

ALNS Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details the use of pupil premium funding at ALNS for the 2025 to 2026 academic year to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged students. This plan represents year one of our new three plan.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the impact that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Admiral Lord Nelson School
Number of students in school	1244 (1251 Nov 25)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible students	26.5% (33% Nov 25)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2025- 2028
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Chris Doherty – Head Teacher
Pupil premium lead	Martin Fuller – Assistant Head: Curriculum
Governor / Trustee lead	David van Walt – Governor with responsibility for Pupil Premium

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 354,750
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£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	£ 354,750

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Statement of Intent

At Admiral Lord Nelson School (ALNS) our mission “*Dare to Dream, Aim to Achieve*” applies to every student. Our goal is that all students — regardless of background or starting point — experience high-quality teaching, tailored support, and the widest possible opportunities to succeed both academically and personally.

Our approach centres on high-quality teaching, targeted academic support, and wider strategies that address the non-academic barriers our disadvantaged students face. Research shows that excellent teaching has the greatest impact on the outcomes of disadvantaged learners, so this remains our strongest lever for improvement.

At ALNS, we know that high-quality teaching removes barriers. Rooted in our Trust Teaching and Learning Principles, our practice focuses on providing appropriate challenge for all, clear modelling, responsive teaching, meaningful feedback, vocabulary-rich literacy and fostering a love of learning. These principles ensure that every student — particularly those who are disadvantaged — can make strong progress.

Our targeted academic support, driven by robust assessment and including mentoring and tutoring, is designed to address gaps quickly and provide personalised, high-impact intervention for those who need it most.

We also implement wider strategies that improve attendance, wellbeing and access to enrichment, ensuring that disadvantaged students experience genuine equity and the same breadth of opportunity as their peers.

Therefore, we invest heavily in developing our classroom practice to benefit all students, especially those who need it most, while also tackling barriers beyond the classroom — from attendance to wellbeing and enrichment. Crucially, our plans are needs-based, not assumption-based: they arise from careful analysis of data and a deep understanding of our students’ context, not stereotypes about poverty.

Our Core Commitment

High Expectations for All

We hold ambitious aspirations for every student. We never stereotype or lower standards for

disadvantaged learners — every student at ALNS deserves a rich, challenging education and the support to succeed.

Evidence-Informed Action

Our strategy is rooted in robust research, especially from the EEF and Marc Rowland’s work. We focus on what works: high-impact teaching strategies like quality feedback, vocabulary, reading, and metacognition.

Quality First Teaching

The most effective support we offer is excellent teaching, every lesson, every day. This means a well-sequenced curriculum and teachers who adapt expertly to meet diverse needs.

Targeted, Personalised Support

Disadvantaged students are not a homogeneous group. Our interventions are tailored and based on diagnostic assessment — with the greatest support for those who need it most.

Everyone’s Responsibility

The progress of disadvantaged students is a whole-school priority. Every adult at ALNS — teacher, leader, support staff — is a champion for equity and excellence.

Driven by Moral Purpose

We build strong relationships, promote confidence, and remove barriers with high challenge and high support. By doing what’s right for disadvantaged students, we improve outcomes for all.

2025–26 priorities

1. Focus Five embedded practice – each teacher identifies five disadvantaged students per class and applies planned scaffolds, feedback and relational recognition; departments track impact.
2. Attendance Project – a targeted mentoring programme for 30 Year 9 and 10 students, supported by Portsmouth LA funding, to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence.
3. Boys Project (in collaboration with University of Portsmouth) – *Learning the Rules: Where young men learn what it is to be a man*. The project examines male identity, mental health and online influence (the “manosphere”), developing staff understanding through Appreciative Inquiry and strengthening relational practice to raise engagement and outcomes for disadvantaged boys.
4. Digital equity – access to high quality digital technology prepares students for future success as life long learners, ensuring parity of access will also improve IL completion.
5. Cultural capital – proportional disadvantaged representation secured on major enrichment experiences such as the Panto, CAEN Visit and Year 8 Camp to broaden horizons and build aspiration.

At Admiral Lord Nelson School, our Pupil Premium strategy is a long-term, evidence-informed commitment to removing barriers and enabling every student to thrive — academically, socially and emotionally — regardless of their background. Grounded in the EEF’s 5-step model (diagnose, plan, implement, monitor, sustain), we are focused on building sustainable systems that nurture talent, address need and strengthen equity across the school. This strategy reflects our unwavering belief that no student should be left behind. By prioritising high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and inclusive wider strategies, we are determined to close the attainment gap and ensure that by 2028, disadvantage is no longer a predictor of outcomes at ALNS.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Raising Academic Outcomes and Closing the Attainment Gap Disadvantaged students at ALNS continue to achieve below national expectations. In 2025, Attainment 8 was at 28.7, compared to national non-disadvantaged figure of 46 respectively. Only 15.6% secured a 5+ in English and Maths. These outcomes reflect a persistent and widening attainment gap, requiring a sustained focus on achievement across all key stages, underpinned by high-quality teaching and targeted support.
2	Improving Engagement and Learning Behaviours Many disadvantaged students exhibit passive behaviours in class, often reluctant to contribute or take academic risks. This lack of active engagement and resilience limits progress and deep understanding. A key focus is helping all students become confident, independent learners who seek challenge and use feedback constructively.
3	Closing Literacy and Language Gaps Gaps in reading comprehension, vocabulary and spoken language remain a barrier. Many students arrive in Year 7 with underdeveloped literacy and oracy skills, restricting access to the wider curriculum. Addressing these gaps is essential to ensure that disadvantaged learners can engage confidently with academic content across all subjects.
4	Expanding Enrichment and Raising Aspirations Despite financial support, disadvantaged participation in enrichment remains lower than non-disadvantaged participation. Limited cultural capital and exposure beyond the local area can reduce confidence and aspiration. Ensuring equitable access to trips, clubs and wider experiences is vital to broadening horizons and inspiring ambition.
5	Addressing Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Needs A number of disadvantaged students face SEMH challenges including anxiety, trauma and low self-esteem. These needs impact attendance, behaviour and learning. Without robust relational support and targeted pastoral provision, academic strategies will fall short. Supporting SEMH is foundational to engagement and academic success.

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
1. Raise attainment and progress for disadvantaged students across KS3 and KS4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved Attainment 8 for Pupil Premium cohort (target – over 35) - Increase in % achieving 5+ and 4+ Basics - 25 % achieve 5+ Basics; - 45 % achieve 4+ Basics. <p>Subject-level gaps reduced compared to 2025 baseline</p>
2. Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence among disadvantaged students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PP attendance to improve from 85.6% toward 90% - PA (Persistent Absence) to reduce significantly, especially in Year 9 and 10 - Engagement with mentoring and pastoral interventions sustained
3. Close vocabulary and literacy gaps to ensure curriculum access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved reading comprehension scores in GL assessments - Greater engagement with tier 2 and 3 vocabulary across subjects - Positive impact on written and verbal communication across the curriculum
4. Embed high-quality adaptive teaching strategies through Focus Five and TAGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus Five support evident in all classrooms - Staff use scaffolding, feedback and TAG guidance effectively - Departmental tracking shows impact on target students
5. Ensure equity of access to digital learning and independent learning completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% digital access for targeted PP students - IL rates are within 5% for PP and non-PP
6. Engagement and cultural capital.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -PP representation on trips and enrichment matches or exceeds proportionality - Student voice reflects increased confidence, cultural capital and engagement
7. Boys Project impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Average attendance increases by at least 3% independent learning (IL) completion improves by 10%, -qualitative feedback shows stronger relationships
8. Address SEMH needs to support learning and attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fewer SEMH-related behaviour incidents and exclusions among PP students - Improved emotional wellbeing reported through pastoral data and student surveys - Sustained access to support via mentoring and external agencies

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: £ 225,250

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Teaching and learning focus on evidence-based strategies to support Quality First Teaching. Development of shared approaches and routines using SLT to monitor and support staff.	Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils (DFE, 2015) suggests high quality teaching as a key aspect of successful schools. EEF toolkit : collaborative learning + 5 months Feedback: + 6 months Metacognition and self regulation: + 7 months	1&4
Embed "Focus Five" instructional framework	EEF evidence shows that high-quality teaching disproportionately benefits disadvantaged learners. Focus Five, informed by Greenshaw Research School practice, ensures teachers plan adaptively with their key PP pupils in mind. Senior leaders monitor implementation and impact through departmental QA.	1
Introduce teacher advice and guidance tools to support adaptive teaching	We have developed and launched adaptive teaching guidance ("TAGs") to support teachers in planning responsively for disadvantaged students. This includes practical strategies for scaffolding, modelling, and differentiation. The guidance is aligned with the EEF's 'Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools' and 'Effective Professional Development' reports. Teachers are supported to use TAGs as part of their lesson planning and instructional routines.	2
Trust Director support for English, Maths and Science To support disadvantaged students to make positive progress. To monitor and implement appropriate interventions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Progress in each subject area is positive ● Support for curriculum leaders ● Cross Trust analysis of perform 	EEF toolkit : collaborative learning + 5 months	1

Purchase of GL Exact to allow us to get access arrangements in place to support disadvantaged and SEND students.	<p>Exact meets the rigorous requirements of exam access arrangements applications in a single digital assessment, providing standardised measures and detailed item-level analysis.</p> <p>Will allow us to easily screen students and produce simple reports that flag which pupils could qualify for additional arrangements to help them achieve results that reflect their ability.</p>	3
Whole school focus on academic language – vocabulary acquisition and comprehension skills to improve communication & comprehension skills	<p>GL Reading & Spelling Tests Oct & June to measure students reading & spelling ages (replacing AR star reader tests)</p> <p>Whole School Literacy Action Plan</p> <p>EEF Recommendations 1, 2 & 3</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4</p> <p>English Department trackers identifying key students for intervention, which include pp students.</p>	3
Whole school focus on reading & reading interventions	<p>Whole School Literacy Action Plan</p> <p>Whole School Reading Plan</p> <p>EEF Recommendations 3, 4 & 5 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4</p> <p>'Let's Read': 15 minutes whole class reading at the start of every lesson, led and read by the English teacher with an expectation that all are engaging, using mini whiteboards for key comprehension and inference skills. A carefully planned range of texts has been mapped out across KS3.</p>	3

	(Primary foci: engagement, participation & breadth of texts).	
Training provided to all staff across the Trust in January 26 so that relational and restorative approaches are embedded in the culture of the school, exemplified through tutors as champions.	<p>Getting the ethos, culture and relationships right is an approach to dealing with the fall out when things go wrong, limiting the damage, stopping things escalating.</p> <p>https://whentheadultschange.com/</p> <p>leading better behaviour - jarlathc</p> <p>https://www.independentthinking.co.uk/associates/mark-finnis/</p> <p>Know me - Teach me-Louise-Michelle-Bomber</p>	2&5
<p>Chromebook Scheme – providing equity of access to technology, resources and all lessons.</p> <p>Chromebooks subsidies</p> <p>Digital curriculum expansion</p>	<p>Planning for a well implemented remote learning strategy can be effectively combined with re-visiting homework policies and related approaches to fostering independent learning.”</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19 Resources/The EEF guide to supporting school planning - A tiered approach to 2021.pdf</p>	1&3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 85, 000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
MS Teams: Reading IL – set up (& being established for reading IL and as a way of teachers measuring fluency, reading ages & identifying key students for intervention within the classroom (& through SEND Team).	<p>Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with overall attainment.</p> <p>EEF toolkit: Phonics: + 5 months</p> <p>Reading comprehension strategies: + 6 months</p> <p>TA interventions: + 4 months</p>	3

Texts can be adapted to suit reading ages of students	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	
1:1 or small group tuition/intervention with LTA: Cognition & Learning The school runs targeted phonics, one to one reading, Reading Plus, Lexia and numeracy support for Year 7–9 pupils. Each group receives personalised, evidence based teaching to improve decoding, comprehension and foundational literacy or numeracy skills.	EEF toolkit: 1:1: + 5 months Individualised instruction: + 4 months	1&3
GL Reader in class intervention	Using new GL data, teachers focus on the lowest 20% in class for 1:1 support in lessons: steps to success, sentence stems, peer-assisted focus on learning, simplifying a text, etc..	3
All students are able to access curriculum and enrichment trips regardless of cost.	EEF toolkit: Arts participation : + 3 months	4
Mentoring Programmes Girls' Network: mentoring programme linking Pupil Premium girls with strong, female role models in local business / industry Boys Impact - programme to support the holistic development of Pupil Premium boys from disadvantaged backgrounds with Portsmouth University.	"Mentors typically build relationships with young people by meeting with them one to one for about an hour a week over a sustained period, either during school, at the end of the school day, or at weekends... On average, mentoring appears to have a small positive impact on academic outcomes... Some studies have found more positive impacts for pupils and for non-academic outcomes such as attitudes to school, attendance and behaviour.	5

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

Budgeted cost: £45,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance team is in place to track and monitor attendance across the whole school, to overcome as many reasons as possible that our disadvantaged students are not in school and raise attendance.	A belief that attendance is everyone's business. Regular absences from school can affect attainment levels, the quality of schoolwork and qualifications gained; school routine, disrupting the child's learning and that of the other students; the chances of children and young people being involved in anti-social behaviour, a child or young person's general wellbeing and long-term life opportunities. Evidence suggests that the more time	2&4

	a student is absent from school, the lower their results in performance will be.	
Rewards and incentives for sustained attendance, IL completion and achievement.	Motivation and public recognition. Builds buy in and students realise what the norm is.	4
Extra Curricular – providing opportunities and tracking engagement Clubs, Duke of Edinburgh, Subject specific trips , Prom PD days	“Children from the wealthiest backgrounds are 3 times more likely to take up music classes out of school hours than children from the poorest backgrounds. There is also a 20% participation gap in sport... Children from the poorest families are 3 times more likely to not participate in any extra-curricular activities compared to those from wealthier families... Extra-curricular activity is so important for young people, and can be especially advantageous in helping to improve the life-chances of those from disadvantaged backgrounds.” Extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	4
Careers/NEET support	“Careers education can be crucial in developing the knowledge, confidence and skills young people need to make well informed, relevant choices and plans for their future. This is especially true of students from poorer backgrounds, who are less likely to have family or friends with the insight and expertise to offer advice. High quality careers education can help them progress smoothly into further learning and work.” SYM873648_Careers-Education-Infographic	2
Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE advice. Staff training, attendance at network meeting to share practice and develop new procedures.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels. Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)	2
Contingency fund to reduce barriers to attendance for disadvantaged students (typically around transport and uniform)	Based on experience we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	2 & 4

Total budgeted cost: £ 354, 750

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

Our 2024–25 Pupil Premium strategy produced mixed outcomes. There were notable improvements in engagement, literacy and enrichment, but core academic results remained below national averages.

Attainment and Progress:

The average Attainment 8 for disadvantaged Year 11 students fell to 28.7 (down from 32.3, compared with 46 nationally). 15.6 % attained a grade 5+ in English and Maths (down from 23.6 %, versus 45.7 % nationally), and 31.3 % achieved 4+ (down from 49.1 %). However, some subjects improved. German, Food Technology and the separate sciences showed much narrower gaps.

A clear positive is the high EBacc entry rate: over 54 % of disadvantaged students were entered for the full suite of EBacc subjects—far higher than the national average (29%) for disadvantaged pupils. This reflects our commitment to providing a broad, aspirational curriculum. Provisional data indicate that Ebacc average points for disadvantaged pupils were lower than national (approx. 2.6 vs 4.1), so the challenge is to convert strong access into high attainment.

Crucially, disadvantaged students with good attendance achieved much higher progress scores indicating that engagement is a powerful driver of attainment.

Admiral Lord Nelson School also continues to excel in securing strong post-16 outcomes for disadvantaged students. In 2023/24 (most recently available data), 85% of our disadvantaged leavers progressed into education, employment or training — significantly above the Portsmouth average of 79% and above the national performance average of 83%. Over the last three years, ALNS has consistently outperformed the local authority average for disadvantaged NEET outcomes, reflecting our robust careers education, pastoral support and aspirational guidance. This sustained success affirms that, despite academic attainment challenges, our students leave well-supported, equipped with clear pathways and ambitions for the future.

Attendance and Persistent Absence:

Attendance remained our biggest challenge. Disadvantaged pupils averaged 85–86 % attendance, compared to 94 % for non-PP, with a gap that widened to 8.4 %. Persistent absence was concentrated among Years 9 and 10. Despite daily monitoring, parental communication and rewards, overall attendance rose only marginally. Lessons learned led us to launch an Attendance Mentoring project, with a dedicated mentor for the most absent students, and a renewed focus on whole school attendance culture.

Literacy and Vocabulary:

Targeted literacy initiatives (vocabulary teaching and reading programmes) yielded clear benefits. Reading-age tests showed that the weakest readers in Year 7 improved. Yet many still read below age expectations, and extended writing remains weak. Literacy work must continue and be consistently woven into every subject; in 2025–26 we will expand interventions, embed oracy further and reinforce “literacy across the curriculum”.

Engagement and Learning Behaviours:

Disadvantaged pupils were often seen as being passive in class. Training on cold calling, questioning and inclusive strategies, plus early adoption of the Focus Five approach, improved participation of disadvantaged students. Student surveys show more disadvantaged students feel like teachers took an interest in them. However, independent learning (homework) completion remained a particular weakness – only about 54 % of Year 9 PP students consistently completed assignments, versus 80 % of non-PP. Lack of motivation and structure, not access to technology (98 % of Year 7 PP students now have Chromebooks), remains the barrier. For 2025–26 we will expand homework clubs and engage parents more closely to support study habits.

SEMH and Relational Support:

A broad programme of mentoring and relational and restorative practice helped sustain engagement. Post16 outcomes were strong: nearly every disadvantaged leaver secured further education, we will still work hard to deliver our current offer and expand targeted initiatives such as the new Boys Project on identity and mental health.

Enrichment and Cultural Capital:

We prioritised access to trips and clubs. Disadvantaged participation in major activities (e.g. Year 8 camp, pantomime) now matches or exceeds cohort representation, aided by subsidies and personal invitations. Some opportunities (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh) still saw low take-up due to equipment or confidence barriers; going forward we will provide loans and mentoring to encourage uptake. Overall, widening cultural capital remains a significant strength of last year's strategy.

Summary and Next Steps:

We recognise encouraging signs: improved engagement, literacy gains in younger years, strong pastoral support and richer cultural experiences. We also acknowledge weaknesses: the attainment gap widened, core results remain too low, and attendance persists as a barrier. These insights shape our 2025–26 plan. We have intensified actions: a dedicated attendance team carrying out home visits, a whole school rollout of Focus Five, more academic tutoring, deeper literacy integration and systematic tracking of PP participation in clubs and trips. Our needs led approach – combining academic rigour with pastoral care and cultural exposure – is essential. Over the course of this strategy, we are determined to ensure that by 2028 disadvantage is no longer a predictor of outcomes at ALNS. With clear targets and rigorous monitoring, we will continually refine our strategy to ensure disadvantaged students thrive at ALNS.