lesson visits</li> <li>• Data will show increasing engagement from parents during parental surveys, curriculum workshops and parents evenings.</li> </ul>
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, especially our disadvantaged pupils.	The overall absence rate for all pupils will be no more than 5%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged peers and their non-disadvantaged peers will be reduced. The percentage of pupils whom are persistently absent will be reduced.

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: £ 100.585

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Continued Investment into our chosen DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme (Read, Write Inc) so the scheme is fully implemented as intended</p> <p>Fund ongoing teacher training via the online portal.</p> <p>Invest in RWI development day.</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils:</p> <p><a href="#">Phonics   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a></p>	2
<p>Investment in HFL advisors for EYFS and partaking of the GLD attainment program to increase good level of development in EYFS</p> <p>Investing in HFL Writing program and resource books for EYFS</p>	<p>Children’s early literacy is dependent on their oral language skills. The EEF’s Early Years Toolkit estimates that children who take part in early literacy approaches make, on average, four months’ additional progress.</p>	1,2,3
<p>Investment of HFL advisors on the Y6 attainment program</p> <p>Release time for teaching staff</p> <p>Data driven decision-making</p>	<p>Evidence-based approaches to improving foundational skills (reading, writing, and mathematics) for Year 6 pupils focus on targeted intervention, high-quality teaching, and addressing the widening attainment gap, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	3
<p>Focus teacher and staff training on specific needs in order to ensure quality first teaching in core subjects with appropriate scaffolding and challenge for all.</p>	<p>First quality teaching and data driven decision making support improving attainment, identifying gaps and adjusting teaching.</p> <p><a href="#">Maths guidance KS 1 and 2.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p>	3

<p>Investment in English, Maths HFL advisors</p> <p>Development of reading fluency assessments and comprehension strategies to improve reading</p>	<p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk">Improving Mathematics in the Early Years and Key Stage 1   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1</a></p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2</a></p>	
<p>Develop character related approaches (behaviours for learning) through school's values (THRIVE), Jigsaw PSHE program, developing aspirations and developing 'growth' mindsets</p> <p>Continue to invest in Commando Jo program (1 day per week) to work with specific groups and whole classes on value education</p>	<p>Evidence in the EEF's literature review on non-cognitive suggest that character-related approaches can be most effective for improving attainment when they are specifically linked to learning.</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/non-cognitive-skills-literature-review-1.pdf">Non-cognitive skills literature review 1.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</a></p>	4,5
<p>Recruitment of an afternoon teaching assistant for EAL support (new to English) across the school.</p> <p>Training in Racing to English</p>	<p>Development of understanding of the English language in order for all pupils, including EAL/disadvantaged to make progress throughout the curriculum.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/resources/resource-filter/evidence-and-policy">https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/resources/resource-filter/evidence-and-policy</a></p>	1,2,3,
<p>Investment in HFL SEND Advisor</p> <p>Training in ordinarily available provision, scaffolding, targeted interventions, differentiation, colourful semantics, ALD communication boards etc to support learning.</p>	<p>An inclusive school removes barriers to learning and participation, provides an education that is appropriate to pupils' needs, and promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential for all pupils</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send</a></p>	1,2,3

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

Budgeted cost: £67,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Buying in to Safe Space counselling service to target specific children with mental wellbeing concerns.</p> <p>2 counsellors a week (10 sessions weekly)</p> <p>Investing in DESTY (emotional literacy program) training and Drawing and Talking training for 3 teaching assistants</p>	<p>There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers):</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/EEF-Social-and-Emotional-Learning.pdf">EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p>	4
<p>Use of WellComm to assess and identify speech and language gaps.</p> <p>Speech and Language training for specific members of staff to deliver small group of 1:1 support.</p>	<p>Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment:</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/oral-language-interventions">Oral language interventions   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p>	1
<p>Additional phonics sessions targeted at pupils falling behind, especially disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Assess phonics and implement intervention across Y3 and those falling behind or new to the school in line with RWI program</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks:</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/phonics-toolkit-strand">Phonics   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a></p>	2
<p>Targeted one to one and group interventions/sessions led by teachers and</p>	<p>Evidence has shown that targeted interventions led by the class teacher have maximum impact as they allow flexibility to adapt to changing needs of pupils in the class and ensure that learning during interventions is consolidated within the whole</p>	1,2,3,5

<p>Teaching assistants, including one to one reading, Y6 foundational skills, SPLD,</p> <p>Use of reading mentors across school (iCane Foundation)</p>	<p>class teaching. Small group interventions can provide ‘an average impact of four months additional progress over the course of a year.</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition?utm_source=/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition&amp;utm_medium=search&amp;utm_campaign=site_search&amp;search_term=small%20g">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition?utm_source=/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition&amp;utm_medium=search&amp;utm_campaign=site_search&amp;search_term=small%20g</a></p>	
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## Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £43,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Monitor attendance and punctuality by embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE’s <a href="#">Improving School Attendance</a> advice to increase attendance</p> <p>Liaise with school Attendance officer.</p> <p>Use banding and attendance data to support decision making.</p>	<p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.</p>	6
<p>To ensure disadvantaged pupils have access to school trips, after school clubs, breakfast club, swimming etc.</p> <p>Monitor attendance at extra curricular clubs and offer support where required,</p>	<p>Evidence shows that developing disadvantaged pupils wellbeing and relationships supports academic learning</p> <p>“Addressing Educational Advanatge – the Essex way” – Edited by Marc Rowland</p>	4
<p>Continue to invest in the Herts therapeutic thinking program to support good learning behaviours.</p>	<p>Evidence shows that positive behaviours impact on learning attainment.</p>	All

<p>Continue to develop behaviour and emotional literacy curriculum.</p> <p>HFL Advisor to support – training on difficult conversations.</p> <p>Continue to invest in the OPAL Play project, including staff training to limit behavioural incidents at lunchtimes.</p> <p>Develop SEMH provision to support pupils with regulation strategies – Regulation Den, restorative conversations, reflection tables.</p>	<p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions</a></p>	
<p>Continue to implement the National Breakfast program across school to ensure that all pupils are having an adequate morning meal</p>	<p>Previous EEF impact evaluation found that offering pupils in primary schools a free and nutritious meal before school can boost their reading, writing, and maths attainment by an average of two months' additional progress in Key Stage 1.</p> <p><a href="#">EEF National Breakfast Program Project</a></p>	<p>5</p>

## Part B: Review of 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.

This report evaluates the impact of Pupil Premium (PP) spending over the academic year, focusing on targeted support for phonics, attendance, behaviour and regulation, SEND, pastoral interventions, and wider curriculum programmes such as Commando Joe. While clear gains have been made in several priority areas, disadvantaged pupils—particularly those with SEND—continue to face significant barriers to learning.

#### Phonics Outcomes

A key focus of Pupil Premium investment this year was strengthening early reading through enhanced phonics support in Year 1.

- Year 1 Phonics Screening Check outcomes increased from 51% to 62%.
- This reflects sustained and targeted intervention, staff training, and structured catch-up programmes.
- Despite overall improvement, disadvantaged pupils continue to perform significantly below their peers, indicating that gaps remain and require continued intensive support next year.

Impact:

Improved attainment for the whole cohort, stronger foundations for reading, and clearer early identification of disadvantaged pupils needing additional targeted intervention.

#### Attendance and Persistent Absence

Attendance has been another major area of Pupil Premium focus.

- Whole-school attendance increased by 1%, rising to 91.2%.
- Persistent absenteeism decreased by almost 5%, demonstrating the effectiveness of pastoral support, family engagement strategies, and targeted attendance plans.

Impact:

Improved consistency of learning for many pupils, especially those previously at risk of disengagement. Sustained work with families and pastoral workers has contributed significantly to these improvements.

#### Behaviour, Regulation and SEND

The school implemented targeted behaviour and regulation strategies as part of Pupil Premium provision.

- Overall number of dysregulated pupils has decreased, reflecting effective use of nurture support, behaviour mentoring, and environmental adaptations.
- However, disadvantaged pupils with SEND continue to struggle with regulation and academic progress due to multiple and complex barriers.

Impact:

Positive improvements in readiness to learn for many pupils, though the subgroup of PP + SEND remains a priority area requiring more specialised intervention and provision.

### **Pastoral Support and Wellbeing**

Pastoral interventions have been a significant strength of Pupil Premium spending this year.

- Children accessing pastoral programmes showed improved attendance, greater emotional resilience, and better engagement in learning.
- Pastoral support also contributed to improved attainment for several pupils by removing barriers linked to wellbeing, anxiety, and home-based challenges.

Impact:

Strong evidence that emotional and pastoral support is directly contributing to better academic and behavioural outcomes for Pupil Premium pupils.

### **Commando Joe Programme**

The Commando Joe curriculum has continued to be a highly effective part of character education.

- Pupils demonstrated increased independence, problem-solving, resilience, communication, and teamwork.
- This programme has supported disadvantaged pupils in particular by providing structured opportunities to develop essential learning behaviours.

Impact:

Enhanced personal development for targeted pupils, contributing to wider cultural improvements in resilience and aspiration.

### **Year 6 Outcomes**

End-of-Key-Stage 2 data was impacted by significant contextual factors.

- Year 6 outcomes were significantly below national averages, largely due to high mobility, a high proportion of pupils with SEND, and a large percentage of disadvantaged pupils.
- Despite this, targeted PP interventions helped several pupils make individual progress from their starting points.

Impact:

While attainment remains below national averages, contextual challenges were considerable, and ongoing Pupil Premium strategies will aim to improve progress measures in future cohorts.

### **Conclusion**

Pupil Premium spending this year has led to clear improvements in phonics outcomes, attendance, pastoral strength, and personal development skills. While progress has been made, significant challenges remain, particularly in closing the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils—especially those with SEND.

The school's next steps will focus on:

- Further strengthening early reading and targeted interventions.
- Deepening support for PP + SEND pupils through personalised and specialist provision.
- Continuing to refine attendance strategies to maintain positive upward trends.
- Expanding pastoral and emotional wellbeing programmes that continue to demonstrate high impact.

## Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Therapeutic thinking training	Therapeutic thinking approach Hertfordshire
Read Write Inc	Ruth Miskin
Times Table Rockstars	3P Learning
National Breakfast Scheme	Family Action
Herts Music Service	Herts Music Service
Dacorum Sports Network	Dacorum
Commando Jo	Commando Jo
HFL	Herts for Learning
MFL Programme	Language Angels
Lexia (Reading)	Lexia Learning
Oxford Owl Online Books	Oxford Owl