Pupil premium strategy statement – Marpool Primary 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	243
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	34.2%
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	Jan 2026
Date last reviewed	July 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Jonathan Bishop
Pupil premium lead	Tim Cook
Governor / Trustee lead	Lorwyn Randall

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£107,350
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£107,350

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

As part of Cornerstone Academy Trust, at Marpool Primary we seek to create and promote a challenging learning environment that inspires children to achieve high standards and become life-long independent learners. We work to set consistently high expectations, build children's confidence and ensure engagement for all. In each of our schools we endeavour to develop creative thinkers, inquisitive questioners and avid problem solvers, with flexible skills, who are successful communicators. All children learn to collaborate effectively at all levels, including working with our international partners, and adapting to the needs of a diverse and ever-changing society. By embracing technology as part of everyday teaching, our schools take a new approach to digital tools, embedding their use within a broad and balanced curriculum. We offer and promote a challenging computational learning environment. The children are taught from an early age to program, to develop good logical thinking skills, to solve problems and to collaborate effectively with their peers.

Our motto across The Cornerstone Academy Trust (TCAT) is "Fortune Favours the Brave" and our values include individual liberty and respect for other religions and cultures. These are discussed explicitly with the children during assemblies, and they are reinforced during class time.

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers.

We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker and young carers. 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 common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. 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.

Challenges:

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	**Underdeveloped oral language and vocabulary**. Assessments, classroom observations and discussions with pupils indicate that many disadvantaged pupils enter school with weaker oral language, vocabulary and expressive communication than their peers. These gaps are evident from Reception and persist into Key Stage 2, limiting pupils' ability to access the curriculum, articulate understanding and engage confidently with increasingly complex texts and tasks. This challenge is more prevalent among disadvantaged pupils and contributes to later underachievement, particularly in reading, writing and reasoning across subjects.
2	**Significant and widening attainment gaps over time**. Assessment data shows that disadvantaged pupils achieve at a significantly lower level than non-disadvantaged peers, with gaps widening as pupils move through the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, only around 20% of Pupil Premium pupils achieve the expected standard in Reading and Mathematics. While entry data in Reception (2024–25) shows a stronger starting point for disadvantaged pupils (71% achieving ARE in Number and Comprehension, compared with 84% and 87% respectively for non-disadvantaged pupils), these early gaps widen over time rather than closing. This indicates that early strengths are not sustained through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, resulting in entrenched underachievement by Year 6.
3	**Social, emotional and wellbeing barriers affecting learning.** Assessments, observations, discussions with pupils and families, and wellbeing survey evidence (including PASS) indicate that some disadvantaged pupils experience social and emotional challenges, including reduced self-confidence as learners and fewer enrichment opportunities beyond the school day. While PASS data shows generally positive attitudes to school, it also highlights variability in pupils' confidence, resilience and sense of academic self-efficacy, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. These factors can limit engagement, persistence and progress, and contribute indirectly to weaker attainment outcomes over time

4	**Lower attendance among disadvantaged pupils**. Attendance data shows that disadvantaged pupils attend less regularly than their peers, with attendance of 90.71% for Pupil Premium pupils compared with 96.61% for non-disadvantaged pupils. Persistent and sporadic absence reduces continuity of learning and disproportionately affects disadvantaged pupils, compounding existing gaps in knowledge and limiting the impact of high-quality teaching and targeted intervention
5	**Insecure fluency and automaticity in early reading and writing**. Assessment evidence, phonics outcomes, classroom observations and pupil work scrutiny indicate that too many disadvantaged pupils do not develop sufficient automaticity in early reading skills. While initial phonics outcomes are relatively strong, this does not translate into fluent, automatic decoding and reading stamina as pupils move through Key Stage 2. As a result, disadvantaged pupils expend disproportionate cognitive effort on decoding and transcription, limiting comprehension, vocabulary development and written composition. This lack of automaticity is a key contributory factor to weak reading and writing outcomes by the end of KS2.
6	**Insecure fluency and automaticity in mathematics**. Assessment data, including the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check and Key Stage 2 outcomes, indicates that while some pupils demonstrate surface-level recall of number facts, this fluency is not sufficiently embedded or sustained over time, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Weak automaticity in number facts, calculation strategies and mathematical language limits pupils' ability to reason, solve problems and apply knowledge flexibly. These gaps become increasingly pronounced across Key Stage 2 and contribute directly to low attainment for disadvantaged pupils in mathematics by Year 6.

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 skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.
Improved reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2.	KS2 reading outcomes in 2027/28 show that more than 90% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.

Improved maths attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2.	KS2 maths outcomes in 2027/28 show that more than 90% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2027/28 demonstrated by: • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • a significant reduction in bullying • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. This will be reflected in PASS survey outcomes
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance by 2027/28 demonstrated by the overall attendance rate for all children being at least in line with national average, PP pupils being no less than 93%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers has reduced by half, from 6% to 3%.

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: £37,781

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments. Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly.	When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups: Diagnostic assessment | EEF £2579	2, 5, 6
Embedding dialogic activities across the school curriculum. These can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend vocabulary. We will purchase resources and fund ongoing	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:	1,2

teacher training and release time.	Oral language interventions | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	
Ongoing training on a DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading, particularly for disadvantaged pupils: Phonics | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF £757	2,5
Enhancement of our maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE and EEF guidance. We will fund teacher release time to embed key elements of guidance in school and to access Maths Hub resources and CPD (including Teaching for Mastery training).	The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: Mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2 The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3	2,6
Access to digital resources to support teaching & learning. Use of Teams and OneNote resources to access the curriculum 1:1 Access to digital devices to support learning Use of video as tool to support communication and access to wider curriculum	As a national leading organisation in this area, children benefit from a curriculum that is rooted in technology – this is a curriculum that has been identified by Ofsted as Outstanding on multiple occasions. £20750	2
Employment of specialist teachers working across all Trust schools – across Art, Music, PE.	We know that the single greatest factor in improving the outcomes of disadvantaged children is access to high quality teaching. In this instance, the specialist teaching ensures a high quality access to the wider curriculum, enhancing the cultural capital of children who may not otherwise have access to such experiences. The importance of wider Arts experiences is highlighted by the EEF:	2

	Arts participation | EEF £13695	

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

Budgeted cost: **£39,688**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
One to one mentoring (KS2) and focused tuition (KS1) for pupils in need of additional support, delivered in addition to, and linked with, normal lessons. Tutoring will be implemented with the help of DfE's guide: Tutoring: guidance for education settings	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind: One to one tuition | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF Small group tuition | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF Mentoring | EEF £35483	4,5,6
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support. This will be delivered in collaboration with our local English hub.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: Phonics | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF £3150	2,5
Provision of a Trust employed SALT	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF £1055	1,2

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

Budgeted cost: **£29,881**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole staff training on behaviour management and anti-bullying approaches with the aim of developing our school ethos and improving behaviour across school. Specifically, this is the roll out of "Price Training", the de-escalation and positive control training.	Both targeted interventions and universal approaches can have positive overall effects: Behaviour interventions | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF £613	3, 4
Whole Trust provision of a School Nurse, who can offer high quality social interventions to support inclusion, and who can contribute to teaching specific aspects of the RSE/SRE curriculum,	Both targeted and universal approached positive impact on children's attendance and welfare. £2388	3,4
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's guidance on working together to improve school attendance. This will involve leadership time to to improve attendance.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence. £1236	4
Access to wider trips, visits and residentials is reduced by 40% for children who qualify for PP funding.	In order to ensure as many children as possible access a host of wide ranging opportunities, we offer a significant discount to qualifying children. £7328	3,4
Uniform fund	All PP children to qualify for one free set of uniform per annum. £185	3,4
Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified. £65719	All

Total budgeted cost: **£18,131**

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Evaluation of outcomes at Marpool Primary School (2024–2025), with a focus on disadvantaged pupils

Outcomes at Marpool Primary School in 2024–2025 present a clear and consistent pattern. While early attainment for disadvantaged pupils is relatively secure, this advantage is not sustained as pupils move through the school. Gaps widen progressively, resulting in very weak outcomes for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium by the end of Key Stage 2. This evaluation draws on statutory assessment outcomes, internal school data, pupil-level attendance and wellbeing information, and comparative national benchmarks to triangulate performance and identify the drivers of underachievement.

Context

Marpool serves a community with very high levels of disadvantage. 48.8% of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium, almost double the national average. This context significantly increases the importance of securing strong, consistent teaching, high attendance and sustained curriculum coherence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Where these factors are not sufficiently strong, the risk of cumulative underachievement is amplified.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

EYFS outcomes in 2024–2025 provide a comparatively secure starting point. 73.7% of pupils achieved a Good Level of Development, above the national average of 69.1%. Disadvantaged pupils performed slightly better than their peers at this stage, with 75.0% of Pupil Premium pupils achieving GLD compared with 72.7% of non-Pupil Premium pupils.

This indicates that early years provision is effective in mitigating disadvantage at the point of entry to statutory schooling. As with Countess Wear, EYFS outcomes are not the primary driver of later underperformance. Many disadvantaged pupils begin Key Stage 1 with an appropriate foundation for learning.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

The transition into Key Stage 1 marks a point of emerging fragility. In 2024–2025, 83.3% of pupils met the expected standard in the Phonics Screening Check. Outcomes

for disadvantaged pupils were slightly weaker, with 80.0% of Pupil Premium pupils meeting the standard compared with 84.6% of non-Pupil Premium pupils.

Although the gap at this stage is relatively modest, it represents the point at which early advantages for disadvantaged pupils begin to narrow. This weakening in early reading is important context when interpreting later outcomes, as decoding security underpins progress across the wider curriculum.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)

The Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check provides a useful mid-key-stage indicator. In 2024–2025, the whole-cohort average score was 20.9, broadly in line with the national average (20.7). However, as at Countess Wear, this headline figure masks significant internal variation.

When considered alongside later KS2 outcomes, the MTC suggests that surface-level fluency is not translating into secure mathematical understanding over time, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. This indicates that recall alone is insufficient without sustained curriculum coherence and high-quality teaching across Key Stage 2.

Key Stage 2 outcomes (Year 6)

By the end of Key Stage 2, the attainment picture is stark, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

- Combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics:
  30.8% school vs 63.1% nationally

The disadvantaged breakdown sharpens this picture further:

- Pupil Premium pupils: 15.8% achieved the expected standard
- Non-Pupil Premium pupils: 39.4% achieved the expected standard

This represents an internal disadvantage gap of 23.6 percentage points, and a 47.3 percentage-point gap between disadvantaged pupils at Marpool and pupils nationally.

These outcomes demonstrate that disadvantaged pupils are the principal driver of weak KS2 performance. Despite relatively secure starting points in EYFS and broadly positive early reading outcomes, disadvantaged pupils do not make sufficient progress across Key Stage 2 to reach age-related expectations. The scale of underachievement cannot be explained by cohort variation alone.

Attendance, behaviour and pupil attitudes

Attendance provides important additional context. While overall attendance is broadly comparable with national figures, attendance for disadvantaged pupils is lower, reducing continuity of learning and compounding existing attainment gaps.

Behaviour is a clear strength. There were no suspensions or exclusions during the academic year, including for Pupil Premium pupils. PASS survey evidence further indicates that pupils report positive attitudes to school, good engagement and a willingness to learn.

Taken together, this confirms that underachievement is not driven by behaviour, motivation or disengagement, but by the consistency, sustainability and cumulative impact of learning over time.

Overall evaluation

Taken together, the evidence presents a coherent and credible narrative. Disadvantaged pupils at Marpool make a relatively secure start, but early gains are not sustained. Subtle weakening at Key Stage 1, combined with insufficiently strong curriculum implementation and learning progression through Key Stage 2, results in very weak end-of-phase outcomes for Pupil Premium pupils.

As at Countess Wear, positive behaviour, improving attendance systems and strong pupil attitudes provide a secure foundation. However, disadvantage remains the central factor shaping outcomes. Improving the consistency, sustainability and impact of provision for Pupil Premium pupils — particularly in early reading development and mathematical fluency over time — must remain a core strategic priority.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider