Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school. **School overview**

Detail	Data
School name	Willow Primary School
Number of pupils in school	457
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	17% (National Average is 25.9%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2026/2027 – 2028/2029
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Amanda Court, Head Teacher
Pupil premium lead	Onam Kumar, Deputy Head
Governor / Trustee lead	Deepa Damera

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£109,297
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
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	£109,297

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Willow Primary School, we strive for the heights as a learning community without walls. We do whatever it takes to build bridges into homes, hearts and minds of all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face. Leaders, teachers, support staff and non-teaching staff are committed to the academic achievement of all pupils.
We intend to use our Pupil Premium funding to achieve the following overarching principles to ensure that disadvantaged pupils will make good progress and attainment in line with their non-disadvantaged peers.

We will ensure that:

- Teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all of our pupils.
- Pupil premium funding improves the attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged pupils.
- Appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, this includes ensuring that the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils are adequately assessed and addressed.
- In making provision for socially disadvantaged pupils, we recognise that not all pupils who receive free school meals will be socially disadvantaged.

At Willow, we look at how the funding is best spent by considering the individual needs of each child. There is a broad range of uses for the money, but when we consider how best it is to be used, **the only criterion is that it must support the school in raising the child's academic achievement so that our disadvantaged pupils flourish and excel.**

It is our intention to use this money to close the gap between the attainment of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium and their non-Pupil Premium peers. To do this we will adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve, provide high quality CPD to improve teaching standards and devote resources to such projects as additional academic tutoring (i.e. academic clubs, 1-1 or small group tuition).

We are also passionate about developing cultural capital by helping pupil premium children access experiences, knowledge and skills that support academic success and broaden their horizons - things they might not have the chance to encounter.

However, we are also aware that if a child is hungry, cold or suffering from some kind of trauma or emotional distress, this too will inhibit progress. We, therefore, will ensure therapeutic support and (where necessary) will look to provide necessities such as food, clothing or transport.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Lack of aspiration
2	Historically poor attendance
3	Limited access to mental health, social care and wellbeing support
4	Inadequate nutrition & housing (the impact of increased cost of living on children's wellbeing)
5	Varying parental capacity to support learning and wellbeing at home
6	Poor model of spoken and/ or written English; as a result there is a differential between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged peers. This is particularly evident for pupils achieving the greater depth standard in writing.
7	On entry to Reception, a gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
8	Digital divide (much improved following Covid with provision from DfE for disadvantaged families).
9	Narrow life experiences outside of school/ limited cultural capital experiences

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
Disadvantaged pupils achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at least in line with all pupils by the end of KS2.	KS2 outcomes show that disadvantaged children achieve the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths at the same rate as their non-disadvantaged peers. Outcome- KS2 outcomes show that disadvantaged children achieve the greater depth in Reading, Writing and Maths at the same rate as their non- disadvantaged peers. Measured through KS2 results and termly summative assessments in Years 3 to 6. Because disadvantaged cohorts are small, three-year rolling averages are reported alongside annual results.
All disadvantaged but particularly the pupils with complex needs (those who are also vulnerable, have SEND, or both) make strong progress from their starting points and are able to fully access learning.	Progress is reviewed and analysed each half term against individual starting points and targets. Pupils with complex needs are identified and tracked as a distinct group. Personalised support, drawing on learning mentors, therapeutic services and targeted interventions, is in place for each pupil. Attendance, access to interventions and wellbeing are monitored alongside attainment, so outcomes are evaluated in the context of each pupil's needs while expectations remain high.
Disadvantaged pupils secure strong early reading skills, including phonics and reading fluency.	Strong phonics outcomes are sustained. In 2026, all disadvantaged pupils (100%) met the Phonics Screening Check expected standard, above the national disadvantaged figure. Disadvantaged outcomes to remain above national, with timely targeted support for any pupil not on track.
Disadvantaged children in Reception achieve a good level of development (GLD) in line with their peers.	To sustain the strong EYFS outcomes achieved in 2026. Overall, 42 of 57 children (74%) achieved GLD, while 4 of 5 disadvantaged children (80%) achieved GLD, well above the 2025 national FSM figure of 51.4%. Disadvantaged GLD outcomes will be sustained at or above national levels, with

	targeted support in place for any child who is not on track.
Disadvantaged pupils have improved oral language, vocabulary and sentence structure.	Pupils receiving speech and language or oracy interventions show measurable progress between entry and exit assessments. Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes in the Communication and Language early learning goals are in line with their peers. Improvement is triangulated through lesson observations, book scrutiny (vocabulary and sentence structure in writing) and pupil voice.
Disadvantaged pupils access enrichment and cultural capital opportunities at the same rate as their peers, including subsidised or paid-for places on trips and experiences.	Participation in trips, clubs and residentials is tracked by pupil premium status each term. All disadvantaged children are supported to attend curriculum trips, and some also attend the Year 6 residential, ensuring that cost is never a barrier to participation. Participation of disadvantaged pupils in extracurricular clubs is in line with non-disadvantaged pupils each year. An annual pupil voice survey shows disadvantaged pupils feel included in wider school life.
To sustain strong attendance for all pupils, with a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils, maintaining attendance above national disadvantaged levels and continuing to reduce persistent absence and any gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.	Strong attendance outcomes achieved in 2025–26 are sustained. FSM attendance remains at 94.5% or above, compared with the 2025–26 national FSM attendance figure of 89.13%, with the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils maintained at 1 percentage point or less. Persistent absence for FSM pupils reduces further from the 2025–26 Willow baseline of 14.3% and remains significantly below the national FSM rate of 33.84%. Targeted support is provided for pupils where attendance concerns are identified.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium this academic year to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £37,160

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Sustaining the restructured literacy provision (introduced in 2025), with smaller sets and an increased focus on disadvantaged pupils. Our most senior and experienced teachers continue to teach the sets that need to sustain or achieve high attainment.	High-quality teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils, and it particularly benefits disadvantaged pupils. Smaller sets taught by our most experienced teachers allow teaching to be closely matched to pupils' needs. Since the restructure in 2025, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in reading at the end of KS2 (88%) is above that of all pupils (83%); the focus now is on sustaining this and on closing the gap in writing. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/1-high-quality-teaching https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-the-five-a-day-approach-how-the-eef-can-support#:~:text=The%20%E2%80%8B'Five%2Da%2D,with%20SEND%20in%20mainstream%20settings.	1, 6, 7
Reading Intervention led by reading recovery specialists	Our specialist reading recovery teacher trains teaching assistants in reading recovery techniques, extending the reach of intensive one-to-one support for pupils who are behind in reading. EEF evidence shows that one-to-one tuition adds an average of five months' progress, and the EEF's Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1 guidance recommends high-quality, structured interventions for pupils who are struggling with literacy.	1, 6, 7

English 'booster' and Maths 'booster'	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition | Toolkit Strand | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF Members of SLT and subject experts provide the majority of this support. Working alongside class teachers and the pupils themselves ensures that sessions are tailored to specific needs and minimises missed sessions as it provides a more adaptable approach	1, 6, 7, 8
Phonics specialist teachers and teaching assistants	The phonics leader ensures early reading is taught by staff with strong subject and pedagogical knowledge. EEF and DfE guidance emphasise that well-trained staff and consistent delivery are essential to effective implementation of systematic synthetic phonics. Training and regular monitoring of staff ensure the scheme is delivered to a high standard and consistently across all classrooms in the school. In 2026, 100% of disadvantaged Year 1 pupils met the expected standard in the Phonics Screening Check.	1, 6, 7
DfE-validated synthetic phonics scheme	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base, with an average impact of five additional months' progress, and are particularly beneficial for disadvantaged pupils. A DfE-validated scheme has been bought in, and part of our spend is focused on training staff and supporting their understanding of how to deliver it: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics	6, 7
Training by speech and language therapists (External/ in house) to enable a range of staff to deliver oracy and receptive understanding interventions (including the hiring/ retention of staff who can deliver this support)	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) The deficit in availability, combined with the high demand for speech and language support in our locality has meant that this vital service has been more consistently provided 'in-house'. Progress amongst children who receive this intervention has been accelerated.	1, 6, 7
Release time for teaching staff to develop through National Professional	This academic year, staff from our Year 5 and 6 phase are completing the NPQSL programme, and an experienced member of staff is completing the NPQ for SENCOs. EEF guidance on effective professional development shows that sustained, high-quality CPD improves teaching and pupil outcomes. Investing in the	5, 6, 7

Qualifications and Assessment only route.	development of staff is one of the greatest levers to improve outcomes for learners.	
Weekly CPD for teaching assistants, led by the Deputy Head and specialist staff, including the reading recovery team and the mental health lead (introduced in 2025/26 and continuing this year).	The EEF's Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants guidance shows that teaching assistants have the greatest impact when they are well trained and well prepared, and when they deliver structured interventions. Teaching assistant interventions add an average of four months' progress when TAs are trained to deliver them. Weekly training led by the Deputy Head and our reading recovery team ensures teaching assistants deliver reading and phonics interventions consistently and to a high standard. Training from our mental health lead equips them to support pupils' wellbeing, emotional regulation and readiness to learn in class. Teaching assistant interventions | EEF	1, 3, 6, 7

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

Budgeted cost: £52,464

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Speech and Language 1:1 sessions	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Progress amongst children who receive this intervention has been accelerated (as seen through formative and summative assessments)	1, 6, 7

School-led tuition: (Specific foci of tuition can be found in the rows below)	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition | Toolkit Strand | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF The use of 'in-house' staff ensures that there is good communication of needs between pupils, class teachers and tutors. It also ensures relationships are built, enabling disadvantaged pupils to feel more confident in their learning and gives us the adaptability to ensure sessions are never wasted due to illness/ attendance issues:	1, 6, 7
School-led tuition: Saturday school	For the Spring term (over 8 weeks) Willow provides a Saturday Day School for Year 6 pupils on site with School staff. Feedback from parents and pupils indicates an increased confidence in learning as well as supporting the filling of gaps as evidenced by KS2 results. One to one tuition | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition | Toolkit Strand | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF	1, 2, 6
School-led tuition: Phonics interventions	Targeted academic support includes phonics and early reading interventions, Reading Recovery, English and maths booster provision, and structured spelling and handwriting support. Trained teachers, specialists and teaching assistants provide small-group and 1:1 intervention to address identified gaps, accelerate progress and improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. EEF evidence supports the use of targeted phonics and structured intervention. This approach enables the school to backfill gaps in learning and narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.	1, 2, 6, 7

School-led tuition: English	At Willow, we use the skills of English specialists to support literacy teaching across the school and small group booster provision in year 6. Moreover, we use some Pupil Premium funding to enable us to pay for additional teaching assistant time so that some children can have reading comprehension or writing intervention, or interventions with a skilled HLTA. Interventions for disadvantaged pupils focus on grammar, punctuation and sentence construction to close the gap in writing.	1, 2, 6, 7
School-led tuition: Reading recovery	Specialist reading recovery teacher to target children who are significantly behind their peers in KS1. Trained staff help support this initiative, expanding the reach and impact.	1, 2, 6, 7
School-led tuition: Maths	We use some pupil premium funding to enable us to employ an additional teacher for year 6 Maths Sets so that the children work in smaller ability groups. We also use the skills of several Maths specialists on staff to provide booster for any child not on track for Maths milestones	1, 2, 6, 7
Spelling and handwriting schemes (Lesley Clarke spelling/ spelling shed and Penpals for Handwriting)	Our Lesley Clarke spelling scheme builds directly on Lesley Clarke's Letters and Sounds, the DfE-validated phonics programme we teach in Reception and Key Stage 1. Pupils continue to use the same 'best bet' grapheme choices, mnemonics and routines as they move through the school, which is particularly important for disadvantaged pupils, who are more likely to have gaps in phonics and spelling. Penpals for Handwriting provides a consistent, structured approach to letter formation and joined handwriting across the school. Spelling is taught through our phonics programme in Reception and Key Stage 1, and continues systematically in Key Stage 2, as recommended in the DfE Reading Framework.	1, 6, 7
CGP Resources	Our targeted support groups are well resourced: for catch-up and booster groups we purchase CGP resources so that staff have high-quality, well-sequenced materials for structured practice that reinforces classroom learning.	1, 6
iPad licences to increase access to a wide range of intervention programmes	A wide range of independent learning programmes (e.g. Times Tables Rock Stars, SPAG.com, maths.co.uk and Renaissance Learning) can be accessed independently and adjusted to meet each child's needs. Usage and progress are easily monitored, so they inform targets and ensure children are moved on in their learning at the right point.	1, 3, 6, 7, 8

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

Budgeted cost: £19,673

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Mini Bus Service: A small number of Pupil Premium children do not attend regularly because they live at a considerable distance from our school or because there is some issue within their family. These children are offered a free place on our minibus, which makes 4 separate pick up rounds to collect them each morning.	This provision helps remove practical barriers to attendance and punctuality. In 2025/26, persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils reduced to 14.3%, compared with 13.49% for non-FSM pupils, and was significantly below the national FSM persistent absence rate of 33.84%. FSM attendance was 94.5%, compared with 95.4% for non-FSM pupils. The minibus service continues to support identified pupils to attend school regularly and on time.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9
Extended services- wellbeing provision	Free places in breakfast club and reduced fee places in after school care or holiday provision (or specific support for families in crisis with uniform, shoes, free or subsidised places on school trips/ residential trips or clubs) for identified pupil premium children with attendance or punctuality issues or who are looked after or have social care involvement. The school actively addresses gaps in disadvantaged pupils' access to enrichment and experiential learning by providing opportunities such as educational visits, extracurricular clubs	2, 3, 4, 5, 9
Learning mentors	Willow has a team of learning mentors who have a variety of backgrounds and dual roles including working as teachers, teaching assistants and sports coaches; (see also Sports premium spend summary sheet). As an attachment aware school, we understand the impact relationships have on a child's ability to learn. Vulnerable children are assigned a designated person who provides support across the academic year. This may be in class, small group or 1:1 support depending on the need of the child. In our experience, when meaningful relationships are formed, a child's potential is unlocked.	1, 3, 6

Attendance team and Child Protection Team	Children cannot progress adequately if they are not in school; or if they are in a vulnerable position in their personal life. The attendance team actively seek to target problem families and explore ways of supporting improved attendance so no child falls through the gaps. In a similar way, the child protection team seek to support all children by ensuring steps are taken to enable a stable and secure personal life. Given the strains and pressures on support services in the local area, the Child Protection team seek to 'fill the gap' of local services to ensure that PP, and other vulnerable children, are able to attend school focused on learning and maximising their potential themselves.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Electric/ Gas	To provide a safe, supportive and engaging environment outside of the standard school day, the school premises were opened to an increased number of children for half terms and holidays, as well as ensuring safe wrap-around care was provided. This had an impact on the site, with additional facilities being used to cater for children during this time. This ensured that children could attend school fed and warm, as well as providing a safe place for children during the holidays (meeting their emotional needs)	1, 2, 4, 5
Uniform support	When required, we provide financial support with school uniform for pupils so that pupils feel included and proud of themselves. This confidence prepares children to engage in their learning and succeed.	2, 3, 4, 5
Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	ALL

Therapeutic services (talk time, kidsconnect, bereavement counselling, nurture, play therapy, autism social skills groups, sibling support groups)	There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers): EEF_Social_and_Emotional_Learning.pdf(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) We have one qualified play therapist on staff for five days every week who provides intensive support to some children for a short period. This therapist coordinates, and supports others, in running a wide range of other therapeutic groups focused on improving resilience, social skills and emotional literacy.	2, 3, 5

Total budgeted cost: £109,297