

Pupil premium strategy statement – Buxton Community 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 | 962 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 25.7% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers | 2025-2028 |
| Date this statement was published | 31 December 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | 31 December 2026 |
| Statement authorised by | Mrs S Jones (Headteacher) |
| Pupil premium lead | Mrs A Garner (Deputy Headteacher) |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Amanda Johnson and Paul Drummond |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|--|-------------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £263,550.00 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i> | £0 |
| Total budget for this academic year | £263,550.00 |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Buxton Community School is committed to ensuring that all disadvantaged pupils receive an ambitious, inclusive education that enables them to achieve well academically and thrive personally. The school now serves a growing proportion of disadvantaged pupils, with the percentage eligible for FSM6 increasing from 26.7% in 2023/24 to 31% in 2025/26. The school also supports rising numbers of pupils with SEND, EHCPs and wider vulnerability. Prior attainment across cohorts remains broadly in line with national averages. This context shapes the focus of our strategy and confirms the feasibility and importance of securing stronger outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Our school secures strong sustained destinations for all groups: in our most recent data, 99% of leavers achieved a sustained EET destination (DfE measure), including 100% of disadvantaged pupils. This is an improving trend delivered through a deliberate strategy to secure next steps for those who need support the most. This strategy included targeted CEIAG, early risk identification, multiple impartial guidance interviews, provider access, and post-results re-brokering to support every leaver to have a recorded next step tracked to enrolment.

Our approach is deliberately evidence informed, with high-quality teaching at its core. We will strengthen classroom practice through clear instructional routines, adaptive teaching and effective assessment so that disadvantaged pupils access and master the taught curriculum. Improving disciplinary literacy is a strategic priority: reading comprehension and subject-specific vocabulary will be taught explicitly across the curriculum so that pupils can engage with increasingly complex texts and tasks. This work is complemented by targeted academic support where need is greatest, particularly in English and mathematics at Key Stage 4, and in reading at earlier stages, so that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills that unlock success in the wider curriculum.

Attendance, EBSA and inclusion are essential conditions for learning. Building on improvements already made in attendance and persistent absence, we will sustain and refine early-help pathways, clear conduct routines and structured reintegration processes so that disadvantaged pupils attend regularly, feel a strong sense of belonging and experience calm, predictable classrooms that enable them to learn well.

We also recognise that barriers to success extend beyond the classroom. The strategy distinguishes between practical barriers to participation, such as equipment, trips and transport, and the deeper material hardship that affects some families, including access to uniform, food and essentials. Our aim is to ensure that disadvantage does not limit any pupil's opportunity to participate fully in school life or feel ready to learn. Alongside this, we will broaden aspiration and access to opportunity through high-quality careers guidance, provider encounters and enrichment, so that pupils progress to appropriate, sustained post-16 destinations and develop the cultural capital that supports long-term success.

Implementation will be precise and disciplined. Targeted academic support will be informed by diagnostic assessment and reviewed regularly to ensure it is having the desired impact. The strategy is intentionally coherent: each strand contributes directly to our intended outcomes, which include stronger Key Stage 4 attainment, improved reading, higher attendance and reduced persistent absence, improved behaviour and inclusion, increased participation in enrichment, and sustained destinations for disadvantaged pupils.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|---|
| 1 | <p>Lower academic attainment and progress at the end of KS4, particularly in English and Maths</p> <p>Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 are below national averages. In 2024–25, disadvantaged pupils’ Attainment 8 was significantly below national figures, with English and maths outcomes also below national averages. While higher prior attainers perform more strongly, overall progress and attainment gaps remain and require sustained improvement. Assessment on entry indicates that over the last 4 years, 28.3% of our disadvantaged pupils arrive below age-related expectations in Maths, compared to 18.4% of their non-disadvantaged peers, and 26.9% arrive below age-related expectations in Reading, compared to 20.5% of their peers.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Weak literacy and reading comprehension limiting access to the curriculum</p> <p>Assessment information indicates that a proportion of disadvantaged pupils have weaker reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, which restricts access to subject content across the curriculum. Internal literacy assessment and intervention data highlight the need for continued targeted support to ensure pupils can engage fully with increasingly complex texts. Assessment on entry indicates that over the last 4 years, 26.9% of our disadvantaged pupils arrive below age-related expectations in Reading, compared to 20.5% of their peers.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Attendance, persistent absence and emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA)</p> <p>Attendance remains a significant barrier for some disadvantaged pupils. Persistent absence and emotionally based school avoidance reduce access to learning and contribute to underachievement. Internal attendance data and pastoral records indicate that some pupils require bespoke and graduated support to re-engage successfully with school.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Lower aspirations, engagement and access to cultural and enrichment opportunities</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Pupil and parent voice, alongside participation data, indicates that some disadvantaged pupils have lower engagement with enrichment activities, school events and post-16 planning. Limited access to cultural experiences outside school can impact confidence, aspiration and awareness of future pathways, particularly within a context of lower social mobility. |
| 5 | Material deprivation and financial barriers to full participation in school life School-level knowledge and requests for support indicate that some disadvantaged pupils experience financial barriers linked to the cost of living. These include difficulty affording uniform, learning equipment, food, transport and enrichment activities. Such barriers can negatively affect wellbeing, engagement and readiness to learn if not addressed proactively |
| 6 | Complex needs, SEND and social, emotional and mental health difficulties Disadvantaged pupils are more likely to present with additional needs, including SEND and social, emotional and mental health difficulties. These needs can impact attendance, behaviour and learning and often require coordinated pastoral, therapeutic and academic support to ensure pupils remain engaged and able to make 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 |
|---|--|
| Improved academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at the end of Key Stage 4, particularly in English and Maths. | Attainment and progress measures for disadvantaged pupils improve over time, with gaps to national outcomes narrowing. Disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress across KS4, reflected in improved Attainment 8 and English and maths outcomes. |
| Improved literacy and reading comprehension enabling full access to the curriculum. | Reading age and literacy assessment data show sustained improvement for disadvantaged pupils. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils entering KS4 with reading skills that enable them to access subject content independently increases year on year. |
| Improved attendance and reduced persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils, including those with EBSA. | Attendance for disadvantaged pupils continues to improve and persistent absence reduces over time to become in line with national averages and with the attendance gap between disadvantaged |

| | |
|---|---|
| | pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers diminishing. Pupils with emotionally based school avoidance are supported to re-engage successfully with school and increase time spent in education. |
| Improved engagement, behaviour and inclusion for disadvantaged pupils with additional needs. | Behaviour, suspension and engagement data show improving trends for disadvantaged pupils, particularly those with SEND or SEMH needs, supporting more consistent access to learning. |
| Increased aspiration, enrichment participation and preparedness for post-16 and post-18 pathways. | Disadvantaged pupils are represented at least proportionately in enrichment activities and careers programmes. All disadvantaged pupils progress to sustained education, employment or training destinations. |
| Reduced impact of material and financial barriers on disadvantaged pupils' participation and wellbeing. | Financial barriers to participation in school life are reduced. Disadvantaged pupils access uniform, equipment, meals and enrichment as needed, supporting engagement, wellbeing and readiness to learn. |

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: £29,266.00

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| <p>Embedding inclusive teaching through the Core 4 and adaptive teaching</p> <p>Whole-school CPD and coaching on the Core 4 (Cold Calling, Paired Talk, Success Checking, Vocabulary</p> | EEF research identifies high-quality teaching as the most effective lever for improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Structured instruction, modelling, scaffolding and explicit vocabulary teaching have strong evidence of impact on | 1, 2, 3, 6 |

| | | |
|--|--|------------|
| Instruction), SEND “5-a-day”, and adaptive teaching, delivered through TLCs, learning walks and WalkThru coaching. | access to the curriculum (EEF: Improving Literacy, Effective Classroom Strategies; SEND in Mainstream Schools guidance). | |
| <p>Strengthening disciplinary literacy across all subjects</p> <p>Planned curriculum work and CPD on reading comprehension, subject-specific vocabulary, and disciplinary reading strategies.</p> | EEF guidance states that disciplinary literacy is central to improving attainment, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with weaker reading comprehension. Literacy difficulties disproportionately affect access to content in KS3 and KS4. | 1, 2 |
| <p>Curriculum and assessment development to improve clarity, sequencing and progression</p> <p>Ongoing refinement of curriculum plans, lesson sequencing, retrieval practice and formative assessment, informed by line-management dialogue and SLT/MLT QA.</p> | EEF’s “Feedback” and “Metacognition & Self-Regulation” guidance highlights that well-sequenced curricula, clear learning goals, formative assessment and structured practice produce significant gains, especially for disadvantaged pupils. Stronger curriculum sequencing also reduces cognitive load. | 1, 2, 6 |
| <p>Targeted CPD and structured support for teachers delivering Year 11 English and Maths</p> <p>Specialist support including lesson visits, exam-technique walkthroughs, externally marked mocks, and SLT-supported behaviour routines during Year 11 English/Maths. Strengthens classroom delivery and reduces barriers for disadvantaged pupils in core subjects.</p> | EEF evidence shows targeted subject-specific CPD and improved assessment literacy improve GCSE outcomes. High-leverage teaching routines and pre-exam feedback cycles are associated with improved progress for disadvantaged pupils. | 1 |
| <p>Leadership capacity to drive improvement in teaching and inclusion</p> <p>Dedicated senior and middle leader capacity (Deputy Headteacher for Inclusion, Assistant Headteacher for Teaching & Learning, and AHT for Literacy) to lead CPD, monitor impact, coordinate subject support</p> | EEF Pupil Premium guidance emphasises the role of strong leadership in securing teaching quality and ensuring consistent implementation of strategies for disadvantaged pupils. Schools with clearer leadership of PP see greater impact. | 1, 2, 3, 6 |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| and ensure teaching improvements benefit disadvantaged pupils. | | |
|--|--|--|

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

Budgeted cost: £ 167,928.00

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| <p>Small-group tutoring for Year 11 in English and Maths</p> <p>Deploy a specialist tutor in Maths and deliver expert-led English masterclasses to close specific gaps, prioritising disadvantaged pupils identified through mocks and class assessment.</p> | EEF evidence shows that well-targeted small-group tuition delivers up to four months' additional progress, especially when linked to precise gap analysis and regular feedback. | 1 |
| <p>Externally marked mocks + feedback clinics (English & Maths)</p> <p>Run a second set of externally marked mocks, followed by subject-specific feedback clinics and reteach sequences; use question-level analysis to assign pupils to targeted reteach or tutoring. Attendance is monitored and escalated for disadvantaged pupils.</p> | EEF "Feedback" guidance emphasises that precise, timely feedback and structured practice improve outcomes, with disproportionate benefit for disadvantaged pupils. | 1 |
| <p>RAISE case-conferencing and mentoring for identified Y11 pupils</p> <p>Termly RAISE meetings identify pupils (with a focus on disadvantaged and EBSA) for targeted mentoring; mentors set attendance/engagement goals, check coursework completion, and update parents fortnightly.</p> | EEF notes mentoring has positive impact when structured around clear goals, attendance/ engagement, and regular review. | 1, 3, 4 |
| <p>Reading interventions (Reading Plus / Lexonik) delivered by the literacy TA</p> <p>Entry via NGRT/reading age diagnostics; time-limited programmes with explicit exit criteria. Cohorts prioritise</p> | EEF "Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools" highlights disciplinary literacy and structured reading interventions as high impact for pupils with weaker comprehension. | 2 |

| | | |
|--|--|---------|
| disadvantaged pupils below age-related expectations; progress tracked half-termly and reported to subject teams. | | |
| Year 7 early intervention (literacy & numeracy catch-up) Identify disadvantaged pupils below age-related expectations on entry; deliver small-group catch-up focused on decoding, fluency, core number, and independent practice habits, with bridge-to-class coaching. | EEF evidence indicates transition is a key moment to prevent later underachievement; structured catch-up with clear entry/exit criteria and classroom bridging improves access to KS3 curricula. | 1, 2, 6 |
| Heads Up (EBSA) personalised learning programmes Time-limited bespoke timetables combining 1:1 tuition, supported reintegration to core lessons, and therapeutic input. Academic targets are agreed with subject leads; attendance steps (time on site/in class) tracked weekly. | EEF “Improving Behaviour in Schools” and targeted SEMH guidance support tailored packages for pupils with EBSA, integrating academic support and graduated reintegration. | 3, 6 |
| Study Zone (supervised homework & retrieval) Daily access to a staffed, device-enabled study space for disadvantaged pupils to complete homework, retrieval practice and coursework; targeted invites issued following RAISE/QA analysis. | EEF highlights benefits of structured, supervised independent study when linked to classroom demands and retrieval practice. | 1, 2, 5 |

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

Budgeted cost: £82,202.05

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Strengthening attendance systems and leadership Sustaining and refining attendance processes that support disadvantaged pupils, including clear expectations, proactive monitoring, home visits, | DfE’s Working Together to Improve School Attendance highlights the importance of leadership oversight, proactive communication, and early support in improving | 3, 6 |

| | | |
|--|--|---------|
| nudge messaging, and targeted support for pupils with EBSA. Includes leadership capacity through the Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour & Expectations and the Sixth Form Attendance Officer. | attendance for disadvantaged pupils. | |
| Embedding a consistent conduct and behaviour approach to support inclusion Promoting high expectations through “The BCS Way”, consistent routines, restorative approaches, REWIND sessions and visible leadership, ensuring disadvantaged pupils experience calm, predictable classrooms and rapid reintegration where needed. | EEF’s Improving Behaviour in Schools identifies explicit routines, relational practice and structured reflection (e.g., restorative work) as effective approaches for reducing incidents and improving engagement for disadvantaged pupils. | 6 |
| Targeted pastoral leadership and early help support Non-teaching Heads of Pastoral Care provide structured support for disadvantaged pupils through Golden Hour, casework, reintegration planning, early help referrals and direct family communication, reducing barriers related to wellbeing, anxiety and disengagement. | EEF evidence indicates that targeted pastoral support improves attendance, behaviour and engagement by addressing underlying needs for pupils facing multiple barriers. | 3, 6 |
| Removing financial and practical barriers to participation Providing disadvantaged pupils with subsidised or fully funded access to curriculum resources, subject-specific equipment, trips, music tuition, enrichment opportunities and transport to ensure full engagement with school life. | EEF and national research show that disadvantaged pupils benefit disproportionately from equitable access to enrichment and curriculum-related opportunities. Removing practical barriers increases participation, widens horizons and supports aspiration and engagement. | 4, 5 |
| Financial support fund for families Providing targeted hardship support for families, including uniform, food, hygiene items, winter clothing, transport and emergency essentials, to reduce stress associated with | Citizens Advice research indicates that financial hardship affects attendance, wellbeing and engagement in learning. Supporting families with essential costs reduces anxiety and ensures disadvantaged | 5, 3, 6 |

| | | |
|--|---|---------|
| cost-of-living pressures and stabilise pupils' readiness to learn. | pupils can engage consistently and confidently with school. | |
| <p>Breakfast Club to support wellbeing, readiness to learn and attendance</p> <p>Offering free access to breakfast for disadvantaged pupils to support regulation, punctuality, sustained attention and positive engagement with morning learning.</p> | EEF evidence shows breakfast provision improves behaviour, concentration and attendance; government research also links nutrition to improved readiness to learn. | 3, 5, 6 |
| <p>Forest Schools and outdoor learning to support SEMH and engagement</p> <p>Targeted Forest Schools access supports pupils with SEMH needs by developing resilience, emotional regulation, confidence and a sense of belonging, improving engagement with mainstream learning.</p> | Research from Forest Research demonstrates positive impacts on wellbeing and engagement from outdoor learning environments, especially for pupils with SEMH needs. | 3, 4, 6 |
| <p>School-based counselling and therapeutic support</p> <p>Provision of a full-time BACP-registered counsellor and structured therapeutic sessions to address trauma, emotional regulation, anxiety and other SEMH needs for disadvantaged pupils.</p> | DfE and EEF guidance note that targeted SEMH interventions improve attendance, behaviour and engagement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils influenced by trauma or instability. | 6 |

Total budgeted cost: £ 279,396.05

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Buxton Community School serves a community with a growing proportion of disadvantaged pupils, with the percentage of FSM6 pupils increasing from 26.7% in 2023/24 to 29.56% in 2024/25. This rise sits alongside increasing numbers of pupils with SEND, EHCPs and wider vulnerability. Prior attainment across cohorts remains broadly in line with national averages, shaping both the context for outcomes and the focus of this pupil premium strategy.

Attendance improved for all pupils over the last academic year, with overall attendance rising from 91.1% to 91.6%. Persistent absence also reduced, from 24.4% to 22.4%. The most significant improvement was among disadvantaged pupils, whose persistent absence reduced from 48.4% to 38.7%, narrowing the gap relative to national trends. These improvements reflect strengthened attendance systems, early help support, Golden Hour structures and enhanced home–school communication. Behavioural outcomes were mixed. Permanent exclusions remained low and no pupils were placed in off-site alternative provision, but suspension rates remained high, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, and continue to require focused, sustained improvement.

Academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 present a varied picture. Overall Attainment 8 improved for all pupils, rising from 40.4 to 41.6. However, Attainment 8 for disadvantaged pupils declined slightly (29.9 to 29.2), and the gap to national outcomes widened. English and maths outcomes at Grade 4+ remain a key priority for improvement, with performance declining for both the whole cohort and disadvantaged pupils. At the higher Grade 5+ threshold, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils improved modestly, indicating some early positive impact from strengthened teaching and assessment approaches.

There are, however, clear subject-level strengths which inform refinements to the strategy. In Science, outcomes improved for all pupils and disadvantaged pupils at both Grade 4+ and Grade 5+, moving performance closer to national averages. In Languages, disadvantaged pupils made strong gains at Grade 4+, again moving closer to national averages. In Humanities, disadvantaged pupils showed early improvement at Grade 4+, with gaps narrowing year-on-year. EBacc and Open element scores for all pupils also improved modestly. Although some cohorts are small, these subjects demonstrate that refining inclusive teaching approaches, targeting and effective intervention can improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The current strategy builds on this evidence by applying successful teaching and learning practices more consistently, particularly in English and Maths, alongside a sustained focus on literacy.

Published destinations data for recent Year 11 cohorts show a strong improving trend. In 2022, sustained destinations stood at 94% for all pupils and 77% for disadvantaged pupils, indicating a clear area for development. In 2024, outcomes improved substantially, with 96.2% of all pupils and 90.1% of disadvantaged pupils securing sustained destinations. Internal tracking for the 2025 leavers' cohort indicates a further improvement, with 99% of pupils achieving sustained destinations, including 100% of disadvantaged pupils. This significant improvement reflects strengthened CEIAG

provision, increased access to provider encounters, enhanced transition guidance and a more personalised approach to supporting disadvantaged pupils toward aspirational next steps.

Overall, the previous pupil premium strategy has been partially effective. Subject-level gains in Science, Languages and Humanities also show where strengthened teaching, literacy approaches and targeted interventions have begun to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. At the same time, overall attainment for disadvantaged pupils—particularly in English and maths at Grade 4+—remains the most pressing area for improvement, and behaviour and suspension rates require sustained focus.

The refined strategy responds directly to this evaluation. It strengthens the emphasis on high-quality teaching, adaptive practice and disciplinary literacy; introduces more precise targeted support through tutoring, structured feedback cycles and robust reading intervention; consolidates attendance and EBSA pathways; and distinguishes between practical participation barriers and deeper family hardship. These refinements aim to ensure that improvements in attendance, engagement and specific subject areas translate into stronger outcomes for disadvantaged pupils over time.

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 |
|-----------|----------|
| | |
| | |

Further information (optional)

In addition to the activities funded directly through Pupil Premium, the school delivers a wide range of initiatives to support disadvantaged pupils and remove barriers to learning. Teaching Assistants provide targeted in-class support to ensure pupils can access the curriculum effectively. Reading interventions, delivered through The Hub (our library), help improve literacy and comprehension for those who need it most. We operate a policy of positive discrimination for rewards, ensuring that Pupil Premium pupils are recognised and celebrated for their achievements. To promote inclusion and enrichment, disadvantaged pupils are given increased opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities, trips, and leadership roles. We also work to reduce stigma around Pupil Premium by making our breakfast club free for all pupils, fostering a sense of equality and community. These strategies, alongside our commitment to personalised support and parental engagement, contribute to improved attendance, wellbeing, and progress for disadvantaged learners.