

Early Years Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

This statement details our school's use of early years' pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our early years' 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 | Highfield Nursery School |
| Number of pupils in school (Oct 2025 Census) | 131 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils (2024-2025 comparison) | 39/131= 30% (+13%) |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended) | 2025-2026 , 2026-2027, 2027-2028 |
| Date this statement was published | 18/11/2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | November 2026 |
| Statement authorised by | Sharon Lewis |
| Pupil premium lead | Sharon Lewis |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Michelle Howles Chair of Local Committee Laura Brodie – EYPP link governor |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|---|---|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £18,555 (indicative) Financial year |
| 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 | Nov 2025 forecasted actual income by 31.03.2026 £22,065 financial year |
| Funding rate increased by 45% from April 2025 | £570 per child per year |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

We adopt a balanced approach to spending our Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) so we make sure we

- Continue to develop quality practice to deliver the greatest benefits for disadvantaged children.
- Consider the particular strengths and needs of each child.
- Make and embed changes to practice, so that our EYPP funding continues to benefit disadvantaged children in the future.

The balanced approach aligns with the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance for local authorities, so we can be confident that our approach meets their expectations.

Develop quality practice

High-quality education and care are important for all children, but the benefits for socio-economically disadvantaged children are greater. We can keep developing the quality of practice through effective professional development.

Tailor personalised support

Some disadvantaged children will need additional support and teaching to make sure they make strong progress. As we develop strategies which are positive for children who need extra support, we are also developing many practices which are positive for every child.

Lead, plan and sustain

The balanced approach is a useful starting point for our thinking. Our leadership is key to ensuring that we plan and sustain a strategy which narrows the learning gap in our setting.

Source: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/pupil-premium/balanced-approach>

Our intention is that all children, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and are on track in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage when they leave us to go to Primary School. The focus of our early years' pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal and close any gaps in their knowledge or skills.

We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker and children with special educational needs. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. 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. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach will be responsive to each child's needs, informed by our 'All About Me' conversations with parents before children start nursery and ongoing observations and assessments of the child. Forest School & the use of artists in residence have proved over many years to be creative practices that targets many of the challenges our children face and helps them develop the attitudes, knowledge and skills they need to succeed at primary school.

We will base this and the other initiatives in a nursery curriculum and environment which is language-rich, nurturing and focuses first on the prime areas of learning. This will ensure that all children can fully assess all seven areas of learning at nursery and be ready and able to thrive in their Reception class when they leave us.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|--|
| 1 | Wellcomm assessments, observations of children and discussions with parents show that disadvantaged pupils have generally lower levels of language skills and vocabulary than their peers. |
| 2 | Our disadvantaged pupils often live in terraced housing with overcrowding. Many children do not have access to a garden and this can result in less developed gross motor skills and understanding of the natural world. |
| 3 | Our disadvantaged pupils have higher levels of parents with mental health issues which can negatively impact their own wellbeing and self-confidence. |
| 4 | Our wellbeing screening (Leuven Scales) shows that our disadvantaged pupils have lower engagement levels and well-being than their peers. |
| 5 | Conversations with parents and the children have shown that our disadvantaged children have less access to enrichment activities, books and educational toys outside of school. |
| 6 | Our disadvantaged children often come to nursery hungry and not able to concentrate on their learning |

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 language skills and vocabulary | Children to have the gap closed in their Wellcomm score by at least one band by the time they leave the school to go to Reception |
| Improved self-confidence, concentration, independence skills and high wellbeing | Good engagement levels and independence skills are observed in the classroom. Children score at least a 3 in engagement and wellbeing on the Leuven Scales Children are on-track in PSED when they leave the school. |
| Enrichment experiences at nursery expand their vocabulary and knowledge | Children use new vocabulary learnt through experiences in their everyday play and conversation. Children link experiences to activities completed in class Concept Cat |
| Children are well-fed and ready to learn and make healthy choices with food | No child says they are hungry at nursery or cannot concentrate due to feeling hungry The children develop healthy eating habits which will stay with them for life. |

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £26,500

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Consistent use of Wellcomm across the school to assess language skills & adult-led small group sessions to teach vocabulary using the Wellcomm materials | There is a strong evidence base that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high-quality classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading: Oral language interventions Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF | 1 |
| Concept Cat Programme | Concept Cat is a programme designed to help three-to-four-year-old children develop early conceptual vocabulary – words like first, wide, and empty. These words are important for understanding concepts linked to the maths and science curricula, and the programme aims to support better outcomes by Key Stage 1. The programme runs across a school year and includes four main parts: A whole-class introduction to new words Play-based learning where the new words are used in context Simple parent-child activities to reinforce learning at home A whole-class review to revisit and consolidate learning | 1 |
| 2 x forest School/nature sessions per week to widen experiences, develop confidence, self-help, independence and language skills, and raise wellbeing | There is strong evidence that shows that children's academic attainment, social development, language and communication and emotional well-being is increased as a result of Forest School https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03004430.2018.1446430 https://www.forestschoolltraining.co.uk/forest-school/research/ | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 |
| Cost of wider experience activities subsidised e.g. Living Eggs, Animal Antics, Artist(s) in residence | There is intrinsic value in teaching pupils creative and performance skills and ensuring disadvantaged pupils access a rich and stimulating arts education. | 1, 2, 5 |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>sessions. Resources to support self-regulation</p> <p>Set of core books & parent workshop.</p> <p>Educational visits.</p> | <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation</p> <p>Maths through stories</p> | |
|--|---|--|

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

Budgeted cost: As above

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Adult led 1 to 1 / small group sessions to teach the correct pronunciation of sounds | <p>Evidence shows that small group tuition is effective and, as a rule of thumb, the smaller the group the better. Some studies suggest that greater feedback from the teacher, more sustained the engagement in smaller groups, or work which is more closely matched to learners' needs explains this impact.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition</p> | 1 |

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

Budgeted cost: £1700

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Daily snack | <p>Young children are growing quickly and have high energy and nutrient requirements for their size. They also eat smaller amounts than older children and adults, so it is important for them to eat regular meals and snacks that contain sufficient energy and nutrients for their needs.</p> <p>The pilots for the universal free school infants meals by the DfE found that children eating healthy meals at school had improved performance in the classroom. Improvements in attainment were strongest amongst pupils from less affluent families and amongst those with lower prior attainment. They also found social and behavioural benefits from children who sat down to eat with friends and teachers</p> <p>https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/commons-committees/Education/evidence-check-forum/Universal-infant-free-school-meals.pdf</p> | 6 |
| Fruit / vegetable sticks | <p>Research confirms that healthy eating habits in the years before school are very important because they influence</p> | 6 |

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| | | |
|--|---|---|
| provided for snack mid-morning and mid-afternoon | <p>growth, development and academic achievement in later life</p> <p>Over a fifth of children are either overweight or obese by the time they join reception class in primary school</p> <p>Eat Better Start Better – Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England:</p> <p>http://cft-staging-cdn.core-clients.co.uk.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/2015/06/CFT_Early_Years_Guide_Interactive_Sept-12.pdf</p> | |
| Early Words Together Parent Courses | <p>There is strong evidence that suggests that in the early years, programmes that encourage parents to engage with their children's learning have a positive impact on their attainment, especially in literacy and with children with low prior attainment.</p> <p>Sensory exploratory play workshops for children and parents and sensory play resources purchased for home learning.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement</p> | 1 |
| SEND equipment | Purchase of resources to support self-regulation eg, soothers, weighted blankets. | 5 |

Total budgeted cost: £28,200

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

| | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Autumn 24 | Spring 25 | Summer 25 |
| 23 | 36 | 56 |
| Actual Financial Year funding 2024-2025 | £12,552 | |

EYPP 2024- 2025 Provision Plan

We provided opportunities for awe and wonder through meaningful and enriching learning experiences. We have worked to support those families with EYPP children by providing them with teacher interventions, targeted support, small group work, Early Words Together and Startwell parent workshops, 2 x artists in residence, and healthy foods.

The impact of our high-quality teaching is that children’s knowledge built up over time and prior learning consolidated through development of skills. These experiences & events enhanced our children’s Cultural Capital.

Assessment tools (WellComm and PIC profile) were used to accurately assess children and plan provision during play and in small groups to support children to develop communication and language skills. Increased Differentiation Plans were introduced for children that required temporary support. Core books and rhymes were used for support with the learning of new vocabulary, understanding, listening and attention.

Children with EYPP have had access to targeted creative sessions with our resident artist and supporting children’s communication and language and physical development skills as well as supporting EAD and UW.

We have encouraged the children to attend as much as possible. Attendance for academic year 24-25 for EYPP children was 81%.

One quarter (27%) of EYPP children started nursery meeting developmental milestones in the prime areas. Throughout the year, we have tracked and monitored the experiences and progress of these children. The majority of children leave Nursery (July 2025) achieving their developmental milestones in PSED & expressive arts and design. Half of children had special educational needs. Data shows that children make accelerated progress in comparison to their starting points. 2024-2025 Use of Concept Cat as an intervention.

| Group | % Met PSED | % Met C+L | % Met PD | % Met L | % Met M | % Met EAD | % Met UW |
|-------|------------|-----------|----------|---------|---------|-----------|----------|
| EYPP | 63 | 57 | 40 | 47 | 23 | 60 | 60 |

Providing the children with this support through the EYPP funding has helped to provide the best start in life and with their education really working to narrow the attainment gap.

Externally provided programmes

| Programme | Provider |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Wellcomm | G.L. Assessment |
| Concept Cat | Better Communication CIC |