



MERRYLANDS
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY



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Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

2024 - 2025

Merrylands is a member of the Berlesduna Academy Trust

Berlesduna Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales.

Company number 10267656.

Registered Office: Berlesduna Academy Trust, C/O Merrylands Primary School and Nursery, Cumberland Drive, Basildon, Essex
SS15 6QS



Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 academic year) 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 the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Merrylands Primary School and Nursery
Number of pupils in school	560
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	21% (120 pupils)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023-2026
Date this statement was published	8 th September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	8 th September 2025
Statement authorised by	Gemma Pryer Acting Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Phil andrews Acting Deputy Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Steve West Chair of Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£158,595
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£14,358
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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	£172,953



Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Merrylands Primary School and Nursery, we believe that teaching and learning opportunities must meet the needs of all the pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they may face, to ensure we provide the very highest standards of education for every child. The focus of our Pupil Premium Strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils and provide them with opportunities they may not always have in order to achieve that goal.

Our ultimate objectives are to:

- Ensure the quality of education for all children is improved.
- Provide all children with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- Close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

High-quality teaching and targeted academic support are both at the core of our approach. By focusing on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support, we aim to close the attainment gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged pupils. This should not only improve the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils but it should also provide sustainability and improved progress for non-disadvantaged pupils. Both high quality teaching and targeted academic support is provided in a variety of ways including:

- Experienced lead teachers who will coach those in their early teaching career as well as new subject leaders.
- A sports coach to up-skill teachers, develop children's participation and enjoyment in PE and to provide a range of extra-curricular activities.
- Targeted interventions delivered by LSAs in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Speech therapy to support pupils identified with speech, language and communication needs.
- Access to an Olympic-size swimming pool where children are taught by qualified swimming instructors.

The next focus area is for the wider approaches where support is also needed for non-academic issues that impact success in school such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional challenges. Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:



- Work closely with parents and vulnerable children throughout the school by ensuring our Parent Liaison Officer/Attendance Officer communicates and offers support to parents/carers.
- Ensure Counselling and Play Therapy sessions are available to pupils and their families to provide professional support and guidance.
- Contribute towards school trips, workshops and special events so that every child is able to attend and take part in order to deepen their understanding and take part in real-world experiences.
- Continue to provide a Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 lunch club to develop social skills and wellbeing.
- Provide hands-on experiences in the natural environment which will increase children's confidence, problem solving skills and learn to manage risks through Forest Schools with a qualified leader.
- Continue to develop the Early Years outdoor area to provide enriching Outdoor Play opportunities, particularly during break times.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Our attendance data over the last 5 years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been between 0.02% and 3.95% lower than for our non-disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.</p>



2	<p>Attainment & Progress (KS1 and KS2)</p> <p>Our assessments and observations indicate that some of our disadvantaged pupils are not meeting age-related expectations within the core subjects.</p> <p>The percentage of Pupil Premium children in KS1 and KS2 who did not achieve age related expectations at the end of the academic year (2023-2024) are as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="368 546 1406 763"><thead><tr><th>Core Subject</th><th>Pupil Premium</th><th>Not Pupil Premium</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Reading</td><td>41%</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>Writing</td><td>42%</td><td>22%</td></tr><tr><td>Maths</td><td>42%</td><td>19%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Core Subject	Pupil Premium	Not Pupil Premium	Reading	41%	20%	Writing	42%	22%	Maths	42%	19%
Core Subject	Pupil Premium	Not Pupil Premium											
Reading	41%	20%											
Writing	42%	22%											
Maths	42%	19%											
3	<p>Cultural Capital</p> <p>Observations and discussions with pupils and parents/carers indicate that many disadvantaged pupils have not had the opportunity to develop their social mobility and deepen their cultural understanding. This lack of hands-on experiences could therefore hinder a child's understanding into global issues and cultural awareness.</p>												
4	<p>Speech, Language and Communication</p> <p>Assessments, observations, discussions with pupils and referrals from teachers indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils.</p>												
5	<p>Social, Emotional and Mental Health</p> <p>Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and their families have identified social, emotional and mental health issues for some of our pupils. This is also linked to children experiencing trauma.</p>												
6	<p>Staff Development</p> <p>Discussions with teachers especially those in their early teaching career identify that further training and support is needed. As a result of school closures due to the pandemic, teachers/subject leaders have not had the same opportunities and experiences as other teachers/subject leaders who are further along in their career. Also, staff development is needed so that the next generation of leaders are developed.</p>												



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
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance rate by 2025/2026 demonstrated by the overall attendance for all pupils to be at least 97% and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantage peers is no more than 4%. Reduced persistence absence rate from 2025/2026 to be in line, or better, than national average.
To improve attainment and progress in KS1 and KS2 in the core subjects for disadvantaged pupils.	Reading, Writing and Maths outcomes by 2025/2026 show that more than 70% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard.
To improve speech, language and communication needs among the 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, engagements with their peers, book scrutiny and on-going formative assessments.
To improve social, emotional and mental health for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing evidenced through qualitative data from pupil voice, pupil and parent surveys and teacher observations.
To improve staff developmental opportunities.	Sustained improvement of the quality of teaching and learning evidenced through assessments, observations, pupil voice and staff surveys.
To develop full and rich play opportunities in and providing further opportunities for creative play.	Sustained improvement in physical development, well-being, social and emotional development, concentration and behaviour evidenced through observations, pupil voice, staff survey and CPOMS reports.
To provide all children with equal opportunities to deepen their knowledge and	All children to attend at least one school trip each academic year including a residential trip in Year 6 and participate in at least one workshop in order to deepen



cultural capital they need to succeed in life.	their knowledge and understanding and to take part in real-world experiences.
To up-skill teachers, develop children’s participation and enjoyment in PE (including swimming) and to provide a range of extra-curricular activities.	All children to participate in at least one PE lesson delivered by the sports coach each week. Staff to work alongside the sports coach to further develop the teaching of PE. All children in Year 4 to take part in weekly swimming lessons. Sustained improvement in physical development and well-being evidenced through attainment and progress, observations, pupil voice and staff surveys.

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: £37,531

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Two lead teachers to provide coaching to those in their early teaching career and new subject leaders. They will work closely with them to identify and build on their strengths and to identify and address their areas of development.	Research indicates that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap. By creating our own coaching programme, we can ensure that professional development effectively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds on staff knowledge • Motivates staff • Develops teaching techniques • Embeds practice Effective Professional Development Education Evidence Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2, 6
A sports coach to up-skill teachers, develop children’s participation and enjoyment in PE and to provide a	Research indicates that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap. A qualified sports coach and qualified swimming instructors can ensure we: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on staff knowledge and confidence • Motivate staff 	2, 3, 5, 6



<p>range of extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>Access to an Olympic-size swimming pool where children are taught by qualified swimming instructors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop teaching techniques• Embed practice• Develop children’s participation and enjoyment <p>Due to financial costs, pupils from disadvantaged background may be less likely to be able to benefit from sport clubs and swimming lessons outside of school. By providing sports clubs and swimming lessons free of charge or at a reduced cost, schools give pupils access to benefits and opportunities that might not otherwise be available to them.</p> <p>The prime benefit from regular physical activity is improved physical development however, there are also wider benefits such as improved health and wellbeing, which in turn may improve attendance thus improvement in attainment and progress.</p> <p>Effective Professional Development Education Evidence Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p> <p>Physical Activity Education Evidence Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £62,782

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Targeted interventions focusing on disadvantaged pupils will be delivered by LSAs in KS1 and KS2. The interventions will focus on Maths, Reading, Phonics and Writing.</p>	<p>Research which focuses on teaching assistants who provide one to one or small group targeted interventions shows a stronger positive benefit of between four and six additional months on average. Often interventions are based on a clearly specified approach which teaching assistants have been trained to deliver: Teaching Assistant Interventions Teaching & Learning Toolkit Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Speech therapy to be delivered by a speech therapist and trained speech and language LSA. The Speech Therapist and LSA will support children with SLCN and will make 1:1 speech and language recommendations. They will also provide staff training and whole school approaches that can be used.</p>	<p>There is evidence to suggest that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to be behind their more advantaged peers in developing early language and speech skills, which may affect their school experience and learning later in their school lives.</p> <p>Given that oral language interventions can be used to provide additional support to pupils who are behind their peers in oral language development, the targeted use of approaches may support some disadvantaged pupils to catch up with peers, particularly when this is provided one-to-one: Oral Language Intervention Teaching & Learning Toolkit Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	<p>2, 4</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £72,640



Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's - Improving School Attendance advice.</p> <p>This will involve training and release time for staff to develop and implement new procedures. This will also involve the continuing appointment of the Attendance Officer to improve attendance particularly for our disadvantaged pupils by communicating and providing additional support for vulnerable families.</p>	<p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.</p> <p>Working Together To Improve School Attendance Department for Education</p>	<p>1, 2</p>
<p>Professionally trained counsellors and play therapists will work with pupils and their families to provide professional support and guidance.</p>	<p>Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their pupils. All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils, which includes: preventing impairment of children's health or development, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.</p> <p>Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial:</p> <p>Mental health and behaviour in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	<p>2, 5</p>
<p>Develop full and rich play opportunities in EYFS by providing</p>	<p>There are many benefits of full and rich play opportunities including improvement in physical activity, well-being, social and emotional</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 5</p>



<p>further opportunities for creative play.</p>	<p>development, creativity, behaviour as well as reduced accidents.</p> <p>Improved health and wellbeing can also improve attendance which in turn can improve attainment and progress.</p> <p>Outdoor Play and Learning Research and Evidence</p> <p>Imagination and Creativity Help for Early Years Providers</p>	
<p>Contributing towards school trips, workshops and events so that every child is able to attend and take part in order to deepen their understanding and take part in real-world experiences.</p>	<p>There is an abundance of research that shows good quality learning outside the classroom adds significant value to children's learning. It provides a context for accumulating integrated and subject based knowledge and for developing key skills. Effective learning outside the classroom relies on problem-solving skills, cooperation and interpersonal communication which are all essential skills.</p> <p>LOTG Research</p>	<p>2, 3, 4, 5</p>
<p>Provide hands-on experiences in the natural environment which will increase children's confidence, problem solving skills and learn to manage risks through Forest Schools with a qualified leader.</p>	<p>Evidence shows that Forest Schools improves confidence, social skills, communication, motivation, physical skills, knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Forest Schools Forest Research</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 5</p>

Total budgeted cost: £172,953



Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Attendance

Attendance and punctuality has been tracked throughout the year and procedures have been followed for persistent absence.

Attendance for the whole school during this academic year was 94.9% (93.28% previous year). Attendance for non-Pupil Premium children was 95.8% compared to 91.3% for Pupil Premium children. This shows a difference of 4.5% which is slightly higher than our 4% target.

Persistent absence for the whole school during this academic year was 15.9% (23% previous year) of which 11.4% was for non-Pupil Premium children compared to 28.5% (32.7% previous year) Pupil Premium.

Several families were supported by the Parent Liaison Officer/Attendance Officer throughout the academic year including sign posting to agencies who can support with finance, accommodation etc.

Coaching

2 lead teachers supported teachers in the early stages of their teaching career. They met with them to discuss areas for development, observed lessons, gave constructive feedback and ensured the next steps were then actioned. They also covered their classes in order for the teachers to observe teaching taking place in other year groups. The feedback from the teachers and lead teachers has been extremely positive. Observations from SLT also indicate the positive impact coaching has had on both teaching and learning and have been able to identify how they have implemented new ideas into their own classroom.

SENCO

The SENCO has worked closely with staff, pupils and their families to ensure children's needs are met and to offer support and guidance to parents/carers. She has provided relevant staff training for teachers and support staff to support the needs of the children in particular classes and also helped prepare the new SENCO for her new role. The



SENCO has also helped many pupils transition to Merrylands as well as transition to their primary, special or secondary school.

Sports Coach

The Sports Coach has worked alongside teachers and the PE lead to up-skill teachers and has also developed children’s participation and enjoyment in PE. This is evidenced through observations, pupil voice and staff feedback. She has provided extra-curricular sporting activities at lunchtime and afterschool and has also attended competitions with the children to provide support and guidance.

Progress and Attainment

5 members of staff completed the National Tutoring Programme training (3xTeachers and 2xLSAs). Where necessary, staff who were new to the NTP Programme completed their online training prior to tutoring in Maths or Phonics. As indicated in the data in the below table, these sessions have had a positive impact due to the increase of Pupil Premium children who are now working at or above age related expectations.

As well as tutoring through the National Tutoring Programme, Interventions have also taken place across the school for identified pupils in the core subjects. The interventions provided accelerated progress for these pupils.

By July 2024, the data indicates that there has been a reduction in the percentage of Pupil Premium children across the school who were working at or above age related expectations compared to the baseline assessments in September 2023 for Reading, Writing and Maths (see below table). However, it must be noted that there was a significant increase in the number of Pupil Premium children on roll, and this has impacted the data. These children will be closely monitored as the terms progress.

	% of Pupil Premium children working at or above age related expectations.	
	Autumn Term 2023 (*no of pupils)	Summer Term 2024 (*no of pupils)
Reading	75% / 58 pupils	59% / 63 pupils
Writing	73% / 56 pupils	58% / 58 pupils
Maths	71% / 55 pupils	58% / 62 pupils

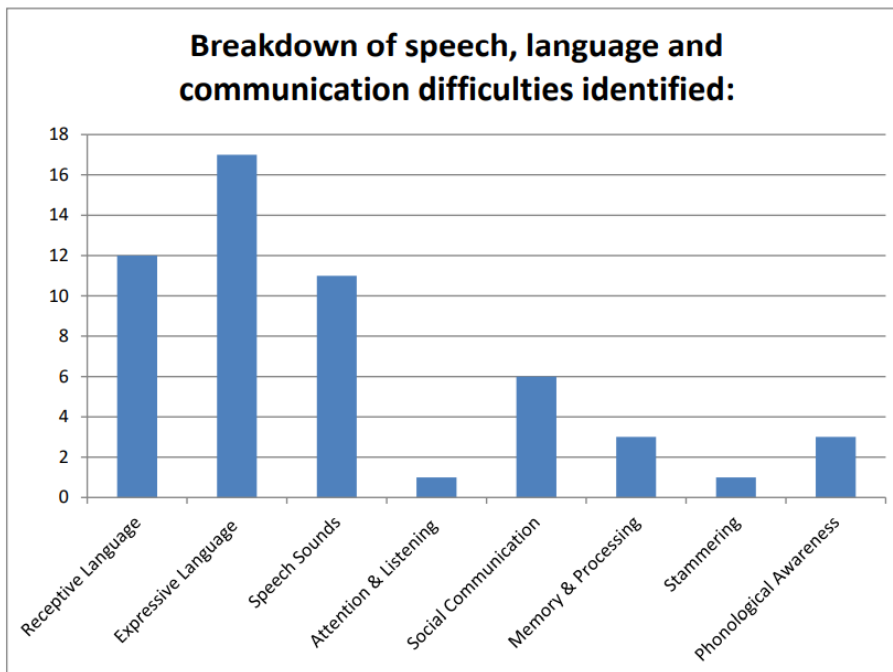


Counselling

A counsellor from Brentwood Catholic Children's Society worked with three children one day per week. One play therapist provided sessions for individuals one day per week. During the course of the year, some children have completed their agreed sessions and new pupils have commenced accessing the support. Based on observations and pupil voice, children have expressed how they have found the sessions beneficial and have been given strategies they can use to support their own well-being and self-regulate their emotions. Staff have also observed positive changes within the classroom and on the playground resulting in less incidents involving these individuals.

Speech, language and Communication Difficulties

The table below identifies the breakdown of speech, language and communication difficulties identified by the Speech Therapist at the start of the academic year:



The Speech Therapist and trained LSA, who delivers speech and language interventions, worked with children on both a 1:1 basis and in small groups to meet the set targets.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

The Berlesduna Trust SEMH provision was attended by 2 pupils where they developed their understanding and skills to help regulate their emotions and develop their SEMH needs. The SEMH provision also provided outreach support whereby they provided



sand therapy and talk therapy. They also gave advice and guidance to teachers and support staff to best support the needs of the pupils.

Outdoor Play and Learning

We have continued to develop our opportunities for outdoor play. We now have mud kitchens, tyres and large sand pits with toys. Pupil play leaders and pupil council have also helped with our development of this. The outcomes have shown that we have reduced incidents at lunchtime, increased enjoyment as well as further responsibilities provided to the pupils. We have also observed improved social and communication skills and pupils are also entering classrooms happy and ready to learn.

Cultural Capital

Each year group attended at least 1 school trip and our year 6 cohort attended their residential trip to the Isle of Wight. Each year group also experienced a workshop linked to the areas of learning during a particular term. The different experiences have helped to deepen pupil's knowledge and understanding about particular subjects and has also helped them to retain subject knowledge. They have also helped pupils to take part in real-world experiences.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
On Track	Rising Stars
Literacy & Numeracy Software	IDL
National Tutoring Programme	Government