

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium for the 2023 to 2024 academic year) 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	Discovery Special Academy
Number of pupils in school	150 (Nursery – Year 8)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	59%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2021-2024
Date this statement was published	October 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2024
Statement authorised by	Jennifer Duncan
Pupil premium lead	Ann Titchener
Governor / Trustee lead	Dean Jackson

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£93,060
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	£93,060

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our key objective in using pupil premium funding is to ensure best progress for all pupils from their own personal starting points and to close the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers.

In order to achieve this, we actively use the pupil premium funding to break down barriers to enable ALL of our children to participate in all activities, regardless of their social and economic status or family circumstances.

At Discovery Special Academy, pupils' needs are met through a multi-agency, collaborative approach using joint commissioning of services to provide a holistic establishment with the support of local stakeholders. Therefore, the key principles of the pupil premium spending plan are to achieve excellence and enjoyment for all by building a learning community that ensures all pupils are well supported, can reach their personal potential and are equipped with the necessary life skills they need to ensure that they become effective citizens of the 21st century.

We are committed to ensuring pupil premium funding is spent to maximum effect. Following the disruption to education throughout the pandemic, the current plan will continue to build on previous challenges as well as acknowledging additional growing needs for our disadvantaged pupils.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Acquisition of language and effective communication continues to be a significant barrier for all our pupils. 100% of our children have communication and interaction needs as part of their SLD diagnosis with over 50% having a diagnosis of ASD Pupils experiences beyond school and home can be limited reducing opportunity for rich exposure to language in the early years.
2	Ensuring all pupils have high quality, well-rounded grounding in early literacy, language and communication leading to high quality phonic and comprehension development.
3	Complex sensory needs impact on pupil's ability to focus, attend and process.
4	Pupils come into the academy with low levels of sense of self, personal development and ability to understand and regulate emotions. This has been compounded throughout the pandemic and some pupils are

	displaying increased needs in the area of emotional wellbeing and regulation.
5	Vulnerability of families continues to be an area of need, ensuring all families are able to engage in their child's development and attend key meetings, coupled with an awareness of how to access services is vital in ensuring good attendance and 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 levels of language, communication, pupil sense of self and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will make progress in their communication and language development relative to their starting points over a 12-month period (evidenced through PIVATS progress and MAPP). • An embedded approach to communication is evident across the academy. This includes high levels of oral language and communication skills for pupils who are able, and a developed, progressive approach to AAC. • Pupils are confident to communicate in different settings and with different people in the academy and wider locality. • Pupils are able to express their sense of self through appropriate communicative means by making choices, expressing opinions and demonstrating confidence in different settings and situations (e.g. trust choir events, performances)
Pupils make good progress in their phonic and reading comprehension development through a clear focus on early reading skills and a structured, progressive approach to all reading areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90%+ of pupils on the semi-formal curriculum meet or exceed their PIVATS targets in reading as generated by CASPA • Personalised MAPP data, individual case studies and learning journeys demonstrate that pupils on the informal pathway make good progress in early reading from their own personal starting points. • Early reading skills lay the foundation for comprehension development for pupils who are developmentally ready. • There is an embedded and structured approach to teaching comprehension which recognises the importance of early language and communication development as the pre-requisite for this.

<p>Pupils are ready to learn, are able to better regulate their sensory and emotional needs (with support), have a growing sense of self and therefore make good progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will have regular access to a range of appropriate therapies to support holistic development. • Staff are confident with delivering a range of appropriate therapies. • Therapies are chosen and delivered based on accurate understanding of need. • Pupils have access to a range of environments and experiences that support their development in all areas. • Reduced incidents of significant behaviour recorded on CPOMs for targeted children. • Monitoring demonstrates pupils are focused and able to access learning. • Pupils make good progress against individual targets.
<p>Families are well supported by the academy, are aware of services they can access and attendance is improved (particularly PA).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school attendance to be at least 94% in the year 2023-2024 with aspirations to increase this in subsequent years. • PA to be below 25% in the academic year 2023-2024, with aspirations to reduce this in subsequent years. • Families are signposted to services and referrals are timely and lead to effective support from external agencies. • Families have a support network within the academy community and beyond.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium (and recovery premium funding) **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £42,814

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Clear, focused CPD based on analysis of pupil and academy needs (quantitative and qualitative) including CPD on language acquisition, communication (AAC), phonics, emotional well-being (linked to PSHERE) and therapeutic approaches.	EEF states that ensuring an effective teacher is in front of every class, and that every teacher is supported to keep improving, is the key ingredient of a successful school and should rightly be the top priority for Pupil Premium spending.	1,2,3,4,5
Development of early literacy, language and communication teaching, resources and a progression document to support language acquisition and comprehension skills.	EEF Preparing for Early Literacy report. Language provides the foundation for thinking and learning and should be prioritised EEF Early Literacy Report Oral language interventions and reading comprehension strategies can both result in +6 months gain.	1,2
Purchase further communication boards for additional areas of the new academy building		
Monitoring and moderation of early reading and phonics teaching and assessment by English Leader.	Ensuring accurate assessment of phonic development ensures understanding of next steps EEF Early Phonics Report	1,2
Recruitment of additional level 2 TAs across the academy to support pupils sensory, social and emotional wellbeing and therapeutic access will ensure teachers are able to focus on teaching and learning. Appointed 3 HLTAS to support the development of the TA team, leading CPD and acting as mentors.	TAs have access to training in order to ensure they are fully prepared for their role in the classroom TAs are employed to add value to the classroom and support what teachers do (more time for teachers to teach, report page 7) TAs in this instance, are supporting pupils to develop independent learning skills and ability to self-regulate through structured interventions (e.g. SIT, BLAST, phase 1 phonics) Best use of TA report	1,2,3,4

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

Budgeted cost: £25,367

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
1:1 and small group tutoring support delivered by qualified teachers	Research supports high-quality teaching approaches delivered by qualified teachers and can result in a +5 month gain (See various research reports from EEF and others)	1,2
Further development of a range of language acquisition intervention including speech and language programmes	EEF Preparing for Early Literacy report. Language provides the foundation for thinking and learning and should be prioritised EEF Early Literacy Report Oral language interventions can result in +6 months gain.	1,2
Development/purchase/CPD on augmentative and alternative communication aids – research and trial of electronic apps and aids for pupils who demonstrate capacity to access this	Bercow report 2008 AAC https://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2013_Shining_a_Light_on_AAC.pdf	

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

Budgeted cost: £85,184

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Structured interventions to support sensory, social and emotional development delivered by level 2 and 3 TAs that supports high-quality teaching	Where TAs are working individually with pupils the focus should be on retaining access to high-quality teaching, for example by delivering brief, but intensive, structured interventions. Used in this way, research shows that TAs delivering targeted interventions can have +3/4 months impact.	1,2,3,4,5
Increased access to counselling for pupils	Best use of TA report Although limited, research demonstrates social and emotional learning approaches can also have a +4-month gain.	
Delivering early bird programme to parents to	SEL report	

support understanding of children's social, emotional and sensory needs.		
Further investment in access to sensory/therapeutic spaces (e.g. installation of sensory room, soft play and sensory integration rooms at new build, 2 x minibus lease)	A large body of literature indicates that pupils with sensory integration disorders (SID) and learning disabilities (LD) benefit from sensory integration therapy (SIT) and multisensory activities (Ayres, 1979; Longhorn, 1988; Cheatum and Hammond, 2000; Bundy et al, 2002; Reynolds and Reynolds, 2010).	1,2,3,4,5
Increase access to varied and rich experiences to support the development of language and communication for all	All evidence linked to development of language acquisition, Early literacy and communication support this action. (action includes minibus lease/additional staff training to drive bus/ music teacher/EVOLVE)	1,2,3,4,5
Granular focus on attendance data supported by case studies, increased engagement with families and regular discussion at SLT level with a particular focus on PA.	<p>The DfE analysis below looks at the attainment of pupils at the end of KS2 and KS4 and the absence each pupil accrued across the whole key stage. This highlights the importance of good attendance as higher overall absence across a school career leads to lower attainment and progress. Pupils with a high persistent absentee rate are less likely to stay in education.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/absence-and-attainment-at-key-stages-2-and-4-2013-to-2014</p> <p>Based on extensive research, parental engagement has a positive impact on average of +4 months' additional progress. Parental engagement</p>	3,4,5
CPD/discussions increase staff and parental understanding of the importance of good attendance to support welfare as well as educational outcomes (and the impact of non-attendance on families)		1,2,3,4,5
Continue programme of workshops for families, parents and carers. Workshops to be focused on a range of academic, therapeutic and wellbeing areas.		
Continuation of stay and share sessions		

Total budgeted cost: £153,366.90

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 2022 to 2023 academic year.

Impact statement 2022 - 2023	
Aim	Evidence of impact
Improved levels of language, communication, pupil sense of self and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The vast majority of pupils continue to make good progress in their communication and vocabulary/language acquisition (84% disadvantaged pupils met or exceeded PIVATS targets).• Case studies for pupils measured on MAPP shows that they made very good progress in communication.• Pupils across the academy have had increased exposure to new language and vocabulary through a well-developed curriculum (evidenced through knowledge organisers, communication boards, book spines, 3 stories a day etc used).• A full review of key vocabulary across all areas of the wider curriculum has ensured continued clarity of progression.• Talk for writing has impacted on vocabulary and also language acquisition in writing as well as in symbol exchange communication (forming sentences)
Pupils make good progress in their phonic and reading comprehension development through a clear focus on early reading skills and a structured, progressive approach to all reading areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils made good progress in their language and communication development across the academic year 2022-2023 linked to phonics and reading.• High quality phonics CPD for teachers and teaching assistants has ensured consistent and coherent approaches across the academy pathways, evidenced through monitoring. This has allowed early career teachers to be successful and confident in their phonics teaching, taking ownership and contributing to the development of resources.• 'Talk for Writing' approaches will continue to be adapted to be used in informal and EYFS groups.• SaLT interventions have continued to support the development of language, vocabulary and phonic acquisition.• Pupils continued to have increased access to a range of experiences and opportunities through the minibus lease. In 2022-2023 this included participation in trust events, activities such as swimming, horse-riding, therapy dog visits, residential visit, and a range of community visits.
Pupils are ready to learn, are able to better regulate their sensory and emotional needs (with support) and therefore make good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils have regular access to sensory integration therapies.• Pupils have been assessed and reviewed by OT from Treetops Occupational Therapy to support sensory integration programmes which has supported pupils being ready to engage in focused learning activities.• Staff are confident with delivering these sensory integration therapies. Further CPD to support new staff coming to the academy will be

	<p>led by SLT in 2023-2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources such as compression vests, weighted jackets, weighted blankets, vibrating cushions, z-vibes etc. purchased and have been a visible support to a range of pupils across all pathways. Resources will continue to be explored and purchased in 2023-2024 For the vast majority of targeted pupils there have been reduced incidents of significant behaviour recorded on CPOMs. Incidents of distressed behaviour are low in the academy (see CPOMS) Additional level 2 TA support has offered access to education and learning environments, allowing teachers to focus on teaching and learning and ensuring all academic, therapeutic and social and emotional needs are catered for. This has been further strengthened for 23/24. Monitoring demonstrates pupils are focused and able to access learning. Pupils across the academy made good progress against individual targets (see data held in the academy).
Families are well supported by the academy, are aware of services they can access and attendance is improved (particularly PA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole school attendance was 92.2% (an increase of 1.1% from previous academic year). Disadvantaged attendance was 92.1%. This is an excellent outcome, which is significantly above national special school attendance (86.9%) and in line with the vast majority of mainstream settings. School age PA was 23%, which is a significant increase from the previous academic year and significantly lower than the national special school PA rate of 38.7%. Families have been signposted to services and referrals were timely and led to effective support from external agencies and the academy pastoral and welfare team. Pupil and Family Support Advisor has added capacity to the pastoral and welfare team increasing the number of families receiving early interventions.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Sensory Integration Therapy	Treetops Occupational Therapists
Movement skills	Madeline Portwood
BLAST	Developed in Stockton
MFC career/enterprise	Middlesbrough Football Club
Counselling	Time for You
Speech and Language	NHS

Therapy Dogs	Private provider
Horse Riding	The Unicorn Centre
Residential visit	Carlton Outdoor Centre

Further information (optional)

To support the growing needs related to ASD within the academy community, this year we are continuing the application process for autism accreditation – this will allow us to audit and reflect on existing good practice and build on this using appropriate expertise in partnership with others.

The academy will deliver early bird training to families following training with the national autistic society this academic year. This gives us an initial three-year license to run the training allowing us to offer increased support for families.

This academic year, the academy will continue to develop its careers and enterprise offer with a view to beginning a fully developed careers programme in 2023-2024 for pupils in year 8 and above.

The academy has continued to engage with a range of external providers and charities to develop all environments in the academy to allow independence, preparation for adulthood, academic progress and therapeutic access.