



## Pupil premium strategy statement – Elmley Castle C of E First School

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

### School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	76
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	5%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement for each academic year)	2025/2026 to 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	<i>Rachel Penney</i> Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	<i>Rachel Penney</i>
Governor / Trustee lead	<i>Emma Robinson lead for Inclusion</i>

### Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£8,690
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£8,690



## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

At Elmley Castle C of E First School, we believe that every child is a light in the world. We love one another, inspire growth, and serve our community with kindness. Rooted in Matthew 5:14 – “*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.*” – we nurture confident, compassionate learners who shine academically, socially, and spiritually.

Our BLISS moto guides all that we do:

Believe in yourself Love one another Inspire greatness Shine with kindness Serve with a heart of compassion

High-quality teaching sits at the heart of our strategy, supported by timely, targeted interventions and wider opportunities that build resilience and self-belief.

We recognise that disadvantage can take many forms—economic, emotional, or circumstantial—and we are determined to remove barriers so that every child can flourish.

To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they’re set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils’ outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve.

### Continuing our journey

During 2024–25, we embedded *The Write Stuff*, introduced *Unlocking Letters and Sounds*, and extended the *Thrive Approach*. Over the next three years we will deepen that work through earlier identification, enhanced speech and language support, targeted interventions, and outdoor learning through *Forest School*.

We are also embedding Magma Maths and Mastering Number across EYFS and KS1 to secure strong foundations in fluency and reasoning.



## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils. These are evident from Reception through to KS2 and in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils than their peers.
2	Reading, writing, and phonics – some disadvantaged pupils struggle with decoding, fluency, and stamina.
3	Mathematical reasoning and number sense – a minority show insecure fluency and confidence with problem solving.
4	Social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) – increased needs around self-regulation and confidence.
5	Attendance and participation – a small number of pupils below expected attendance and lower engagement in enrichment.



## 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 oral language and vocabulary	Improved oral language and vocabulary Earlier identification of those speech and language.
Improved reading and writing attainment	80 % of PP pupils reach ARE in reading and writing by 2028; evidence of strong fluency and independence.
Improved maths attainment	80 % of PP pupils meet ARE in maths by 2028; reasoning confidence improves.
Thrive show positive growth; pupil voice indicates confidence and belonging.	Thrive profiles show positive growth; pupil voice indicates confidence and belonging.
Improved attendance and engagement	PP attendance 95 %; PA gap 2 %; all PP pupils take part in at least one enrichment activity per term

## 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: £3K

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embed Unlocking Letters and Sounds with staff training and coaching.	<i>Phonics – EEF (+5 months)</i> . Strongest impact for early reading and spelling.	2
Develop writing through <i>The Write Stuff</i> and shared moderation.	EEF Feedback (+6) and Writing (+4).	2
Implement Magma Maths and Mastering Number in EYFS/KS1 to strengthen early number sense and fluency.	EEF: Improving Mathematics in the Early Years and KS1 (+6); Teaching for Mastery (NCETM) research guidance.	3



CPD on adaptive teaching, diagnostic assessment, and vocabulary enrichment.	EEF Metacognition (+7).	4
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### Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £3K

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Speech & Language Therapist on-site fortnightly with follow-up interventions.	Oral language interventions (+6).	1-2
Welcomm screening for early identification and EYFS/KS1 intervention.	EEF: Early Years Communication Approaches.	1
Targeted TP interventions in reading fluency and immediate maths catch up.	EEF: 1-to-1 / small-group tuition (+4-+5).	2-3

### Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £2,690K

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embed Thrive Approach with trained practitioner.	EEF: Social & Emotional Learning (+4); DfE 2018 review.	4
Forest School fortnightly sessions to build resilience and teamwork (funding TP day).	EEF: Outdoor Adventure Learning (+4).	4-5
Attendance & parental engagement strategy	DfE: Working Together to Improve Attendance (2022).	5
New Family Support Worker – regular check-ins with PP families to identify barriers early and coordinate support	EEF: Parental Engagement (+4); DfE Early Help (2023).	1, 4, 5

Total budgeted cost: £8,690



## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Our analysis of 2023–24 outcomes showed that phonics interventions were not sufficiently robust following limited staff training in the previous scheme. As a result, some children began to fall behind and were not receiving the timely support they so urgently needed. This informed the move to Unlocking Letters and Sounds to ensure greater fidelity and staff confidence.

Writing attainment for disadvantaged pupils was below that of peers, particularly in KS1, prompting investment in *The Write Stuff* and new comprehension materials.

Thrive sessions improved engagement and attendance for identified pupils, while the school's overall attendance (96%) was slightly higher than that of disadvantaged learners (83%). We are hoping that personalised family support will reduce persistent absences for several pupils.

The number and complexity of needs increased, particularly in speech, language, and emotional regulation. Delays in external-agency access led us to commission fortnightly on-site Speech and Language Therapist input and implement Welcomm screening for earlier identification.

We know that the Thrive approach has a positive impact on wellbeing and the need to strengthen early language, phonics consistency, and attendance. We have now trained our own Thrive practitioners so that we can offer more sessions and respond swiftly to pupils' needs. These insights directly informed this 2025–28 plan.



## Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Thrive	Thrive Approach
Unlocking Letter and Sounds	DfE-validated scheme
The Write Stuff	Jane Considine Education
SALT input	WCC NHS
Welcomm	Speech Link Multilingual
Forest School Curriculum	Qualified Forest School Leader
Magma Maths	Magma Maths
Mastering Number	NCETM / Maths Hubs

## Service pupil premium funding (optional)

How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year
NA
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
NA



## Further information (optional)

### Additional activity

Elmley Castle C of E First School is a small, nurturing rural primary where Christian values and close relationships underpin every aspect of school life. Our approach is deliberately personal: we know each pupil and family well, enabling timely, targeted intervention and a whole-school sense of responsibility.

Monitoring will take place termly through pupil progress meetings, Thrive assessments, and governor reviews. Impact will be evaluated through attainment data, attendance tracking, and pupil voice.

From 2025–26, our Family Support Worker will check in regularly with Pupil Premium families to ensure barriers are identified early and pastoral, attendance, and wellbeing strategies are coordinated between home and school.

Our long-term goal to 2028 is simple:

Every child shines – academically, emotionally, and spiritually – believing in themselves, loving one another, inspiring greatness, shining with kindness, and serving with compassion.

### Planning, implementation, and evaluation

In planning our new pupil premium strategy, we evaluated why activity undertaken in previous years had not had the degree of impact that we had expected.

We triangulated evidence from multiple sources of data including assessments, engagement in class book scrutiny, and conversations with parents, children and teachers, in order to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils.

We looked at several reports, studies and research papers about effective use of pupil premium, the impact of disadvantage on education outcomes and how to address challenges to learning presented by socio-economic disadvantage.

We used the [EEF's implementation guidance](#) to help us develop our strategy, particularly the 'explore' phase to help us diagnose specific pupil needs and work out which activities and approaches are likely to work in our school. We will continue to use it through the implementation of activities.