

# Pupil premium strategy statement- Quest Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the **2024 to 2025** academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged students.

It outlines our 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.

**Abbreviations: KS- Key Stage; PP- Pupil Premium; ADP- Academy Development plan; HPA, MPA, LPA- High, Middle and Low Prior Attainers School overview**

Detail	Data
School name	The Quest Academy
Number of pupils in school	
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	36.33%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	2024-2027 (3 academic years)
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Andy Crofts
Pupil premium lead (From September 2025)	Zaira Sami
Governor / Trustee lead	Local Governing Body Collectively

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£395,850
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£395,850

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

The Quest Academy is committed to ensuring that all our students achieve their potential, develop fully and are ready to positively contribute to society. To that end we recognise that some students need additional resources and support to achieve their personal goals and ambitions. The effects of the extended period of “home learning” disproportionately affected Disadvantaged Students and the response to this has been proportionality intensive for Disadvantaged Students. Through regular contact home, ensuring engagement in independent learning, and access to necessary facilities, the mitigation of these impacts has been a key priority and focus.

We believe that the best way to support students is to precisely identify learning gaps and take decisive action to address them; predominantly this takes place through ‘Quality First Teaching’. It is often the most vulnerable students that benefit the most from high standards, high expectations and outstanding teaching, assessment and feedback. To this end, The Quest Academy aims to provide learning opportunities of the highest quality for all of its students.

Our students are from a diverse range of backgrounds, abilities and needs. The essential point is to ensure that disadvantage does not hinder potential. This may require additional classes, staffing, equipment or opportunities and the Academy seeks to meet need on an individual and group basis. To achieve our key priority all faculties at The Quest Academy aim to deliver ‘Quality First Teaching’ through:

- Highly focused lessons with sharp objectives.
- High demands of disadvantaged student involvement and engagement with their learning.
- High levels of interaction for all students.
- Appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining.
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for students to talk both individually and in groups.
- An expectation that disadvantaged students will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently and are given necessary help to achieve this.
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate students.

- Reduced class sizes in key and foundational areas of the curriculum.

The resources used to achieve the above disproportionately benefit Disadvantaged Students, and are supplemented by intensive targeted interventions including:

- 1-1 and small group academic mentoring.
- A focus on Disadvantaged Students when considering progress and ensuring completion of work and attendance at additional catch-up sessions.
- Taking additional steps to ensure consistent and on-going dialogue with the parents/carers of Disadvantaged Students.

Together, these strategies aim to:

1. Improve the levels of attainment and progress of disadvantaged students.
2. Close the attainment gaps between our disadvantaged students relative to The Quest Academy and national averages.
3. Ensure disadvantaged students have full access to the curriculum.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The attendance of Disadvantaged Students has not been as high as non-Disadvantaged Students.
2	The cohorts of students entering the school are increasingly academically able. The attainment of Disadvantaged Students HPA students has not been as high as the non-HPA or non-Disadvantaged Students.
3	Literacy levels of PP students are lower than non-Disadvantaged Students. This has implications for learning across the academic spectrum.
4	Disadvantaged Students are less likely to receive academic guidance at home. There is therefore a need to engage and inform parents of Disadvantaged Students, and to provide supplementary support and individualised academic support for targeted Disadvantaged Students.
5	Retention of Disadvantaged Students into Q6 is not as high as it could, and should, be.
6	Disadvantaged Students are at a lower level in the core curriculum (particularly literacy and numeracy skills). They are less likely to engage in Home Learning compared to their non-Disadvantaged Students counterparts.

7	Disadvantaged students are less likely to know how to be a good learner. They are less likely to demonstrate good behaviour and attitudes to learning compared to their non-Disadvantaged Student counterparts.
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## 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. Attendance of PP improves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence from EWO attendance data shows this is in-line with that of non-Disadvantaged Students, across a range of attendance evidence.</li> </ul>
2. Progress of HPA Disadvantaged Students improves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence from 4-Matrix and external examination data shows that this is increasingly close to that of non-disadvantaged students and non-HPA students. This is true across a range of Year Groups, and the curriculum offer.</li> </ul>
3. Gaps in literacy levels between non-Disadvantaged Students and Disadvantaged Students close during students' time at Quest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence from literacy strategy assessments, both of individual Disadvantaged Students as they go through the school, and also at each Year Group level.</li> </ul>
4. Disadvantaged Students receive necessary guidance and support to become independent in their learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher report data is consistent between disadvantaged students and non-Disadvantaged Students.</li> <li>Class observations show that this is improving.</li> <li>Analysis of learning shows that Disadvantaged Students completion of work is of a similar standard and rate to non-Disadvantaged Students.</li> </ul>
5. Disadvantaged Students are ambitious in their post-16 aspirations and realise this through their destinations for further study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% of Disadvantaged Students, and 80% of those who achieve the required GCSE grades, are retained into Q6.</li> </ul>
6. Disadvantaged Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are in line with non-Disadvantaged Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher report data is consistent between disadvantaged students and non-Disadvantaged Students.</li> <li>Class observations show that this is improving.</li> <li>Analysis of learning shows that Disadvantaged Students behaviour and attitude is of a similar standard to non-Disadvantaged Students.</li> </ul>

## Activity in this academic year

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

### Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 160,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Achievement coordinator to lead a targeted programme for HPA and Disadvantaged students	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool. Part 4- School leaders train and support staff to deliver and sustain quality first learning for all pupils. Professional development for teachers is prioritised, whilst training and support for early career teachers and recruitment and retention are also considered as an important part of the strategy.	2, 3, 5, 6
CPD time for developing student independence and resilience in learning. Also sharing plans for Disadvantaged Students.	Teaching metacognitive strategies to pupils can be an inexpensive method to help pupils become more independent learners. There is particularly strong evidence that it can have a positive impact on maths attainment: <a href="#">Metacognition and self-regulation   Toolkit Strand   Education Endowment Foundation   EEF</a>	2,4, 5, 6
Structure of the KS3 core curriculum enables enhanced core skills in literacy and numeracy, providing a solid foundation for learning.	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: <a href="#">Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</a> Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English: <a href="#">word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)</a>  The DfE non-statutory KS3 guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: <a href="#">Teaching mathematics at key stage 3 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	2, 3, 6

	<p>To teach maths well, teachers need to assess pupils' prior knowledge and understanding effectively, employ manipulatives and representations, teach problem solving strategies, and help pupils to develop more complex mental models:</p> <p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/ks2-ks3-maths-guidance-2017">KS2 KS3 Maths Guidance 2017.pdf (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p> <p>Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking &amp; reflection tool. Part 1- Staff have a shared language around high expectations - no use of limiting language eg. "low-ability", "bottom set".</p> <p>Part 5- Pupil Premium strategy is based on a whole school approach; solutions are not just a single initiatives confined to isolated pockets of the school; instead they are a range of different strategies that reflect the complexity.</p>	
Lead Practitioners to support CPD and develop staff to ensure quality first teaching	<p>Research from the EFF demonstrates the impact of the specialist LP roles in schools and the contributions they make in developing staff and classroom practice. Research into coaching programmes also support the role of LPs being active coaches to shift cultures of staff engagement with CPD opportunities. Therefore, impacting classroom practice and the learning experience of students.</p>	2,4,6

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

Budgeted cost: £ 140,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Tutoring sessions for key individuals as identified from progress data to improve resilience and engagement across subject areas.	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- Sections 1, 2 and 3	4, 6

Subject specific mentoring with key, targeted individuals, through School Led Tutoring	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- Sections 1, 2 and 3	4, 6
Senior Tutor Mentoring	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- Sections 1, 2 and 3	4, 2, 3, 6
ACO additional time for developing plans for targeted Disadvantaged Students.	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- sections, 1, 2, 6	4, 1, 6
SENCO capacity and expertise	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool	1, 3, 4, 6
Deputy Pastoral Director.	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- sections 1, 2, 6	1, 2,
Targeted careers support for Disadvantaged Students to raise aspirations for post-16 study.	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- sections 1 “Disadvantaged students are on a trajectory to access KS5 where appropriate.”	5, 4
TCT Educational Psychologist	Collegiate Trust will have more hours to be able to provide students with Educational Psychologist support. This is essential in supporting students to obtain formal diagnosis of particular needs.	1, 2, 7
GCSE Revision guides and resources.	Revision guides provided to DS students in October of Year 11. Parents and students to be offered support with uniform and resources.	2, 4, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £ 96,900

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Senior Tutor- to ensure the transition process	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium	1, 2, 3, 4

addresses learning gaps which have arisen as a result of different experiences of the pandemic, and students make a flying start to secondary school.	outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool sections 1, 5	
EWO to provide increased level of support for improving attendance.	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- sections 1, 6	1
Leadership capacity- ACOs to have increased capacity for working with families on attendance, in conjunction with the EWO.	Research schools network- Using evidence to improve pupil premium outcomes   Benchmarking & reflection tool- sections 1, 6	1, 4
Strengthening Minds	Online provision offering exciting, interactive programmes that help engage, teach and develop the mental wellbeing of young people.	1, 6, 7
Career Support to encourage DS to have a clear focus and pathway assisting with high aspirations	<p>DS who have clear guidance, aspirations and positive role models are more likely to maintain greater attendance to school, remain engaged with their learning further and hold higher aspirations for their educational journey.</p> <p>DS Students are prioritised for careers appointments so are seen first in order to support Post 16 applications.</p> <p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk">Aspiration interventions   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p>	4, 5

**Total budgeted cost: £ 396,900**

## Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year 2024-25

### Pupil premium strategy outcomes

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

The performance of Disadvantaged students compared to their non-Disadvantaged peers shows that progress has been made, while also highlighting areas for further improvement, particularly in Year 11, which will be the primary focus of strategic refinements this academic year.

Evaluation of student progress through the curriculum, informed by grades and set placements, demonstrates consistent progression across subjects and year groups. Disadvantaged students show rates of progress comparable to those of their non-Disadvantaged peers.

In examination cohorts, Disadvantaged students achieved a Progress 8 score approximately 0.41 lower than their non-Disadvantaged peers. When looking at the measure of 'Level 4+ in both English & Maths', Disadvantaged students, performed better in this measure (+4.1%), when compared to their non-Disadvantaged peers, which is a promising break through when comparing this to the previous cohort, reporting a -32.03% pupil premium achievement gap. However, there is a noted gap in achievement when looking at the 'Level 5+ in English & Maths': with pupil premium gap variance of -34.19%.

Overall progress outcomes for both Disadvantaged and non-Disadvantaged students were below national trends. The strategic focus for this current academic year continues to be in driving achievement, securing Level 4s and beyond.

Attendance across Years 7–11 was 90.17% for Disadvantaged students, compared to 92.19% for the whole cohort, below national averages. Through the lens of inclusion, this contextual group of students continue to feature in our current whole school attendance strategy to reduce this gap further and positively impact whole school attendance figures, in particular 'SEND & Disadvantaged' students.

In relation to behaviour, suspension rates for Disadvantaged students were significantly higher than those for the wider school population (demonstrating a 24.9% difference). When looking at internal isolations this trend is also seen with a 27.9% variance when comparing the Disadvantaged & non-Disadvantaged students. This is being addressed within our current behaviour strategy of targeted intervention, growing the Pastoral Team further and liaison with the SEND Team, to support the reduction of behaviour incidents and repeated behaviours and increased accessibility with the curriculum.

This review indicates that, while Disadvantaged students continue to perform below their non-Disadvantaged peers, improvement is evident in the lower years, and the gap is narrowing in Year 11. Investment around removing educational barriers for students in equipping students with revision materials, specialist external study-skills workshops, targeted half term booster programmes and Saturday school sessions have had impact. The investment into staffing to create smaller teaching groups in Year 11 (7 groups, instead of 6 in English, Maths & Science) has also had impact. Targeted strategies are being refined to further accelerate progress, and the school remains on course to meet the ambitious outcomes set out in the Intended Outcomes section.

This strategy is closely aligned with the Academy Development Plan and supports equal access to the curriculum for all students. Targeted actions within the ADP focus specifically on Disadvantaged students and inclusion, with the intention of securing progress and outcomes that are at least comparable to those of non-Disadvantaged peers.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum structure remains effective in narrowing gaps between Disadvantaged and non-Disadvantaged students by allowing knowledge gaps to be identified and addressed promptly. This has been supported by the referral process to the SEND Team, whereby student learning difficulties are assessed and progressed where appropriate to ensure students access the specialised support, they need to fully achieve their potential.