



Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2025-2028 Ponteland High School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our Pupil Premium students (PP).

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for PP students last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school (Y7-11)	1259
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	16% (202)
Academic years that pupil premium strategy plan covers	2026 - 2029
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be first reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Mr S. McElwee
Pupil premium lead	Mr M. Warland
Governor / Trustee lead	Dr N. Twelves

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£208,530
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£208,530
<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

We are committed to ensuring that students who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding achieve their full potential at Ponteland High School and leave our school as confident, well rounded and successful individuals. We want our PP students to benefit fully from the high quality provision offered at Ponteland High School and to be able to access all of the opportunities that are available.

Our provision for PP students is aimed at overcoming common challenges as well as responding to individual needs. It is rooted in robust diagnostic assessment of students' academic and pastoral needs.

To ensure that our approaches are effective we are working to:

- develop a school culture where all staff take responsibility for the welfare and academic progress of PP students by ensuring that they are well known in school with all areas of their school life tracked and information shared amongst key stakeholders.
- ensure that teachers have the highest of expectations for PP students. That they are challenged in every lesson and have the opportunity to regularly experience success.
- intervene early at the point of need for all PP students in all year groups.
- provide PP students with bespoke enrichment opportunities that help develop the key character traits of dedication, resilience, being involved, respectfulness and compassion.

This strategy details a plan for how this intention will be achieved. It is based on the principles of outstanding teaching and pastoral care, targeted academic support, regular monitoring, and effective intervention. It also recognises the importance of excellent attendance, participation in wider school activities and high levels of parental engagement.

Challenges

Some of our PP students face significant challenges, which makes engaging in school and their learning difficult. At the same time, we have some students with very specific and individual needs whilst others face very few challenges at all. In order to support our PP students we have identified a range of potential challenges but we are acutely aware that these are not unique to PP students and additional challenges may emerge throughout the year.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Poor attendance and becoming persistently absent
2	Significant mental health, emotional and pastoral needs
3	Challenging family situations or personal circumstances that detract from a focus on school

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4	Low levels of literacy and numeracy or gaps in subject knowledge due to absence
5	Lack of aspiration or idea of what the future might look like, and where education fits into this
6	Lack of access to suitable technology, i.e. laptop and wifi
7	Lack of access to cultural and social experiences such as residential school trips
8	Unable to walk home and lack of transport preventing attendance at after school activities such as sporting clubs and revision sessions.

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of this PP strategy plan in 2028**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Progress 8 Score	Progress 8 score for disadvantaged students at PHS to continue to be significantly higher than the national disadvantage score.
Attainment 8 Score	Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged students at PHS to continue to be significantly higher than the national disadvantage score.
Percentage of Grade 5+ in English and maths	The percentage of disadvantaged students at PHS attaining a grade 5+ in both English & Maths continues to be significantly higher than the national disadvantage score.
Attendance	Ensure attendance of disadvantaged pupils at PHS is in line with their peers nationally

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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

Budgeted cost: £178,530

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Maintain high quality teaching, assessment and a broad and balanced, knowledge-based curriculum that responds to the needs of students	<i>The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment (EEF, 2024).</i>	1, 3, 9
School wide focus on checking for understanding and questioning. CPD sessions, lesson observations, Action Research and evidence gathering used to improve consistency of highly effective practice throughout school. Teachers instructed to identify PP students on seating plans and ensure that along with SEND students their understanding of both the task and their learning is checked by the teacher regularly.	<i>“Great teachers also have strategies for checking the responses of all students. Asking meaningful and appropriate questions that target essential learning, collecting and interpreting a response from every student, and responding to the results, all in real time during the flow of a lesson” (Hattie, 2012)</i>	1, 3, 9
Improve the literacy and numeracy of PP students by utilising a system of early identification and input where appropriate. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining the whole-school literacy strategy focused on disciplinary literacy, intervention and life-long reading. Bespoke intervention programme to support identified phonics gaps, fluency and comprehension needs. Primary trained additional teachers in English and Maths to support underperforming KS3 learners. 	<i>Reading comprehension strategies have been shown to have a very high impact for a very low cost (EEF, 2025)</i> <i>Oral language interventions have been shown to have high impact for a very low cost (EEF, 2025)</i> <i>Additional Maths & English teachers allowing for smaller class sizes increasing student-teacher interaction during lessons. Around a quarter of the students in the Y7 catch-up classes are PP.</i>	5

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of literacy and numeracy schemes in years 7 and 8 to build strong foundations during the early secondary school years. • Maintaining smaller class sizes in KS4 English and Maths. • Staff training to aid teachers supporting weaker readers 	<p><i>Small group tuition has been shown to have a moderate impact for a low cost (EEF, 2021).</i></p>	
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Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £10,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ensure that Target 5+ En. & Ma. PP students are instructed to attend 16 hours of additional English and Maths 'Drop Down' lessons occurring throughout Year 11.	<i>Small group tuition has been shown to have a moderate impact for a low cost (EEF, 2021).</i>	1, 4, 9, 10
Ensure that Y11 PP students who underperform in their mock exams are instructed to attend before school, lunchtime and after school intervention sessions occurring during the Spring Term. Remove barriers for non attendance such as transport.	<i>Small group tuition has been shown to have a moderate impact for a low cost (EEF, 2021).</i>	1, 4, 9, 10
Ensure that all PP students have access to their own computer for use at home. Where this is not the case students will be issued with a loan Chromebook.	<p><i>Homework has been shown to have a moderate impact for very low cost. (EEF, 2021)</i></p> <p><i>Thirty two Chromebooks were issued to Y7-11 PP students last year demonstrating need.</i></p>	7
Provide educational materials, where relevant, at no cost including textbooks and revision material as well as access to trips that are run to enhance the curriculum.	<p><i>Reading comprehension strategies have been shown to have a very high impact for a very low cost (EEF, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>Social and emotional learning which are developed on trips and residential has been shown to have moderate impact (EEF, 2025).</i></p>	2, 4, 8

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Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £20,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>New Y7 Summer School Project Day</p> <p>A selected group of PP new starters will be invited into school for a day during the final week of the Summer holiday. Students will work with professional artists to produce their own play, which they will deliver to parents at the end of the day. The day will be planned and delivered by education charity Hand Of.</p>	<p><i>Summer schools have been shown to have moderate impact for a moderate cost to the school. (EEF, 2025)</i></p>	1,2,4,6 & 8
<p>Y7 Performing Arts Day</p> <p>Twenty five Y7 students will be invited to participate in a 1-day mixed arts project focused on telling stories. It will take place at Newcastle Theatre Royal. The day will be planned and delivered by education charity Hand Of.</p>	<p><i>Arts participation has been shown to have moderate impact for very low cost to the school. (EEF, 2022)</i></p> <p><i>Feedback from students who participated in a similar project last year was very positive with many saying that it was the highlight of Y7.</i></p>	2,6,8
<p>Y8 & 9 Extended Arts Project</p> <p>Twenty Y8 and six Y9 students will be invited to participate in an extended arts project. Working with artists, students will develop a film which will be shown at a local cinema. Students will take part in 4 x 2hr workshop sessions during the school day occurring in the Spring & Summer term.</p>	<p><i>Arts participation has been shown to have moderate impact for very low cost to the school. (EEF, 2022)</i></p>	2,6,8
<p>Y10 1-2-1 mentoring sessions</p> <p>Weekly 1-2-1 mentoring sessions for six identified Y10 students. Sessions allow students to speak with an adult for a half hour session each week. Discussion focuses on students' areas of interest and how that links to what is being taught in school. The sessions aim to improve students' engagement in learning and their emotional regulation.</p>	<p><i>Oral language interventions have been shown to have a high impact for a low cost (EEF, 2025)</i></p> <p><i>The average impact of behaviour interventions is four additional months' progress over the course of a year (EEF, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>Evidence suggests that, on average, behaviour interventions can produce moderate improvements in academic performance along with a decrease in problematic behaviours.</i></p>	2,6,8

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<p>Y11 Boys Breakfast Club</p> <p>A group of 13 Y11 boys identified with either poor behaviour, effort and/or attendance. Fortnightly meetings held during Thursday AM Reg. with free breakfast provided. Discussion on aspirations and need to improve grades, which is incentivised with termly rewards trips.</p>	<p><i>The average impact of behaviour interventions is four additional months' progress over the course of a year.</i></p> <p><i>Evidence suggests that, on average, behaviour interventions can produce moderate improvements in academic performance along with a decrease in problematic behaviours.</i></p>	<p>2,6,8</p>
<p>Closely monitor the attendance of PP students in all year groups.</p> <p>Half-termly welfare and attendance meetings with all Pastoral Managers to review the attendance of PP students in each year group.</p>	<p><i>Research has found that poor attendance is linked to poor academic attainment across all stages. However, evidence suggests that small improvements in attendance can lead to meaningful impacts for these outcomes. (EEF Rapid Evidence Assessment)</i></p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Closely monitor the behaviour and effort of disadvantaged students to ensure they are fully engaging with school. Tutors to provide feedback at half-termly pastoral meetings. Where issues are identified Pastoral Leaders contact parents and students are placed on report.</p> <p>To ensure that under performing KS4 PP students are identified at RAG meetings with Subject Leaders instructed to propose and implement interventions.</p>	<p><i>Behaviour interventions have been shown to have moderate impact for low cost (EEF, 2021).</i></p> <p><i>Parental engagement has been shown to have moderate impact for low cost (EEF, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>Ensuring that Pastoral Leaders and Raising Achievement Leaders are informed regularly of PP pupil progress maintains focus on this key group of students.</i></p>	<p>2, 3</p>
<p>Ensure that PP students are provided every year with high quality careers guidance and one-two-one support with their KS4 and Post-16 option choices.</p>	<p><i>Mentoring has been shown to have low impact for moderate cost (EEF, 2025)</i></p> <p><i>Write-up from careers advisor displayed on PP register ensured all staff were aware of students aspirations</i></p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Ensure that parents are informed of the support available to help with the cost of schooling. This includes support with breakfast, uniform, music lessons and school trips.</p>	<p><i>Parental engagement has been shown to have moderate impact for low cost (EEF, 2025).</i></p>	<p>4</p>

Total budgeted cost: £208,530

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Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for Pupil Premium students

We have analysed the performance of our school's 40 Year 11 Pupil Premium, PP, students during 2024/25 academic year using their final GCSE results and published Key Stage 4 performance and data.

Progress 8, P8, is a measure of how much progress students at PHS make across 8 qualifications between the end of KS2 and the end of KS4, compared to other similar students nationally. Y11 students did not take KS2 SATs at the end of Y6 due to the Covid pandemic and therefore there is no P8 score for this cohort. In 2024, the Progress 8 score for our PP students was -0.03. This was a significant improvement on the -0.72 achieved in 2023 and the -1.03 in 2022.

For Attainment 8 (which is a measure of GCSE attainment across eight subjects) the value in 2025 was 43.18. This was lower than the 49.49 achieved in 2024 but higher than the 39.4 achieved in 2023 and 40.9 in 2022. The school's A8 score was also significantly higher than the national score of 34.5 pts for disadvantaged students (2024).

The main headline figures for the percentage of PP students who achieved at least a strong pass (grade 5+) in both English and Maths was 38%. This was down slightly on the 41% achieved in 2024 but still significantly higher than the 21% achieved in 2023 and compares to 26% for the national figure (2024). For the standard pass (grade 4+) in both English and Maths the figure was 55%, which was significantly lower than the 68% achieved in 2024 but again higher than the 2023 figure of 50% and the 2024 national figure of 47%.

EBacc entry for PP students at PHS for 2025 was 40%, which was 8% higher than in 2024. This entry is significantly higher than the national figure of 29% (2024). The average grade achieved by our PP students in their EBacc subjects was 3.86, which was lower than the 4.32 achieved in 2024 but higher than the 3.46 in 2023 and the national average score of 2.97 (2024).

In conclusion, the data from 2025 shows a decrease in outcomes across all of the main KS4 headline measures compared to 2024, apart from Ebaac entry. However, on all measures there was improvement compared to 2023 and 2022 and the outcomes of PP students at Ponteland High School continues to be noticeably better than the performance of PP students nationally. However, we continue to recognise that the gap in attainment between PP students and non PP students is too large. We will therefore continue to prioritise reducing barriers that limit the attainment of PP students as a target for this PP plan.

For more information about KS4 performance measures see [DfE guidance](#).

For the year 2024-25 the attendance of students at PHS currently receiving free school meals or during the past 6 years, FSM6, was 86.0%. This was 1.2% lower than the 2023/24 figure and also slightly lower than the national FSM6 figure for attendance of 86.2%.

We continue to recognise that the gap in attendance between students receiving free school meals and those that do not is too large. We have therefore prioritised improving attendance of PP students as a target for the academic year 2025-6.

In terms of progression from PHS, all 40 PP students in 2024/25 remain in meaningful education. 9 students remain at PHS in our Sixth Form with 17 students enrolling on courses at Newcastle College, 4 students taking up an apprenticeship and the others at various Post 16 colleges in the North East.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
One-2-One student mentoring	Brian Wade
In school music lessons	Various private peripatetic teachers and Northumberland Schools Music Service.
Arts & culture experience	Hand Of Education Charity
1-2-1 Mentoring Sessions	Hand Of Education Charity

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Appendix A - Pupil Premium Plus Spending for 2025- 28

Background Information

What is the money for?

The DfE has said that it intends the funding to be spent on: ‘...helping adopted children emotionally, socially and educationally by providing specific support to raise their attainment and address their wider needs.’

The focus on children’s social and emotional and wider needs is in contrast to the Pupil Premium for children who are either eligible for free school meals or have been in the past 6 years, which is focused on closing the attainment gap. The money is not ring fenced and does not have to be spent on the individual child. The DfE has said that it has introduced this flexibility so that schools can get maximum impact from the funding and so that children who change schools are not disadvantaged. In deciding how to use the Pupil Premium Plus funding, schools will want to understand and take account of the particular needs of looked after and previously looked after children, as these may be additional to or different from the needs of children who attract the Pupil Premium because they are from financially deprived family circumstances; for example, financial subsidies such as school trips and clubs may not address the needs of previously looked after children.

The DfE has clearly said that the funding should not be used to supplement the general school budget, or to support other groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs or who are low attaining. Some children who are eligible for Pupil Premium Plus will have special educational needs or low attainment, but these are needs which should be met through the usual or additional funding streams available to the school.

The DfE encourages schools to use robust evidence when making decisions about how to spend the funding to support previously looked after children and recommends seeking advice from the local authority, the virtual school and the designated teacher for looked after children, as the impact of abuse, neglect, trauma and loss does not disappear overnight. The DfE says that schools are also encouraged to seek advice from national organisations that specialise in adoption support

Who decides how the funding is spent?

It is up to each individual school to decide how to spend the money. The DfE has clearly stated that it is good practice to consult parents and guardians when making the decision. Some schools are consulting with individual parents and guardians, while others have invited adopters and special guardians to group consultations or task groups about how to spend the funding. Schools must act transparently and publish their pupil premium spending on their websites.

Additional Support for PP+ Cohort

In addition to the support outlined via our Pupil Premium Support Strategy and Spending, we have identified the following needs within our cohort of Looked After and Post Looked After children as well as those children with a named social worker (PP+).

- Nurture and relationships
- Scaffold children's social skills and peer relationships

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- Support for emotional literacy and emotion regulation
- Support children to cope with transitions
- Develop children's executive functioning skills
- Address barriers to information sharing and joint working

The following outlines the additional offer we have for our PP+ cohort under these identified needs.

Additional Offer for pupils eligible for PP+

1. Provide nurture and relationships through:

- A breakfast club which allows children to settle into the school day
- Providing meet and greets for children at the start of the day, where required.
- A Safe Space area which is supervised by trained staff
- Training and supporting staff to provide key attachment relationships with regular 1:1 'attachment time' built into children's timetables

2. Scaffold children's social skills and peer relationships, for example through:

- Social skills groups
- Supported Lunchtime clubs with opportunities to practise social skills
- Friendship groups
- Facilitating friendships e.g. through a buddy scheme or peer mentoring initiative

3. Support emotional literacy and emotion regulation through:

- Emotional literacy and emotion regulation groups, including anger management
- Enhanced Pastoral Care through regular tracking and check-ins
- Providing alternatives to detention and isolation which focus on understanding and repairing what went wrong
- Access to lower class sizes for practical lessons and some core subjects.
- Signposting/referring young people to specialist services where required

4. Support children to cope with transitions and change by:

- Providing additional structure during break and lunchtimes
- Providing safe spaces for children to come to throughout the school day

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- Appointing a transition worker to support children through the Year 6 to Year 7 transition
- Identifying a group of staff who can provide cover for absence, reducing the need for external supply staff
- Spending time preparing children for change in advance e.g. using social stories or visual timetables
- Liaising closely with parents and guardians who can help their children prepare for and cope with change

5. Develop children's executive functioning skills through:

- Training staff in understanding and supporting executive functioning skill development in the classroom and during social time.
- Providing individual and group sessions which focus on scaffolding the skills needed
- Providing coaching for children who struggle to plan and organise e.g. check-ins to ensure they have books and equipment, have recorded the homework etc.

6. Address barriers to information sharing and joint working by:

- Developing policies and procedures which ensure that key information about children's needs is shared with all key staff coming into contact with them.
- A designated teacher to support and promote the needs of this cohort and communicate with parents/ Carers and agencies involved in the care of the student.
- Identifying a named member of staff who liaises with the parents or guardians and facilitates regular meetings to discuss the child's need and progress when required.