# Pupil premium strategy statement – Rotherham Aspire Pupil Referral Unit

Before completing this template, read the Education Endowment Foundation's guide to the pupil premium and DfE's pupil premium guidance for school leaders, which includes the 'menu of approaches'. It is for school leaders to decide what activity to spend their pupil premium on, within the framework set out by the menu.

All schools that receive pupil premium are required to use this template to complete and publish a pupil premium statement on their school website by 31 December every academic year.

If you are starting a new pupil premium strategy plan, use this blank template. If you are continuing a strategy plan from last academic year, you may prefer to edit your existing statement, if that version was published using the template.

Before publishing your completed statement, delete the instructions (text in italics) in this template, and this text box.

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 | 132 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 70.1% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)** | 2025/26<br>2026/2027<br>2027/2028 |
| Date this statement was published | December 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | September 2028 |
| Statement authorised by | Nichola Plant (Deputy Head Teacher) |
| Pupil premium lead | Sally Peedle - (Teaching and Learning Lead; Assistant Head Teacher |

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| Governor / Trustee lead | Link Management Committee Member Curriculum |

## Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|---|---|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £105,764.00 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years *(enter £0 if not applicable)* | £0 |
| **Total budget for this academic year**<br>*If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year* | £105,764.00 |

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

At Rotherham Aspire a high proportion of our children are classed as being disadvantaged through socio-economic challenge. It is our intent that all children's life chances will be improved because of high quality academic and therapeutic intervention offered by Rotherham Aspire PRU; *Improving life chances* is our mission statement. It is our intention that all our children are given both the academic and Social Emotional Mental Health skills to make a successful transition to their next school, either mainstream or special, or are equipped to succeed in post-16 education and/or training.

Our pupil premium strategy is designed to ensure that being disadvantaged does not act as a barrier to progress. We intend for all children to attain and achieve well whilst developing key core values and becoming safe, respectful and resilient young people who will go on to contribute positively to society. Due to the extremely high transient nature of our setting and the barriers our children typically come to us with, our pupil premium focus remains focused on SEMH needs, reading, appropriate assessment of need, high quality key stage 4 provision that offers breadth and challenge that is engaging and appropriate to support Post 16 placement. A focal point for our work over the next 3 years will also be whole school attendance supporting children to access our setting and make the most of the high-quality support that is available to them.

Our approach is aligned with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance and focuses on three key areas:

**1. High-Quality Teaching**
Ensuring all pupils receive high-quality, adaptive and trauma-informed teaching that meets their individual needs, addresses gaps in learning and supports engagement in education.
**2. Targeted Academic Support**
Providing personalised interventions to address barriers to learning, including literacy, reading, numeracy and curriculum gaps resulting from disrupted educational experiences.
**3. Wider Strategies**
Addressing the wider barriers that affect educational outcomes, including attendance, SEMH needs, emotional regulation, enrichment opportunities, cultural capital, aspirations and preparation for adulthood.
At Rotherham Aspire, decisions regarding Pupil Premium spending are informed by robust assessment, pupil need and evidence-based practice rather than assumptions. Through our Aspire Pathways model, we identify individual vulnerabilities and deploy support proportionately to ensure resources are targeted where they will have the greatest impact.
We are committed to ensuring that financial disadvantage never prevents pupils from accessing the full breadth of opportunities available at Aspire, including therapeutic support, enrichment activities, educational visits, careers education and transition support. Through this approach, we aim to develop safe, respectful and resilient young people who are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in their future lives.

- **70.1% of pupils on roll are eligible for Pupil Premium funding.**
- A significant proportion of pupils reside in areas of high deprivation across Rotherham.
- All pupils attending Aspire have identified SEMH needs as part of their SEND profile.

- Many pupils have experienced disrupted educational histories, including exclusion, emotionally based school avoidance, persistent absence or reduced timetables.
- Pupils often present with multiple vulnerabilities that require a coordinated, therapeutic and trauma-informed response.
- The Aspire Pathways framework is used to identify levels of need and ensure support is matched appropriately to individual pupils.

## Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Poor school attendance** The majority of our disadvantaged students have had historical ongoing attendance challenges. As a cohort a significant amount of children do not meet the government expected standard of above 95%;<br>*'School attendance is vital for children's learning, wellbeing and wider development, and is a strong protective factor for all children and young people, especially the most vulnerable.' DFE School* |
| 2 | **Difficulties relating to students' social, emotional and/or mental health**: All of the disadvantaged (and non-disadvantaged) students who attend Rotherham Aspire have identified SEMH needs as part of their SEND profile, which have prevented them from achieving success in a mainstream environment. |
| 3 | **Literacy and Reading Deficits;** Many pupils entering Aspire have significant gaps in reading age, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension due to disrupted education and poor attendance histories. |
| 4 | **Interrupted Educational Histories and Low Prior Attainment;**<br>Many pupils arrive following periods of exclusion, emotionally based school avoidance, reduced timetables or significant absence, resulting in substantial curriculum gaps. |
| 5 | **Preparation for Transition and Post-16 Destinations;**<br>Many pupils require additional support to develop aspirations, employability skills, independence and readiness for their next educational placement. |
| 6 | **Limited Access to Enrichment, Wider Experiences and Cultural Capital**<br>Many pupils attending Rotherham Aspire have experienced disrupted education, social isolation, reduced participation in extracurricular activities and limited access to wider life experiences. Financial disadvantage, poor attendance, SEMH needs and previous negative experiences of education can restrict opportunities to develop cultural capital, confidence, aspirations and essential life skills. As a result, pupils may require additional support to access enrichment opportunities that broaden horizons, develop resilience and prepare them for successful transitions into further education, employment and training. |
| 7 | **Complex SEND Needs and Neurodevelopmental Differences**; Many pupils attending Rotherham Aspire present with complex SEND needs, including social, emotional and mental health difficulties, communication and interaction needs, sensory differences and neurodevelopmental profiles. Some pupils are undergoing assessment processes or require further identification of need. Many have experienced multiple placement breakdowns, disrupted educational experiences and unmet needs within previous settings. As a result, pupils often require highly personalised assessment, adaptive teaching approaches, reasonable adjustments and multi-agency support to successfully engage in education and achieve positive outcomes. |

## 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 |
|---|---|
| *All children that are identified as having reduced/poor attendance (below 90%) have specific bespoke attendance support that is personalised to them* | • Increased attendance and a clear understanding of specific barriers to regular school attendance. Clear planning to support and address these needs.<br>• Attendance awards |
| Ensure all children have access to SEMH interventions within and outside of the classroom as part of their Aspire School Day | • Students' progress via SEMH assessment |
| Ensure that all children receive a trauma informed approach to supporting their specific SEMH needs. That this is practice is embedded throughout our setting and contribute to the feeling of safety for all children within Aspire settings. | • All staff demonstrate consistent use of trauma-informed and relational approaches in their daily practice.<br>• Pupils report feeling safe, valued and supported within Aspire through pupil voice activities and surveys.<br>• Boxall Profile assessments demonstrate positive progress in SEMH development from baseline.<br>• Reductions in incidents requiring high-level behaviour intervention, suspension or crisis response.<br>• Increased pupil engagement in learning and wider school activities.<br>• Individual SEMH targets show measurable progress over time.<br>• Staff training and coaching ensure trauma-informed practice is embedded across all Aspire provisions.<br>• Pupils develop improved emotional regulation, resilience and coping strategies.<br>• Positive relationships between staff and pupils are evident through observations, learning walks and pupil feedback.<br>• Sustained placements, successful reintegration and positive transitions reflect improved emotional readiness for learning. |
| All pupils make accelerated progress in reading and literacy from their starting points. | • Literacy assessments are used to identify barriers to learning and inform personalised intervention programmes.<br>• Pupils accessing literacy support demonstrate progress appropriate to their individual starting points, needs and length of placement.<br>• Reading interventions contribute to improved engagement in learning and access to the wider curriculum.<br>• Progress is evidenced through reading assessments, pupil work, teacher assessment and pupil voice.<br>• Improved access to curriculum content. |
| All pupils make academic progress from their individual starting points. | • Increased attainment in core subjects.<br>• Successful completion of qualifications. |

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| | • Positive progress measures across pathways. |
| Pupils successfully transition to appropriate educational, training or employment destinations. | • Sustained placements.<br>• Positive destination data.<br>• Reduced NEET figures. |
| All pupils access meaningful enrichment opportunities that broaden experiences, raise aspirations and support personal development. | • Pupils participate regularly in a range of enrichment activities, visits and experiences.<br>• Increased pupil engagement with school and learning.<br>• Pupils demonstrate improved confidence, resilience and social skills.<br>• Pupils develop greater awareness of opportunities beyond their immediate experiences.<br>• Pupil voice reflects positive experiences of enrichment activities and increased aspirations for the future.<br>• Enrichment opportunities contribute to improved attendance, behaviour and engagement for identified pupils.<br>• Pupils develop skills that support successful transitions into further education, employment or training.<br>• All pupils have equitable access to enrichment opportunities regardless of disadvantage. |
| Pupils with complex SEND needs receive timely assessment, appropriate support and personalised provision that enables them to engage successfully in education. | • Pupils have identified needs assessed and reviewed regularly.<br>• Provision maps reflect individual strengths, needs and adaptations.<br>• Increased engagement in learning and attendance.<br>• Positive progress against personalised targets.<br>• Improved placement stability and positive transition outcomes where appropriate. |

### 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: £ 31,189.90

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| *Recruitment of Attendance officer*<br><br>*Recruit full time attendance officer to* | See Government's literature, just one day off can hamper children's life chances… | 1 |

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| *support with Attendance reengagement work and also support our school safe and well policy in order to ensure vulnerable children and vulnerable families have access to support at the earliest intervention point possible.* | https://www.gov.uk/government/news/just-one-day-off-can-hamper-childrens-life-chances<br>"Being excluded from mainstream school puts children in an automatically vulnerable position. However, when other factors come into play – for example, lack of family support, poverty, and peer pressure – there is an even greater risk that children will become victims of harm outside of the home " ChildProtectionCompany | |
| Ensure all children have access to appropriate SEMH interventions/ therapeutic approaches required to manage their individual needs. Both in and/or outside of class. That are effective in supporting SEMH progress.<br><br>See the toolkit of evidence based interventions to promote inclusion of children with SEMH needs<br>Sensory profiling for students to create sensory intervention packages tailored to their needs | There is a strong evidence base showing the impact that high quality interventions can have on the outcomes of students with specific unmet SEMH needs. They are likely to be most effective when deployed alongside efforts to improve teaching, and attend to wider barriers to learning, such as attendance and behaviour." Eef<br>See Intervention menu for evidenced based interventions.<br><br>SEMH toolkit…<br>https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/babcock_l_d_p/Educational-Psychology/Downloads/Resources/SEMH-Toolkit-of-Evidence-Based-Interventions-to-Promote-the-Inclusion-of-CYP-with-SEMH-needs-contents.pdf | 2 |
| Ensure that all children receive a trauma informed approach to supporting their specific SEMH needs. That this is practice is embedded throughout our setting and contribute to the feeling of safety for all children within Aspire settings. | Research demonstrates that children who have experienced trauma, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and disrupted attachments are more likely to experience difficulties with emotional regulation, behaviour, attendance and engagement in learning. Trauma-informed and relational approaches can improve pupils' sense of safety, wellbeing and readiness to learn. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights that social and emotional learning approaches can lead to improved outcomes in behaviour, attitudes to learning and academic attainment when embedded across a whole-school approach. | 2 |

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

Budgeted cost: £ *73,784.10*

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| Reading assessment and intervention programme to identify and address literacy gaps. This may include reading age assessments, targeted reading interventions, one-to-one reading support and structured literacy programmes. | EEF Toolkit evidence demonstrates that targeted reading interventions can deliver significant progress, particularly for disadvantaged pupils with gaps in literacy. Literacy is a key predictor of wider academic success and positive post-16 outcomes. | 3 |
| Small group and individual literacy interventions tailored to pupil need. | Reading comprehension strategies have consistently shown positive impact on pupil progress when delivered effectively. | 3 |
| Comprehensive baseline assessment and personalised curriculum planning for all pupils on entry. | EEF guidance highlights the importance of accurate assessment in identifying learning gaps and ensuring teaching is appropriately targeted. Effective diagnostic assessment enables schools to tailor support and accelerate progress for pupils with disrupted educational experiences. | 4 |
| Small group and individual academic interventions to address identified gaps in literacy, numeracy and core curriculum subjects. | Evidence from the EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit suggests that targeted academic support and small group tuition can have a positive impact on pupil progress, particularly for disadvantaged pupils who have fallen behind their peers. | 4 |
| Highly personalised curriculum pathways that provide appropriate challenge while enabling pupils to experience success and re-engage with learning. | Research indicates that engagement and motivation improve when learning is matched to pupils' starting points and individual needs. Personalised provision can support re-engagement following periods of absence, exclusion or disrupted education. | 4 |
| Provide personalised careers guidance, transition planning and destination support for all pupils. | The Gatsby Benchmarks and statutory careers guidance highlight that high-quality careers education and personalised guidance improve young people's aspirations, decision-making and successful progression into further education, employment or training. | 5 |
| Develop employability, independence and life skills through curriculum opportunities, enrichment activities and workplace experiences. | Research suggests that developing employability skills, resilience and independence increases young people's readiness for adulthood and supports successful transitions into further education and employment. | 5 |
| Provide enhanced transition support for pupils moving to mainstream, specialist settings, college, | Effective transition planning and multi-agency working can improve placement stability, reduce anxiety and increase the likelihood of sustained destinations for vulnerable learners. | 5 |

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| apprenticeships or training providers. | | |
| Dedicated staff time to liaise with families, receiving settings and external agencies to support successful transitions and sustained placements. | Strong collaborative working between education providers, families and external agencies is associated with improved transition outcomes and greater engagement for vulnerable pupils. | 5 |
| Provide a planned programme of enrichment activities, educational visits, outdoor learning, sporting opportunities and cultural experiences to broaden pupils' experiences and raise aspirations. | Evidence suggests that enrichment activities can improve motivation, engagement and wellbeing, particularly for disadvantaged pupils who may have fewer opportunities to access such experiences outside school. Participation in enrichment activities supports personal development, social skills and cultural capital. | 6 |
| Ensure all pupils can access enrichment opportunities through subsidised trips, activities and experiences, removing financial barriers associated with disadvantage. | The DfE recognises that disadvantaged pupils often have reduced access to wider experiences. Providing equitable access to enrichment opportunities helps develop confidence, aspirations and preparation for adulthood. | 6 |
| Use enrichment activities to develop resilience, teamwork, communication, independence and employability skills. | Research indicates that wider personal development opportunities contribute to improved self-esteem, social skills and readiness for future education, employment and training. These skills are particularly important for pupils with SEMH needs and disrupted educational experiences. | 6 |
| Provide opportunities for pupils to engage with employers, colleges, training providers and community organisations through enrichment and careers-related activities. | Exposure to positive destinations and future pathways can raise aspirations and support successful transitions into further education, employment and training. Gatsby Benchmarks highlight the importance of meaningful encounters with employers and education providers. | 6 |
| Comprehensive assessment of need on entry, including Aspire Pathway assessment, Boxall Profile, sensory profiling, attendance analysis and baseline academic assessment. | Pupils entering AP frequently present with multiple and overlapping needs, disrupted educational histories and gaps in previous assessment. Research from the Department for Education Alternative Provision guidance highlights the importance of accurately identifying barriers to engagement and learning in order to provide effective support and secure positive outcomes. | 7 |
| Highly personalised provision, adaptive teaching and therapeutic support matched to individual pupil need. | Evidence suggests that pupils in alternative provision achieve better outcomes when provision is tailored to individual strengths, needs and readiness for learning. Personalised approaches can improve engagement, attendance, behaviour and placement stability for vulnerable learners. | 7 |
| Multi-agency collaboration with Educational Psychology, | Pupils attending PRUs often require coordinated support from multiple services. Effective multi-agency working supports earlier identification of | 7 |

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| SEND, CAMHS, social care and health professionals. | need, reduces barriers to learning and improves long-term educational outcomes. | |
| Staff training in neurodiversity, trauma-informed practice, communication needs and adaptive approaches. | Pupils in AP are disproportionately likely to present with SEND, neurodevelopmental differences and unmet needs. Building staff expertise supports more inclusive practice and improves pupil engagement, emotional regulation and participation in learning. | 7 |
| Sensory and regulation-based interventions to support engagement and readiness to learn. | Many pupils in AP experience difficulties with emotional regulation, sensory processing and executive functioning. Evidence suggests that targeted regulation support can improve participation, attendance and access to learning. | 7 |

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

Budgeted cost: £ 790

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| *Attendance awards* | A tiered reward system using experiences (such as trips and inflatable activity days) alongside tangible rewards from a Pick & Mix reward box provides immediate and longer-term incentives for students to attend school regularly. Positive reinforcement is recognised as an effective strategy for encouraging desired behaviours, particularly for children and young people with SEMH needs who may respond well to achievable, motivating rewards. Experiential rewards also help strengthen students' sense of belonging and create positive associations with school, while celebrating both excellent and improved attendance ensures that success is accessible to all students, not just those with consistently high attendance. This approach supports the development of positive attendance habits and reinforces the school's culture of recognising effort and achievement. | 1 |
| Lesley Gregory Award (Attendance Trophy) | The Lesley Gregory Award provides a prestigious whole-school recognition | 1 |

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| | for students who demonstrate exceptional commitment to attendance. Celebration through the presentation of trophies raises the profile of attendance, promotes positive role models and reinforces the message that regular attendance is valued by the school. Celebrating attendance in assemblies and school events contributes to a positive attendance culture, increases students' sense of pride and achievement, and encourages peers to aspire to similar success. The award recognises commitment and resilience, helping to promote sustained engagement with education. | |

## Total budgeted cost: £ 105,764.00

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

## Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

*Outline the performance of your disadvantaged pupils in the previous academic year and explain how it has been assessed. You should draw on:*

- *At Rotherham Aspire we use Attendance, Boxall progress and academic progress (including reading) as our 3 key performance indicators. 2024/2025 The vast majority of pupils made either effective or highly effective progress for their pathway. For the purposes of the pupil premium report this has been broken down into the 3 KPIs however students in pathway 1 for example may not need to make progress in all 3 areas to be making effective progress. For some students we may need to focus on attendance before considering SEMH or academic progress.*
- *Every student's attendance is tracked weekly and appropriate support is targeted to families where attendance and/or pattern of attendance is a concern. This will remain a priority for our students. The new school attendance officer continues to be effective in targeting students who find attending school regularly difficult and understanding the key motivators for poor attendance.*
- *The vast majority of students make SEMH progress in the time they are at Rotherham Aspire and this remains the backbone of what we do. This will remain a focus for our work and we will continue to make use of current research and make innovative decisions in terms of supporting pupil need in a therapeutic and trauma informed way.*

**Attendance**

- Attendance improved from 53% to 62.4%.
- Persistent absence reduced from 62 students classed as PA to 44.

**SEMH – Boxall Profile Scores:**

- Rawmarsh FS1–Year 2: 86% of pupils made progress, with 71% exceeding expectations.
- Rawmarsh Years 3–6: 80% made progress, with 60% exceeding expectations.
- Rawmarsh Years 7–9: 62% made progress, with 31% exceeding expectations.
- Hutton Park Years 9–11: 27% made progress, with 7% exceeding expectations.
- Catcliffe Years 8–11: 89% made progress, with 78% exceeding expectations.
- Rotherham Aspire overall: 56% of pupils made progress, with 33% exceeding expectations.

**Academic**

- All students; 92.5% achieved English qualifications. Compared to 89.2% which were PP achieved English Qualifications.
- All students: 83% achieved Maths qualifications. Compared to 78.4% which were PP achieved a Maths qualification.
- Average reading age gain = 3 months.

**Destinations**

- 70.4%% sustained destination.
- NEET = 29.6%. in comparison with the LA average which is 4.1%

## 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 |
|---|---|
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| | |

## Service pupil premium funding (optional)

| *For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:* **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year** |
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| **The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils** |
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## Further information (optional)