Mercenfeld Primary School

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 (2025-2026) and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Mercenfeld Primary
Number of pupils in school	216
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	42% (52 children)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2026/2027
Date this statement was published	December 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2027
Statement authorised by	Kirstie Randle (Head)
Pupil premium lead	Josh Noon (SLT)
Governor / Trustee lead	Liz Moore & Gill Hussey

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£61,891
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£61,891

Part A Pupil Premium Strategy 2026-2027

Statement of Intent

At Mercenfeld, we aim to provide the highest quality of education and provision for all the children, regardless of their socio-economic background. In order for children to achieve their full potential, our focus for our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupil to make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subjects. We strive to equip all our children, those that are disadvantaged or other vulnerable groups with the skills and knowledge they need for the next stage of their education.
Our ultimate objectives are to:

- Narrow the attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged counterparts both within school and nationally.
- Ensure ALL pupils are able to read fluently, write effectively and have good number skills to enable them to access all of the curriculum offered to them.
- Support all our pupils to become self-aware, resilient, respectful and recognise these are skills for life.
- Work in partnership with our families to help to remove barriers created by poverty, family circumstance and background.
- Work in partnership with our families to remove barriers that lead to poor and persistent attendance (below 97%)

How we aim to achieve these objectives.
We will consider three main approaches to our spending:

1. High-quality teaching. We believe that high quality teaching will always be at the core of support for these children. Teachers, Cover Supervisors and TAs at Mercenfeld clearly understand the needs of the vulnerable children in their class and are able to focus in on what specifically they need. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school.

2. Targeted academic support. Targeted interventions using a forensic assessment system help staff with filling gaps pupils may have across core subjects. This also includes rigorous pupil progress meetings with the headteacher and pupil premium lead. Working in close partnership with classroom teachers staff deliver high quality intervention sessions which are closely matched to gaps in leaning and next steps. We understand that the research shows that interventions will have greater impact when learning in these small, focused groups linked to classroom teaching and planning.

3. Wider strategies. We acknowledge that challenges linked to well-being, behaviour and attendance have an impact on learning. We also believe that it is important for children to be able to have access to extra-curricular activities which have a positive impact in all aspects of their life.

The key principles of our strategy plan.

1. Our approach here at Mercenfeld is rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, using assessment data as a prime indicator to identify gaps and next steps in learning. Other data sets and information – such as attendance, character data, vulnerability index, feedback from parents etc- aid our approach. However, our understanding of the personalised needs of all of our children also are used to formulate a tailored approach to disadvantaged children in order to ensure all achieve.

2. Our whole school approach is 'striving for excellence' which is becoming embedded within the school both for staff and children We feel that 'Striving for Excellence' encapsulates our drive as professionals in school to ensure we constantly work hard to do our best for our young learners and empowering our children with excellent attitudes to learning. Using the Commando Joe character traits helps to empower our children to be the best they can be, supporting them to become lifelong learners, equipping them for their futures.

3. We have high expectations for all our children and know our children and their families well. We listen and respond to information shared with us from our families, parents and carers.

Challenges

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

<table>
<tr><th>Challenge number</th><th>Detail of challenge</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Quality first teaching
Meeting individual needs for all pupils, including middle and higher ability pupils.
Data and assessment indicate that attainment among disadvantaged pupils is below that of non-disadvantaged pupils for combined scores and core subjects. It is imperative that quality first teaching remains in place in order for this gap to be bridged.

Current Whole School Data – Summer 2026
<table><tr><td>ARE+</td><td>All pupils</td><td>Children in receipt of PP</td></tr><tr><td>Read/Write/Maths</td><td>72%</td><td>62%</td></tr><tr><td>Reading</td><td>86%</td><td>81%</td></tr><tr><td>Writing</td><td>75%</td><td>64%</td></tr><tr><td>Maths</td><td>83%</td><td>79%</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Social and emotional well-being.
Evidence indicates that a decline in the social and emotional wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged pupils is impacting the group’s ability to fully access their educational offer, resulting in slowed academic progress. Teacher referrals for social and emotional support, particularly those from a disadvantaged background, have markedly increased since the pandemic. This has resulted in knowledge gaps widening and evidence which suggests that disadvantaged pupils are at greater risk of falling further behind age-related expectations than their peers. At the beginning of the 2025-2026 academic year, 46% of our Pupil Premium Pupils were also on our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Record.</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Attendance – The percentage of disadvantage pupils whose attendance is below 90% is greater than that of non-disadvantaged pupils.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Resources and enrichment opportunities
Data shows that our disadvantaged pupils do not participate in enrichment opportunities as much as our other children. On occasion, resources and additional activities is a concern, particularly due to family income. The costs involved means that the children are less likely to be involved and access the offer of such opportunities</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Phonological awareness and reading attainment. Many disadvantaged pupils do not read for pleasure frequently which has an impact on their phonological knowledge and the ability to apply it when reading. Reading fluency and vocabulary development is also impacted by this.</td></tr>
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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
Attendance for all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, will improve and be in line with both school and national data for non-disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained attendance over 90% for all children, until at least 2026/2027 with gap between non-disadvantaged pupil being narrowed.
Children's wellbeing and resilience is developed and sustained, especially for the disadvantaged children The well-being, resilience and personal development for all pupils in school will improve and be sustained, particularly for our pupils who are identified as disadvantaged. Strong social and emotional support strategies to be implemented to help pupils in this area, including through working with their families. This will include social nurture groups and social communication groups.	Increase in the % take up of enrichment activities by disadvantaged children. Pupils demonstrate confidence and resilience both within daily life and when completing academic activities. Pupils are confident and resilient when carrying out challenging activities. Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by qualitative data from pupil voice, pupil surveys and teacher observations. Commando Jo targets and tracking show progress with character traits.
Enrichment opportunities and extracurricular activities accessible to all pupils, including those identified as disadvantaged.	Subsidised funding for school activities and equipment enables more disadvantaged pupils to participate in extra-curricular and enrichment activities. A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils throughout the school year.
The overall attainment of disadvantaged pupils in phonics will have improved from baseline. Y1 phonics outcomes for disadvantaged pupils will be in line with non-disadvantaged pupils. Accelerated progress and improved attainment of disadvantaged pupils in reading at the end of KS2.	Percentage of disadvantaged pupils passing the Year 1 phonics screening check to be in line with non-disadvantaged pupils. 80% of EYFS children will have met the expected standard as they transition to Y1.
The overall attainment of disadvantaged pupils in reading and writing will have improved from the baseline.	KS1 and KS2 reading and writing outcomes show that at least 75% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.
The overall attainment of disadvantaged pupils in maths, will have improved from the baseline.	KS1 and KS2 maths outcomes show that at least 75% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.

Activity This year – 2026/2027

Teaching

£16,058

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Twinkl NTS Assessments Purchase of assessments, reading scheme, reading books and trackers.	Providing accurate and timely assessment, can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction. They can also provide valuable information on the progress of specific groups of children, such as those that are disadvantaged. Information gained through standardised methods should be carefully considered and contributes to the understanding of what makes effective feedback. In regard to phonics and early reading 'careful diagnosis is required on the difficulties that the reader is experiencing, regardless of age' By purchasing books that match the phonics scheme accurately, it enables improved teaching and more progress.	1, 5
Provide high quality CPD for teachers and subject leaders in line with EEF Guidance through: Attendance at LA and Trust run subject leader network meetings and professional development opportunities External Consultants delivering CPD for teachers and support staff	Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children's outcomes. Research tells us that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap. By considering the 4 key strands and then, in turn the 14 mechanisms, CPD will be focused, purposeful and sustained: • Build knowledge • Motivate teachers • Develop teaching techniques • Embed practice EEF-Effective-Professional-Development-Guidance-Report.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)	1,5
Provide high quality CPD for teachers and support staff in EYFS and KS1 for Phonics to ensure that there is a systematic scheme in place (Twinkl Phonics)	Phonics should be taught systematically and research shows that this approach is more effective than other approaches to early reading 'Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds' Phonics | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1,5

Develop reading fluency, comprehension and vocabulary through delivery of The Faster Reading Project.	Poorer adolescent readers are often regarded by teachers as unable to read whole narratives and given short, simplified texts, yet are expected to analyse every part in a slow laborious read through. This article reports on a mixed methods study in which 20 English teachers in the South of England changed their current practice to read two whole challenging novels at a faster pace than usual in 12 weeks with their average and poorer readers ages 12-13. Ten teachers received additional training in teaching comprehension. Students in both groups made 8.5 months' mean progress on standardised tests of reading comprehension, but the poorer readers made a surprising 16 months progress but with no difference made by the training programme. Simply reading challenging, complex novels aloud and at a fast pace in each lesson repositioned 'poorer readers' as 'good' readers, giving them a more engaged uninterrupted reading experience over a sustained period. http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/70702/	1,5
Phonics and reading Enhancement of our reading curriculum and the teaching of reading across the school in line with DfE and EEF guidance via: - CPD opportunities such as individual training opportunities Professional Capital Dialogues. (JN) - CPD and support provided by English leader (KR, JN, LW). - Reading CPD and enrichment activities provided for reading for pleasure leader (LW) Where appropriate, individual and small group support for pupils to close any gaps in knowledge. - Leadership release time for English (Monitor and evaluate reading across school, attend CPD, disseminate CPD, attend Trust and LA network meetings etc.)	Phonics approaches have been consistently found to be effective in supporting younger pupils to master the basics of reading, with an average impact of an additional five months' progress over the course of a year. Research suggests that phonics is particularly beneficial for younger learners (4–7-year-olds) as they begin to read. Teaching phonics is more effective on average than other approaches to early reading (such as whole language or alphabetic approaches), though it should be emphasised that effective phonics techniques are usually embedded in a rich literacy environment for early readers and are only one part of a successful literacy strategy. **https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics** **https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65830c10ed3c34000d3bfcad/The_reading_framework.pdf** **https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies**	1,5
Attendance - Regular monitoring of attendance by the internal attendance officer - Additional monitoring by the school attendance lead (KR) - Support by the Trust attendance officer as required (VP) - Support for children/ families identified as a concern.	Positive pupil outcomes can only be achieved when children are provided with a high-quality education. This is only possible when children attend school regularly. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/pages/Attendance-REA-report.pdf?v=1669317805	3

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

£27,042

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted interventions - Same day intervention and other targeted intervention programs to support areas across the curriculum offered as a package of support to children across the school, particularly those that are disadvantaged or who are working below age related expectations. Interventions include: •Reading/Comprehension •Phonics and spelling •Writing •Maths •Social Communication •Fine and gross motor skills Support and interventions based on pupil progress and attainment evidence e.g. termly data, assessment results and identified gaps in knowledge	Evidence from the EEF indicates that targeted deployment, where teachers are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals has a higher impact (+4 months) 'Small group tuition is most likely to be effective if it is targeted at pupils' specific needs. Diagnostic assessment can be used to assess the best way to target support ' https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition	1,4,5
Homework club to support children who may not have space or support at home. Ensuring homework links into the basic skills the children need to access the curriculum (reading, spelling, times tables)	Some pupils may not have a quiet space for home learning therefore regular homework clubs support all pupils Homework that is linked to classroom work tends to be more effective and so homework is primarily focused on ensuring children have chance to acquire and develop basic skills needed for their year group. This helps to ensure that the purpose of homework is clear to children and they can then practice and apply skills learnt in school. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework?utm_source=/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_search&search_term=home	1,3, 4,5

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

£18,791

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number (s) addressed
Embedding the principles of good practice as set out by the DfE document 'Working together it Improve School attendance' Training and release for staff to develop and implement new procedures. Time with Trust Attendance and Welfare Lead for regular monitoring and implementation meetings	The guidance support work in school to ensure that the right approaches are put in place to support all children, in particular those that are disadvantaged, to regularly attend school. It recognises that the approach must be whole school and should not be seen in isolation. 'Improving school attendance is everyone's business' https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working- together-to-improve-school-attendance	1,3
Delivery of Garden Rangers Club, and Forest schools through a trained Forest School practitioner to groups of identified children, including those that are disadvantaged	The benefits of how gardening can help health and wellbeing and well documented as is the use of the outdoors to support and promote learning e.g https://www.kent-teach.com/Blog/post/2018/08/06/benefits- of-gardening-and-outdoor-living1.aspx https://forestschoolassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/ 'Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average, of 4 months' additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year' The research indicates that social and emotional aspects to learning can have a positive impact on outcomes. Being able to effectively manage emotions will be beneficial to children and young people even if it does not translate to improved reading or maths scores. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education- evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional- learning	1,2,3,4
Delivery of a wide range of after school activities including sports, arts, craft and performing arts	Use of external sports coaches and companies to deliver a range of activities after school. Use of basketball coach to deliver sessions and provide children in receipt of pupil premium funding with exposure to high quality coaching during and after school.	2,3,4

To continue the of delivery of Commando Joe as a key driver to motivate, engage pupils and develop their overall character.	By building on work already embedded in the school, the Commando Joe character traits and pupil passport will continue to support children to develop life skills, build resilience and motivation	1,2,3,4,
To continue to support enhancement activities for pupils to support well-being	Enrichment activities enhance high quality curriculum provision and support pupil engagement and wellbeing. This includes discounted trips and workshops from inspirational visitors.	1,2,3,4