

Pupil premium strategy statement – Hilltop School

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

| Detail | Data |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Number of pupils in school | 185 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 45% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended) | 2025-2026 2026-2027 2027-2028 |
| Date this statement was published | December 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | July 2026 |
| Statement authorised by | Sam MacDonald |
| Pupil premium lead | Zara Skidmore |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Paula Williams |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|---|----------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year (Post LAC and service) | £101,890 |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our core values are the make-up of our ethos and culture and what we as adults endeavour to model and instil amongst our children and young people and go hand in hand with our curriculum intent.

Core Values:

- All staff at Hilltop School believe in the importance of **team work** in supporting our young people and each other
- Children and young people at Hilltop School are treated with the utmost **care** and **empathy**
- We strive to enable our pupils to be as **independent** as they possibly can be
- All staff at Hilltop School are **child centred** and treat every child and young person as an individual
- We want every child and young person to feel **valued** and **happy** during their time at Hilltop School.

Our goal is to utilise Pupil Premium funding to provide disadvantaged pupils with the highest quality education, ensuring they achieve academic and social success comparable to their peers. We acknowledge that disadvantaged children face various barriers impacting their learning. Our primary objectives are to:

- Remove barriers to learning caused by disability, poverty, family circumstances, and background.
- Narrow the attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged counterparts both within the school and nationally.
- Ensure pupils can read fluently with good comprehension to access the full curriculum.
- Develop pupils' confidence in their ability to communicate effectively in diverse contexts.
- Support pupils in managing their social and emotional well-being and developing resilience.
- Provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to expand their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Achieving Our Objectives:

To achieve our objectives and overcome identified barriers to learning, we will:

- Provide all teachers with high-quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to ensure pupils receive effective, quality-first teaching.
- Adapted class teaching and support to address identified learning gaps, including small group work and one-on-one tuition.
- Allocate funding to ensure all pupils can participate in trips, residential experiences, and hands-on learning opportunities.
- Create opportunities for all pupils to develop communication skills.
- Offer appropriate nurture support to help pupil wellbeing and access to learning both within and beyond the classroom.

This list is not exhaustive, and our strategies will evolve based on individual needs.

Key Principles:

We will ensure that effective teaching, learning, and assessment meet the needs of all pupils through rigorous data analysis. Class teachers will identify specific interventions and support for individual pupils during pupil progress meetings, which will be reviewed at least termly. In addition to academic support, we will ensure that pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs receive high-quality provision from appropriately trained adults.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|--|
| 1 | Eight percent of Hilltop pupils have Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) as their primary diagnosis. Other pupils have different primary diagnoses, typically ASD, but will either have SLCN as either a secondary need or due to their primary diagnosis. These needs make it challenging for children and young people to communicate with others. The difficulties may include expressing themselves, understanding others, or grasping the social rules of communication. Consequently, these challenges can hinder their ability to access the curriculum, particularly in areas such as Reading/Phonics, Writing, and Mathematics. |
| 2 | A significant proportion of pupils struggle to achieve an optimal sensory balance necessary for effective learning. These complex sensory needs can lead to communication behaviours and difficulties in accessing the curriculum. |
| 3 | Our evaluations reveal that pupils qualifying for the Pupil Premium Grant tend to achieve lower academic results compared to their peers who are not eligible for the grant. This difference can be especially pronounced in reading, writing, mathematics, and phonics. |
| 4 | Thirteen percent of our pupils have PMLD. Expanded Learning Opportunities: From our interactions with pupils and their families, it's clear that disadvantaged pupils typically encounter fewer chances to enrich their cultural understanding beyond the classroom setting. |
| 5 | Many of our pupils face ongoing social, emotional, and mental health challenges related to their primary needs. These issues can be exacerbated during specific phases or due to unforeseen circumstances in their lives. Our communication with families highlights that pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, often contend with anxiety and difficulties in emotional regulation. These factors profoundly affect their ability to engage in learning and achieve academic success. |

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 |
|--|--|
| <p>Speech, Language and Communication Pupils and staff use a range of communication systems to aid their understanding and to develop expressive communication skills.</p> | <p>All disadvantaged pupils have a communication profile that details their method of communication and how to support them. All staff are trained in the use of Makaton. 90% of disadvantaged pupils make progress towards their Communication and Interaction EHCP outcomes.</p> |
| <p>Complex Sensory profiles Pupils and staff know how to meet sensory needs to ensure that pupils are ready to learn and can regulate their emotions.</p> | <p>Pupil and staff access to sensory occupational therapist Access to relevant sensory equipment Detailed sensory profiles for all pupils that require one Reduction in behaviour incidents 90% of Pupil Premium learners make expected progress towards their Physical and Sensory EHCP outcomes.</p> |
| <p>Curriculum Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils in all subjects throughout all curriculum areas</p> | <p>Assessments and pupil progress records indicate that 90% plus of Pupil Premium learners make expected progress in Cognition and Learning EHCP targets</p> |
| <p>Community access Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds develop increased confidence and independence, enabling them to engage more actively within the broader community and better prepare for adulthood.</p> | <p>Pupil Premium learners have increased access and engagement with the community and increase their cultural capital as measured by their participation in the Children's University activities.</p> |
| <p>Social, emotional, and mental health Pupils and their families will receive timely and tailored proactive support from dedicated professionals, ensuring their holistic development and well-being are effectively nurtured and sustained.</p> | <p>Reduction in behaviour incidents. A significant increase in engagement, learning and participation, particularly amongst disadvantaged pupils. Sustained high level of wellbeing are demonstrated by qualitative data from pupil voice, pupil and parent surveys and teacher observations.</p> |

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: £101,890

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <p>Grid3 to support the introduction and sustainability of the communication strategy – approximately £12,000</p> <p>Purchase 40 ipads to support the above. - £13,300</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total £25,300</p> | <p>Speech, Language and communication are a key area for delivery alongside the Hilltop curriculum.</p> <p>Grid3 has been identified through research and training as an appropriate programme to roll out across school. To ensure this happens successfully we need to purchase a number of ipads to add to those we already have and ensure consistency across school- https://thinksmartbox.com/grid-for-schools/</p> | 1,3 |
| <p>Communication specialist to ensure Hilltop is a communication friendly school</p> <p>(£10,704.87 – 2 days Communication support)</p> | <p>EEF research on the improvement of language</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1/</p> <p>EEF – Developing early language</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Law_et_al_Early_Language_Development_final.pdf</p> | 1,3 |

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions/>

Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, well-being)

Budgeted cost: £101,890

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| <p>Employ sensory OT to create bespoke sensory profiles for pupils. To train school staff and parents in sensory needs and strategies.</p> <p>£ 15,678.80 (sensory footsteps)</p> <p>Sensory budget £7500</p> | <p>Pupils' sensory needs will be met in order to support them accessing learning and progressing towards their targets across all subjects. Much research shows that sensory integration is necessary for successful learning. Sensory regulation in autistic children can be overwhelmed and result in anxiety and distress</p> <p>https://autism.org/sensory-integration</p> <p>Approaches including play-based activities and paying attention to low-arousal environments support sensory integration and allow learning to take place. The EEF recognises the importance of removing barriers to learning, promoting pupil wellbeing and understanding pupils' individual needs. Research on the impact sensory needs can have on learning.</p> <p>Identifying Sensory Issues that Impact Learning in the Classroom (lifeskills4kids.com.au)</p> | <p>2,3, 4, 5</p> |
| <p>Cover the costs of trips and extracurricular activities for disadvantaged Children and Curriculum University subscription</p> <p>£2229</p> | <p>Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, ensuring all children can participate in trips, visits and clubs enables parity of opportunity and an increase in cultural capital. Whilst participation in trips, visits and clubs can have an impact on academic attainment, it is important to remember that engagement in these activities is of value in and of itself.</p> <p>Arts participation EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Outdoor adventure learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>Children's university https://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/</p> | <p>4,5</p> |

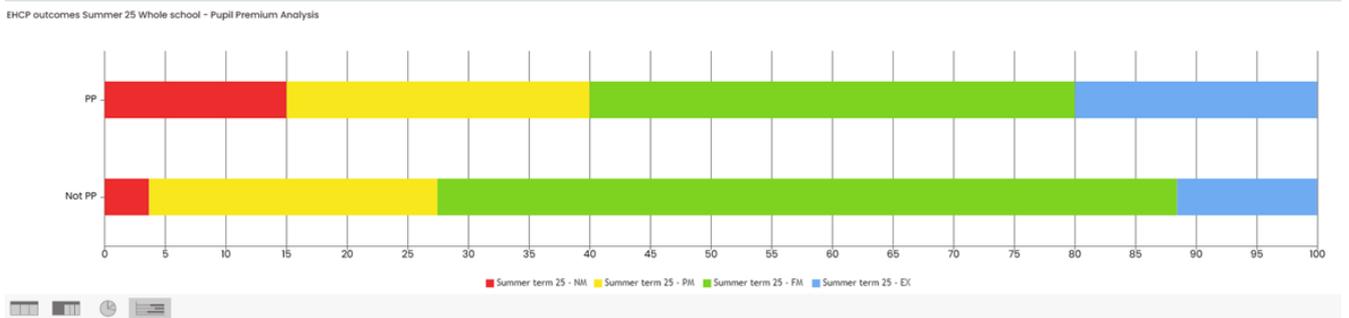
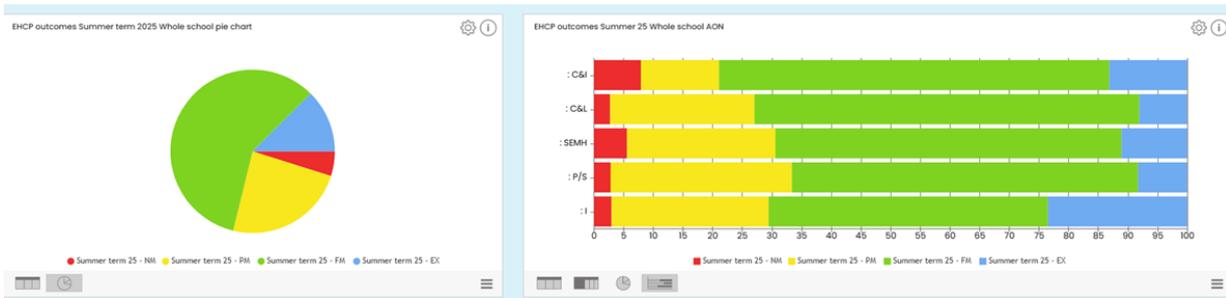
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|---|--|-------------|
| <p>Targeted Multi Agency Family Support Interventions</p> <p>£6710</p> | <p>Levels of parental engagement are consistently linked to better academic outcomes. Targeted family support and collaboration with external agencies will offer structured, focused interventions for parents, aiming to improve children's social, emotional, and behavioural outcomes, which are essential for academic success.</p> <p>The Family support team will enable these interventions take place through joint multi – agency working.</p> | |
| <p>Wellbeing and Behaviour Support Officer</p> <p>£30,660.18</p> | <p>Particularly where behaviour is an issue for a child, involving other stakeholders, in particular their parents, can strengthen the impact of any intervention put in place. Promising approaches involve parents and teachers setting goals for their child, agreeing and implementing specific strategies that can be implemented at home and school to help their child's behaviour, responding consistently to children's behaviour, and gathering information to assess their child's progress.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-parents</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/behaviour</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/working-with-parents-to-support-childrens-learning/</p> | <p>2, 5</p> |

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:

- Classes from across school have accessed the minibus to facilitate a range of out of school visits which have provided a high level of enrichment to the new curriculum offer. Some classes have stayed local whilst others have travelled further afield to Sheffield. These trips have allowed pupils to practice their communication and cognition (particularly the use of money) and their skills in the community.
- Cultural visitors and theme days have been highly impactful allowing pupils to experience, and become involved in, the celebrations from other cultures.
- The work of the specialist communication teacher has worked in tandem with core curriculum provision and enabled pupils to advance in the expressive and receptive communication.
- All symbols/signage throughout school are now in Makaton and Imprint symbols to create a consistent approach to visual aids for all pupils.
- The Communication Specialist has delivered dedicated sessions focusing on Makaton and speech development which included weekly sing and sign sessions across the school to improve access to Makaton to both pupils and staff.
- SaLT worked in partnership with Communication Lead to ensure consistency and individual pupil aims were shared.
- Sensory OT employed has observed pupils in school and created a detailed sensory profile for all pupils that require one.
- Through the above, staff have secure knowledge on strategies to use to improve sensory overload.
- All staff were trained and have a shared understanding of the Team Teach techniques. There is a real focus on de-escalation using Team Teach scripts
- The Behaviour and Wellbeing Lead has been appointed

Pupil premium outcomes and Looked After Pupils outcomes 2024-2025



Service pupil premium funding

N/A