



Department  
for Education

# Using pupil premium: guidance for school leaders

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## Purpose of pupil premium

The pupil premium grant is funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged 5-16 year-olds in state-funded schools in England. In the financial year 2023-24, pupil premium spending will increase to almost £2.9 billion, with an additional £1 billion of recovery premium funding across academic years 2022/23 and 2023/2024.

In England the primary and secondary school attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has grown between 2019 and 2022, having narrowed between 2011 and 2019. In the context of the widening attainment gap, it is more important than ever that schools use the wealth of evidence of 'what works', evaluated by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), to drive maximum impact from the pupil premium.

Based on latest data about the impact of the pandemic on reading and maths - which are the cornerstones of a broad, academic, knowledge-rich curriculum - we expect that spending will include a particular focus on these areas.

## Purpose of this document

This document provides non-statutory guidance on how to make the best use of pupil premium funding.

The guidance is for school leaders and those involved in managing the use of pupil premium in schools, such as academy trust leadership, trustees and governors. This guidance can also be used to support use of recovery premium. It may also be useful for parents and local authorities who want to know how schools can use their pupil premium effectively, and understand the related reporting requirements.

The guidance will help you to ensure that you adhere to the [conditions of grant](#) for pupil premium:

- using pupil premium in line with the 'menu of approaches'
- publishing a strategy statement by 31 December using the DfE's [strategy statement template](#) (if you have a multi-year strategy, you should publish an updated version)

There is a separate guidance document which gives a brief overview of the [pupil premium](#), including eligibility information, for school staff, parents and those interested in the pupil premium.

The EEF has also published a [guide to using pupil premium effectively](#) which complements this document and which we encourage all schools to use in developing their pupil premium strategies.

# Developing and delivering an effective strategy

This section explains how you can make the best use of your pupil premium through a '5 step' approach:

1. Identifying the challenges faced by the school's disadvantaged pupils
2. Using evidence to support your strategy
3. Developing your strategy
4. Implementing your strategy
5. Evaluating and sustaining your strategy

## 1. Identifying the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils

Diagnostic assessment, using data from internal and external assessments, is important for identifying the specific areas where intervention and support will improve each pupil's academic progress.

You should also draw on data to develop an understanding of any non-academic challenges that pupils are facing which negatively affect their education and readiness to engage with teaching, for example:

- attendance and levels of persistent absence
- behaviour incidences and exclusions data
- wellbeing, mental health and safeguarding concerns

When identifying challenges, you should draw on a range of data sources, including [performance data](#), discussions with teachers and support staff and engagement with pupils and families.

See the EEF's [diagnostic assessment](#) resource for further support on diagnosis.

When diagnosing the needs of your disadvantaged pupils, you should bear in mind that you do not have to spend your pupil premium so that it solely benefits eligible pupils. You can use it to support other pupils with identified needs, for example pupils who have or have had a social worker or are a carer. You can also use it on whole class approaches, for example high-quality teaching, which will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils.

You should also diagnose the challenges facing higher attaining eligible pupils to help you identify how to improve their progress further. Evidence shows that eligible pupils who are among the highest performers at Key Stage 2 are more likely than their non-eligible peers to fall behind by Key Stage 4.

## 2. Using evidence to support your strategy

To support schools to make best use of their pupil premium, we have introduced a 'menu of approaches', based on the evidence of how best to improve attainment. Using pupil premium in line with the menu will help you to develop your pupil premium strategies. The menu can be found on page 8 of this guidance. The [conditions of grant](#) require schools to spend their pupil premium in line with the menu.

It is for school leaders to decide how to use their pupil premium within the framework set out in the menu. You do not have to allocate pupil premium to every item on the menu; instead, you should focus on approaches that best address the challenges identified in step 1.

You should consider a range of external evidence, alongside your own knowledge of your pupils. External evidence can help you to better understand:

- which specific activities have been found to be the most effective in addressing the types of challenge that your pupils face
- what implementation strategies may be important to ensure success
- the relative impact of different approaches

. For further support about using evidence, see the EEF website for:

- a guide to [using pupil premium effectively](#) which complements this guidance
- an [evidence brief](#) which signposts high-quality evidence and practical resources for each approach in the menu
- the [guidance reports](#) which provide a summary of evidence on specific approaches
- the [Teaching and Learning Toolkit](#) which provides an accessible summary of evidence of approaches

## 3. Developing your strategy

The pupil premium [strategy statement](#) template reflects the previous outlined steps and should help you to develop your strategy, based on the challenges you have identified, the menu of approaches and the evidence of effective approaches.

The DfE recommends that schools develop a 3-year pupil premium strategy.

If you already have a multi-year plan, and any of the activities you fund do not fall under one of the approaches on the menu, you should amend your plan as soon as possible.

When considering the balance of spending, you should bear in mind that the EEF recommends that high quality teaching should be a top priority for pupil premium

spending, but the exact balance of spending between categories will vary depending on the specific needs of pupils.

Your strategy should:

- focus on the challenges that are having the most significant impact, and are within your control
- set ambitious, but realistic, target outcomes
- allocate funding to activities most likely to deliver those outcomes, based on evidence of what works

You should also consider how your strategy aligns with other strategic school improvement documents, such as your school improvement plan.

Academy trusts may wish to pool resources and set a strategy for use of pupil premium across multiple academies. Trusts must ensure that any such strategy is flexible enough to accommodate the specific needs of each school's disadvantaged pupil cohort.

You should ensure that you consult governors, academy trust leadership and trustees if appropriate, and relevant staff members when developing your strategy - for example, the designated safeguarding lead, the designated teacher for previously looked-after children, and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). You should also consult relevant external partners, such as the Virtual School Head.

## 4. Implementing your strategy

Effective implementation is important for making best use of pupil premium. The EEF has published a detailed [guide to implementation](#) that you may wish to read for further information.

The key factors you should consider when implementing your strategy include:

- Coherence with curriculum: how to integrate any planned activity with the curriculum, and ensure that pupils receiving targeted support do not miss out on core curriculum content
- Staffing implications: how to ensure that all staff promote the principles and ethos of your strategy, and ensure that professional development requirements are taken into account, drawing on the [standard for teachers' professional development](#)
- Targeting and monitoring: which pupils will receive which activity, when and in what group size, any resourcing or timing requirements of external providers (if you are using them), and what data and resources will be required to monitor the impact of each activity

## 5. Evaluating and sustaining your strategy

When evaluating the impact of your approaches, you should:

- measure success based on outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils
- implement a robust and transparent evaluation framework and report outcomes against this
- ensure that evaluation is an ongoing process - strategies that have been effective in one year may not continue to be effective the next

When evaluating impact, you should not:

- use data that does not focus on pupil outcomes
- base evaluation on the perceptions of those delivering the activity
- use vague intended outcomes, which make an accurate assessment of improvements more difficult

The outcome of your evaluation will inform your decision on whether to sustain or stop each activity.

Where a strategy is successful, it is particularly important to continue monitoring implementation. Enthusiasm for approaches may reduce in subsequent years and additional professional development and resources are likely to be required for new and existing staff to maintain successful outcomes.

If you have developed a multi-year pupil premium strategy, you should review and renew your strategy every year. It is a requirement of the conditions of grant to publish an updated strategy statement annually.

## Menu of approaches

In line with the [conditions of grant](#), any activity that you fund using pupil premium must fall under an approach listed in the table below.

When selecting approaches from the menu, you should also consider how you are using the funding to support:

- Effective identification of pupil needs, for example through diagnostic assessment
- Successful implementation of approaches
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of approaches

3 tiers	Approaches that you could implement
<b>High-quality teaching</b>	Developing high-quality teaching, assessment and a broad and balanced, knowledge-based curriculum which responds to the needs of pupils
	Professional development to support the implementation of evidence-based approaches, for example, training provided by <a href="#">a DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics programme</a> , mastery based approaches to teaching or feedback
	Mentoring and coaching for teachers
	Supporting the recruitment and retention of teaching staff, for example, providing cover time to undertake professional development such as <a href="#">National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)</a>
	Technology and other resources that support high quality teaching, for example software to support diagnostic assessment
<b>Targeted academic support</b>	One to one, small group or peer academic tuition, including through the <a href="#">National Tutoring Programme (NTP)</a> *
	Targeted interventions to support language development, literacy and numeracy
	Targeted interventions and resources to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged pupils with SEND
	Teaching assistant deployment and interventions, for example by supporting high-quality provision within the classroom or delivering structured interventions
<b>Wider strategies</b>	Supporting pupils' social, emotional and behavioural needs
	Supporting attendance, including approaches outlined in <a href="#">the working together to improve school attendance</a> guidance
	Extra-curricular activities, including sport, outdoor activities, arts and culture, for example music lessons and school trips
	Extended school time, including for summer schools
	Breakfast clubs and meal provision
Communicating with and supporting parents	



Schools may be justified in funding items not listed where this is necessary to overcome specific barriers to pupil attainment, for example to meet acute needs around pupil equipment to ensure readiness to learn.

\*The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) is funded through the school's budget. Funding can also be drawn from pupil premium. Recovery premium [conditions of grant](#) for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years state that schools must not use the recovery premium to meet their portion of the costs of tuition provided through the NTP.

## Additional guidance for pupil premium plus

Pupil premium plus refers to the portion of the pupil premium grant for children who are looked-after by the local authority or were previously looked-after by a local authority or other state care. As for the main pupil premium budget, it is not a personal budget for individual children and schools must spend their funding in line with the 'menu of approaches'.

### Looked-after children

Pupil premium allocations based on the eligibility of looked-after children are managed by the local authority's Virtual School Head.

Your [designated teacher](#) should work with Virtual School Heads to ensure that pupil premium benefits looked-after children in your school, in line with their personal education plans.

Local authorities are expected to release these payments as soon as possible to schools, but they may choose to retain a portion of it to fund activities that will benefit a group, or all, of the authority's looked-after children.

### Previously looked-after children

Pupil premium funding based on the eligibility of previously looked-after children is part of your school's pupil premium allocation.

The [designated teacher](#) has a key role in ensuring that the specific needs of previously looked-after children are reflected in how you use your pupil premium.

Your designated teacher should:

- ensure adoptive parents and guardians are aware that they can declare their child eligible for pupil premium and work with them in deciding how the funding should be used
- consult the Virtual School Head on how to use the funding effectively, where appropriate
- be the main contact for queries about how pupil premium is being used to support previously looked-after children

### Further information

There are sections on pupil premium in the statutory guidance for:

- [designated teachers](#)
- [local authorities](#)

There is additional pupil premium guidance on [Virtual School Heads' responsibilities](#).

## Additional guidance for service pupil premium

Service pupil premium is additional funding for schools with pupil(s) who have parent(s) serving in the armed forces. It has been combined into pupil premium payments to make it easier for schools to manage their spending. Details on eligibility are on the pupil premium overview page.

The primary purpose of the service pupil premium is to:

- enable schools to offer mainly pastoral support to eligible pupils during challenging times
- help mitigate the negative impact on service children of family mobility or parental deployment
- help improve the academic progress of eligible pupils if you deem this to be a priority

The strategy statement template includes an optional section to report on how you are using the service pupil premium and its impact on eligible pupils.

There is separate guidance on service children and service pupil premium available on GOV.UK.

## Reporting on pupil premium

In line with the [conditions of grant](#), schools whose allocation for pupil premium is based on 6 or more eligible pupils must publish a strategy statement annually using the [DfE template](#). Schools whose allocation is based on 5 eligible pupils or fewer are not required to publish a strategy statement. The DfE template is designed to help you develop your strategy, in line with the steps outlined in this document.

The strategy statement template can be found on the [guidance page](#), along with some completed examples to illustrate how to complete the form. You must develop your own strategy and reflect this accurately in your statement.

The strategy statement is a tool for you to demonstrate how you are using pupil premium to help disadvantaged pupils to raise their attainment. It is published primarily for the benefit of parents, governors and trustees. You should write it with them in mind.

The Department for Education will review a sample of schools' published statements each year to ensure that plans for use of funding comply with the [conditions of grant](#) – including that activities are in line with the 'menu of approaches'.

If your school is selected for an inspection, Ofsted may use your pupil premium statement to help them to prepare for the visit.

## Format of the template

The format of the strategy statement templates has been designed to reflect the 5 step process to developing an effective strategy for use of pupil premium which is set out in this guidance.

**Part A** is for you to outline your strategy and the approaches that your pupil premium is funding in the current academic year. The format is designed to reflect the steps needed to develop an effective strategy, in order to help you with that process.

**Part B** is for you to explain what outcomes were achieved for disadvantaged pupils in the previous academic year, including reference to performance measures data. It can be challenging to evaluate the impact of any activity that is not directly linked to academic outcomes, such as activity supporting social and emotional wellbeing. You should still write about this in your online statement and refer to any evidence that shows you are making progress.

There is an optional further information section to provide any additional information you wish to publish.

## **Publishing your strategy**

You have until 31 December each year to publish your statement. This will enable you to take the needs of your new intake into account.

If you have developed a multi-year strategy for pupil premium, you must review your strategy and publish an updated statement every year.

Although multi-academy trusts (MATs) can pool resources and set a plan for use of pupil premium funding across multiple academies, each academy within the MAT must publish a separate pupil premium strategy statement each year.

## Checking your allocation and payments

Information about the pupil premium funding your school will receive for the academic year 2023/24 is available in the allocations document. The technical note shows the payment timetable and explains how each school's allocation has been calculated.

### 'Get Information About Pupils' data download

If you need to check which pupils your school's allocation is based on you can consult [Get Information About Pupils \(GIAP\)](#) from April each year.

GIAP cannot be used for planning or delivering the pupil premium strategy as it is a retrospective list of eligible pupils based on the October census. For pupils in alternative provision settings, GIAP is based on the January census.

### Pupils who move schools

As pupil premium is not an entitlement for individual pupils, you will not get an adjustment if a pupil leaves your school or joins another school. The only exception is for permanently excluded pupils.

The excluding school's pupil premium will be reduced by the value of one pupil, pro-rated to the point in the financial year when the pupil left.

The school that receives the pupil will be credited by the value of one pupil, pro-rated to the point in the financial year when the pupil left the excluding school.

### Errors in payments

[Contact DfE](#) if you have mistakenly recorded a pupil as eligible for the pupil premium.

We can change the national pupil database for you to correct individual pupil errors, but we cannot amend your census return.



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