Pupil premium strategy statement – Blacon High School 2023 – 2024

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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 the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	740 (September 2023)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	51% - 374 students
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2023 - 2024
Date this statement was published	October 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2024
Statement authorised by	Rachel Hudson
Pupil premium lead	Rachel Thomas
Governor / Trustee lead	Judy Gilmour

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£349,865
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£23,406
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
*Recovery premium received in academic year 2021 to 2022 can be carried forward to academic year 2022 to 2023. Recovery premium received in academic year 2022 to 2023 cannot be carried forward to 2023 to 2024.	
Total budget for this academic year	£373,271
If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our vision is clear; we want Blacon High School to be a safe and caring place at the heart of our community, where everyone is valued and supported to aspire, believe and achieve beyond their potential. This can be summarised by our school motto - Aspire, Believe, Achieve. It is our fundamental belief, that everyone can achieve well, and this lies at the heart of our educational philosophy, irrespective of background or starting point. We will also consider the challenges faced by pupils with multiple vulnerabilities and the activities we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

Central to our ethos, are three key values; respect, relationships and resilience. Respect is a deeply held value which underpins everything we do, leading to high quality relationships that enable young people within our school community to develop the resilience and determination to achieve and excel.

We believe in the power of education to transform lives and our aim is to prepare every young person for success both now and in the future. Quality First Teaching is at the heart of our approach and all at Blacon High School aim to inspire students to love and enjoy learning through a thinking curriculum, where they are encouraged to ask questions, to be inquisitive and creative through a range of high quality learning experiences, both within and beyond the classroom.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Securing outcomes that match or exceed national attainment measures

	Prior attainme	ent			
		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
	Year 7	No data	No data	No data	
	Year 8	No data	No data	No data	
	Year 9	Close to national	Close to national	Close to national	
	Year 10	Below national	Below national	Close to national	
	Year 11	Below national	Close to national	Close to national	
	ISDR 2022				
2	Attendance				
	PP attendand	e 2022-23 = 78.52%	6		
		ndance 2022-23 = 8	03.2070		
	School target	is 92.5% for PP.			
3	Home Learn	ing			
	not have a que pupils may not it is important providing hon tends to be m	liet space for home of have a quiet space for us to consider he nework clubs for pup	learning or have a e for home learning now home learning oils). Home learning	rly with pupils in our context who maccess to their own laptop. Many of age or have access to their own laptog can be supported (e.g., throughing that is linked to classroom work at included feedback on homework	our op –
4	Emotional R	Emotional Resilience and Wellbeing			
	people and s young people adolescence challenges, o journey, and Our observat emotional iss professionals	ituations with confidence given the enormous and adulthood. Resobstacles and setbacto end their school juicons and discussions and pupils	lence and optimis us changes that or silience also enablicks they are likely journey with the cons with pupils and so, such as anxiety em. These challer	g enables a person to approach oth m, which is especially important for ccur with the transition into les students to cope with the to experience on their learning apabilities and mind set for success families have identified social and depression (diagnosed by medicanges have affected disadvantaged	r S.
5	Literacy inc	luding Reading			
	that disadvar	ntaged pupils in our work is less develop	school have lowe	ssion with Key Stage 3 pupils indica r reading comprehension than peer confidence orally, which impacts the	rs,
6	Parental/Ca	rer engagement			
	months' addi	tional progress. It is	crucial for our sc	has a positive impact on average of hool to engage with all parents to a re involved in their child's education	void

	children do better on a wide range of measures. These positive effects include: improved behaviour, more confidence and greater self-esteem.	
7	Culture Capital	
	Cultural capital is defined as the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a student can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a student will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work. Building those cultural capital experiences are key because many lack opportunities to build social capital in their families and communities.	

Intended outcomes

Intended outcome	Success criteria		
Improved attainment among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of Key	2023-24 targets (current Year 11)		
Stage 4 – with a key focus on English and Maths	Indicator	All students	PP students
so that pupil premium students achieve the	Attainment 8	47	45
national average and close the gap.	Basics 9-5	50%	45%
	Maths 9-5	50%	45%
Increase in EBacc numbers.	Maths 9-4	75%	70%
Improved reading ages across disadvantaged	Reading tests v	vill demonstrate a	an improvement in
pupils at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.			aller disparity taged pupils and Teachers will also
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Meeting the school and National PP attendance target of 92.5%.		
Parental/Carer relationships and engagement.	Improved Parent/Carer attendance at key events throughout the academic Year. Improved communication with Parents/Carers through the Edulink App, Information evenings, reward assemblies and regular positive calls home. Positive feedback from surveys held after key events.		
Continued Culture Capital opportunities - To	100% access to Learning outside the classroom		
continue with providing students enriching and purposeful external opportunities that support their academic progress and awareness of life around them.	Increasing participation in enrichment and extra- curricular activities		

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: £65,462

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Teaching and Learning	Teaching and Learning - The development of an individually focused approach to the development of Teaching and Learning. All teachers analyse and evaluate their own strengths and areas for development against a whole-school overview of what constitutes effective Teaching, Learning and Assessment throughout a Learning Sequence. Teachers, with Line Managers, then identify key areas that they will focus; prioritising areas and approaches that will have the most impact on the attainment of students, supported by a bespoke and high quality CPD programme to enable students to achieve the best outcomes.	1
White Rose Maths	Delivering resources, CPD, tools, advice and guidance, working together to make a difference for every pupil, leading to higher rates of engagement and improved outcomes.	1
Additional Intervention staff for all Core subjects.	School interventions are crucial for promoting success, well-being, and unlocking the full potential of all students. Through tutoring, mentoring, counselling and specialised programmes, interventions aim to boost academic performance and enhance valuable social and emotional skills.	1, 2, 4 , 5
Transformation of Learning Environment programme.	This supports the outcomes of SEND and disadvantaged students through creative adaptations to the learning environment using research on trauma informed practice and neuro science.	1, 2, 4, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £265,243

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Maths 1:1 targeted intervention	Individual tuition provides an increase in learning time, which may be used for practice and engaging activities that expand on classroom work. The individual tuition can be linked to prior learning and objectives are that are clear and shared. As a result, learning is transferred from tuition to the classroom and ensures that any gaps in mathematical knowledge are addressed.	1
English 1:1 targeted intervention	Individual tuition provides an increase in learning time, which may be used for practice and engaging activities that expand on classroom work. The individual tuition can be linked to prior learning and objectives are that are clear and shared. As a result, learning is transferred from tuition to the classroom and gains in English have a positive impact across all subjects.	1, 5
NGRT Reading tests	NGRT reading tests enable progress to be tracked each year along with targeted reading interventions.	5
Curriculum + / Opal classes	Our inclusion model led by one of our Senior Leaders is where small groups of students from each year group are supported to access their learning in an adapted way, with specialist support and full access to the curriculum. These are our most complex and vulnerable students, potentially at risk of permanent exclusion. This model is proving to be effective and successful for these students showing improved outcomes, attendance, engagement and enables us to keep young people in education. These outcomes are strong evidence of the success of this model.	1, 2, 4
The Sanctuary and SEND/Inclusion team	The Sanctuary allows identified students to feel safe and secure at school where otherwise, in full classes, they may not have engaged or attended school. The students work with a specialist member of staff along with a Teaching Assistant on a range of activities from across the curriculum. The curriculum is fully aligned so that all students have access to a	1, 2, 4, 5, 6

	broad and balanced curriculum with the aim to secure outcomes, increase motivation and raise aspirations amongst these students. The Family Support and Safeguarding team provides counselling and mentoring support to identified students regarding their mental health and well-being. Students will show an improvement in their emotional responses to a variety of situations and this will positively impact their school life.	
Action Tutoring	We continue to use Action Tutoring for our catch-up programme and currently have two programmes running for both, Year 11 and Year 10. The forty Year 10 and Year 11 students, who are currently attending tutoring for either English or Maths, are all dedicated to the programme and attendance has been very good. All students are engaged fully with their tutors. Recently, The Westminster Foundation	1, 5
	requested to interview our students about how they feel about the programme and this press release should be available soon. It is hopeful that we will see, yet another, positive impact on GCSE outcomes for our core subjects this summer from these students.	

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

Budgeted cost: £42,566

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance 12 point attendance strategy to improve overall, attendance, reduce persistent absence and improve Pupil Premium attendance to match the national average.	Research shows that there is a direct correlation between attendance and outcomes achieved. The improvement strategy is informed by latest publications from the DfE, EEF and research into the most effective strategies to improve attendance in the current context.	2
Peripatetic Music lessons	Learning a musical instrument is fun and builds confidence. These lessons are free for students so any financial barrier is removed. Vast amounts of research shows that an education rich in music improves students' cognitive function and academic performance —	4, 7

	and also improves their cultural knowledge.	
Rewards • Full range of reward activities stretching across whole school. • Prom tickets for Year 11 partly paid for attending session 6. • Reward trips each term led by Progress Leaders.	All students have the opportunity for a reward trip linked to progress, attitude to learning or attendance Students gaining experiences they otherwise wouldn't reach out of school.	1, 2, 4, 7
Financial Support Uniform Free breakfasts Enrichment activities Family Support Learning outside The Classroom All produce funded for Food Technology lessons for both KS3 and 4 to enable equality of access to cooking Subsidised visits and fully funded outdoor education programme	Financial Support allows to students to engage fully with all aspects of school life and not to experience any barriers to their learning due to financial situations.	1, 2, 7
Mental Health and well- being support, counselling	External counsellors in school 3 days each week to support students through Platform for Life to provide support for students and families to develop resilience to improve mental health.	4

Total budgeted cost: £373,271

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Main outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in the Academic Year 2022 – 2023 are as follows:

Pupil Premium Measure	Success Criteria	Actual
Average Attainment 8	44.19%	32.49%
Basics 9-5	41%	15%

Specific Maths 9-5 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are as follows:

	9 – 5 in Maths		
	Disadvantaged	Other	% points difference
Local Authority average	24%	57%	33%
Blacon High School	26%	30%	4%

Overall attendance for all Pupil Premium pupils for 2022 – 2023 was 78.52%. The attendance for Year 11 Pupil Premium pupils for 2022 – 2023 was 72.55%; which has had a direct impact on outcomes.

The Maths department continues to embed and refine interventions and the White Rose Maths is an essential resource for the department. The specific impact it can have on pupil premium students is the free home learning resource feature of the website which allows students and parents to follow the scheme of work being taught in school though a series of videos and resources. It is a resource the Maths department use for every lesson in terms of content, worksheets, DNAs (Do Now Activities) and anchor tasks which all positively impacts PP students and their understanding and accessibility of Maths.

PP students who regularly received Maths Action Tutoring last year showed distinct improvement in progress. 1:1 tutoring is invaluable and it will have an impact on any student who engaged with it.

Examples of Maths outcomes with students who attended tutoring:

Student	Target	Result
А	5	5
В	3	3
С	5	5
D	5	5
Е	3	4
F	4	5

The English department continues to work on improving reading comprehension amongst all pupils with a focus on PP pupils. Below is an overview of interventions and strategies from the English department in 2022 – 2023

- Explicit teaching of vocabulary embedded into lessons at KS3.
- Tutor time guided reading.
- 1:4 targeted support using (Higher Level Teaching Assistant) HLTA for the weakest readers in KS3.
- Carnegie Book Club Linked to Chester Schools Together to encourage wider reading at all levels.
- Blacon Library Club Run by the Learning Support Assistant to encourage students to take out library membership and utilise community services more frequently.
- Homework club open to all students.
- Period 6 sessions after school for Key Stage 4 (Year 10 and Year 11)
- Easter Revision sessions re: Literature (whole department)
- Action Tutoring Monday and Thursday evenings
- Learning Support Assistants used to support reading interventions and are also trained to deliver phonics with students who are identified as requiring additional support for basic literacy skills; delivery helps to transform students' foundational skills allowing them to successfully access the curriculum.
- English staff supported others as intervention teachers for Key Stage 4

In response to reading comprehension for 2022 – 2023, initial data for incoming Year 7 has shown that reading ages are lower than in previous years. The Learning Support Assistant in English has supported the completion of, tracking of and implementation of strategies to improve reading ages. She also conducted small guided reading sessions with target pupils during tutor time and lunchtime. This led to a dramatic increase in the reading ability (particularly comprehension) of those pupils. For example, Student A began Year 8 with a reading age of 12:05 and ended the year, having completed a range of interventions with a reading age of 13:04. In addition, trainee teachers were used to support this strategy at KS4 (Yr. 11) where possible, with one using the intervention as a basis for their University study. This supported student understanding and targets being met - Year 11 leavers 2023 were recorded in Year 8 as only having 36% of the cohort who were reading at the appropriate level - by the time these students left, this had closed by 26% and it was recorded that 62% of the cohort were reading at the level appropriate for their age.

Period 6 sessions ran weekly in English until January when we moved to fortnightly sessions. There were also booster sessions run in the Easter holidays and evening sessions (online Google Classroom) in the weeks leading up to the exams. Higher ability and lower ability students attended and results evidence a positive impact in these areas.

Curriculum + 2022 - 2023

In order to improve engagement with learning and achievement across a specific group of students, the Curriculum+ model was launched in September 2022 and built upon the previous Orion model which provides an adapted curriculum offer. This is also ensuring statutory curriculum requirements are met to meet the needs of individual students.

Pupil Premium students account for 88% of the Curriculum + groups, ranging from Years 8 – 11.

Improved engagement and attitude to Learning can be evidenced using attendance, SSA behaviour data and outcomes.

SSA grades are the grades each student in awarded by the teacher at the end of every lesson. This is across the whole school and not only Curriculum + classes.

Positive SSA grades are 1 and 2

Passive SSA grades are a 3

Negative SSA grades are 3 and 4

Individual Student	Year Group	2021-22 Negative SSA	2022-23 Negative SSA	2021-22 Average Negative SSA per Half Term	2022-23 Average Negative SSA per Half Term
Student A	11	87	8	14.5	1.6

Student B	11	76	7	12.6	1.4
Student C	11	48	2	8	0.4
Student D	10	54	11	9	2.2
Student E	10	49	17	8.7	3.4
Student F	10	34	6	5.6	1.2
Student G	9	51	15	8.5	3

Attendance of key students has also been positively impacted by the Curriculum + model.

Individual	Year	2021-22 Attendance	2022-23 Attendance
Student	Group	%	%
Student A	11	53.28%	84.64%
Student B	11	85.41%	94.33%
Student C	11	54.62%	76.24%
Student D	10	53.61%	92.03%
Student E	10	89.17%	93.17%
Student F	9	76.10%	84.40%

SEND/Sanctuary Provision Evaluation: 2022-2023

- Our Sanctuary space was used to support a variety of interventions for our key students including: guided reading in small groups; 1:1 reading interventions to improve pronunciation and fluency; IDL (Literacy) programme and specific interventions for students with dyslexia including a selection of dyslexic-friendly texts and resources.
- The Sanctuary Kitchen was sourced to provide sessions on food preparation and cooking to enhance the Food Science Curriculum.
- Classes in the Sanctuary and Inclusion (Curriculum +) were assigned one day per week for Outdoor Education where our provider would take students to outward bound centres to complete a variety of activities including orienteering and team-building skills.
- The Quiet Room in the Sanctuary was equipped with furniture and furnishings to support counselling sessions, attendance meetings and SEMH work for students struggling with both classes and external issues.
- Teaching Assistants were provided with key training to support an array of need including specialist school sessions for attachment and trauma-informed practice across school and zones for regulation.

- SEND Specialist Teachers were employed to support screening for access arrangements.
- Our Family Support Team, alongside the Pastoral Team, created a Uniform Shop for recycled uniform to support students and their families with the cost of living.
- Mental Health First Aid training was provided for key members of the SEND and Safeguarding Teams.
- SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) visits and training in other facilities were completed by key Teaching Assistants in the Sanctuary Area including visits to local farms to provide enhanced Learning outside the classroom experiences to suit students' needs
- Use of a therapy dog and training for Teaching Assistants has continued to provide support for vulnerable students.

Nurture Base and SEND Facility

- Students who were school refusers and non-attenders secured basic outcomes to enable them to move on to post-16 education.
- Additionally, students who struggled with ASD (Autism) and exam conditions, with enhanced support and provision, secured outcomes for post-16 study.
- The Sanctuary provided many vulnerable students with a soft transition from primary school to secondary school, recognising that the differences between settings with regards to staff, academic demands, and physical learning spaces can be overwhelming for some.
- Vulnerable students were identified in collaboration with primary school staff, and allocation to
 the nurture group was made in advance of their arrival in September. These students
 remained with the Sanctuary teacher, developing their confidence in life at secondary school
 and transitioning into classes across school at the pace of the student.

SENDCOs

- The SENDCOs liaised with Archer's Brook Specialist School Outreach to gain training in The Zones of Regulation, providing support staff with valuable skills and knowledge in supporting students when they are dysregulated.
- Our Assistant SENDCo has commenced training on the National Award for Special Needs Coordination (NASENCO) accredited course.
- One of our SENDCOs attended the Access Arrangements course to update her knowledge on the 2022/23 changes to JCQ regulations and also commenced her studies in September 2022, on the National Professional Qualification in Senior Leadership (NPQSL) with the Best Practice Network.
- In May 2023 the TES Provision Map was purchased, a SEND management software, which enables SENCOs to improve their workload while managing SEND pupils' provision and improving learning outcomes. It shares key information about students in a variety of formats, from comprehensive plans (that fully meet the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice) to passports and one-page profiles. This will provide a one stop shop for gaining and sharing information about SEND students for all staff to ensure that SEND is the golden thread running through school and that teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all learners. The aim is to improve learning outcomes by ensuring students have the right

- provision, to reduce teacher workload so they have more time to support students, and to ensure students are effectively and efficiently supported with centralised provision mapping.
- The Fresh Start intervention package from Read Write Inc. Fresh Start was introduced, which is a systematic synthetic phonics programme for struggling readers aged 9 13+. Pupils are taught at their challenge point, so they learn to read accurately and fluently in just 25 minutes a day. Fresh Start is for students who: are not yet reading age appropriately; have missed schooling or are late arrivals into school; are new to the UK education system; are learning English as an additional language. Three members of staff have attended the two-day face to face training and this is now rolling out to all staff.

In the summer term, the school was granted access to an online Wellbeing Hub which provides wellbeing support for staff, students and parents/carers. In addition to this, a member of the Senior Leadership Team has been appointed as Senior Mental Health Lead and a fully funded training course is underway for this member staff.

With regards to one of our challenges being 'digital poverty' and therefore, this having a direct impact on access to Home Learning, school has spent £20,000 since 2020 on ICT equipment for families. This has ranged from laptops and electronic equipment to supporting families pay for home access to Wi-Fi and the internet. As a result of more families having access to ICT (there are still a large amount without access for individual children to use) we have been able to use Google Classroom more frequently to support Home Learning. There is also a Home Learning club at school, 3 nights per week and there is a specific quiet area at the local Blacon Library for our students to complete Home Learning and to study/revise.

100+ pupils accessed Peripatetic music lessons on a variety of instruments last year (trumpet, trombone, tenor horn, clarinet, saxophone, flute, piano, drums, guitar and vocals). Most pupils are working towards graded examinations, three pupils completed Rock school examinations in the summer term. Peripatetic provision also supported the outstanding results at KS4 with 8 out of 14 pupils achieving Distinction-Distinction* (highest grade). Funding from the Council Member's budget grant and various fundraising or donations has increased the availability of instruments - such as 24 flutes donated to school, which supports the flute provision and new flute choir ensemble who have represented the school at a variety of events throughout the year. We currently have 25 pupils attending weekly piano lessons with Miss Jones, due to the employment of a second music teacher we have increased hours of peripatetic provision, which has improved from 4 weekly piano peripatetic lessons before a new Music teacher joined the team. The peripatetic provision has also supported several pupils with Key Stage 5 destinations, completing grades on their chosen instrument.

Pupil Premium funding has also provided financial support for families and in 2022 – 2023, the cost of this provision was approximately £31,000. This has included school uniforms, free breakfasts, gas/electricity support for families, food and Learning Outside the Classroom activities which formed part of our Enrichment Week in July 2023.

Rewards are also key to our students and their wellbeing and progress. In total, there was a £10k budget for rewards last year. This included individual student rewards, group student rewards for hitting milestones and also reward trips for students. Rewards were distributed on a termly basis and parents and guardians were invited in to celebrate students' successes in our assemblies.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium (or recovery premium) to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
NGRT Reading Tests	GL assessment
Attendance and Mental Health	Fight to Thrive
Attendance at low levels	Stride
Counselling/Mental Health	Platform For Life
KS3 and KS4 independent learning	SAM Learning
Communication and Parental Engagement App	Edulink App
Phonics	Read, Write Inc Phonics