

Alt Bridge School



Pupil Premium Strategy

2025-2028

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium for the 2025-2026 academic year funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils. Our strategy is however organised to cover a 3-year period.

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	Alt Bridge School
Number of pupils in school (as defined by DfE 2025-2026 grant allocations)	306
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	71%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	N Menagh
Pupil premium lead	N Menagh
Governor / Trustee lead	Mr J Holmes

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£189,200
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Pupil Premium Service Children	£700
Pupil Premium Post LAC	£28,930
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	£218,830

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our overall key aim is to use pupil premium funding in order to help us to achieve and sustain positive outcomes for disadvantaged children. Our students face a variety of challenges and socio-economic disadvantage is one such challenge for a large proportion of our student population. When looking at data associated with pupils who are eligible for pupil premium, there can be indicators of variance in outcomes for academic attainment, progression, attendance and engagement.

Our approach is focused on enabling access to high-quality teaching whilst also meeting the needs of learners in terms of their social and emotional vulnerabilities as these vulnerabilities can significantly reduce access to the curriculum and the academic support available.

Whilst our strategy is to target disadvantaged students, the use of funding can support other students across school where money is allocated to the development of high quality teaching and learning, the provision of external expertise through structured programs and through working to maintain consistent social relationships. As a specialist school, barriers to learning can be a complicated picture for our learners and we rely heavily on observational data of our young people and their presenting needs to identify the barriers they face from experiencing disadvantage.

We provide disadvantaged pupils with support to develop independent life and living skills, access to high quality work experience, careers guidance and a wide variety of enrichment options. A lot of work is done to ensure positive destinations whether students leave us in year 11 or from post-16. Preparation for a successful adult life is central not only to this strategy but to our whole school ethos.

Preparing students for learning and life through the development of key pivotal skills is a key area of focus for us and is at the heart of our strategy for pupil premium funding allocation.

Our strategy is driven by our knowledge of the needs and strengths of each student which informs our programs, approaches and aims.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Previously, our attendance data in 2022 showed a 6% gap between PP pupil and non-PP pupil attendance which was addressed through our last PPG strategy. In 2025, the gap shows at 2.1% so it will continue to be a focus of our pupil premium strategy to ensure a high level of support across school for this need.
2	Our 2025 observational and recorded data shows that our PPG students are more likely to experience difficulties securing positive behaviour for learning and are over-represented in our suspension data with 15 out of 16 suspensions in the 2024-2025 academic year, involving a student who is eligible for pupil premium.
3	Our 2025 data, observations and conversations with students showed that more disadvantaged students have difficulties with mental health and wellbeing, social relationships, communication and emotional resilience than their non-pupil premium peers. This continues to be a focus of our pupil premium strategy as these students required more support from our wellbeing hub, externally commissioned services and pastoral support mechanisms in order to achieve positive mental health and wellbeing.
4	Our 2025 observations and pastoral data shows that our disadvantaged students are more vulnerable to exploitation and risk through online safety issues than our non-pupil premium students. PPG students are more likely to engage in unsafe social media and online activities which lead to increased vulnerabilities than non-PPG peers.
5	Our 2025 observations and pastoral data shows that our disadvantaged students are more likely to live in households where there are a complex range of needs within the family and would benefit from family support arrangements and early help.
6	Our 2025 observations and pastoral data records show us that our disadvantaged students may not make the best choices in terms of KS4 options and may limit their options due to low aspirations when in fact they may be capable of more qualifications that we offer.

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
Our goal is to continue to minimise the attendance gap between PP and non-PP students to promote equitable access to education	The gap between attendance for PP and non-PP students remain low and not widen with the support in place to address attendance concerns through inclusive and ongoing support.
Our goal is to provide additional support of high quality, which enables students to develop positive behaviour for learning in order to prepare them for learning and later for adulthood.	Reduction in the number of suspensions associated with PP eligible pupils. Observations and conversations with students and their families will demonstrate improved outcomes for PP learners with difficulties establishing positive behaviour for learning skills.
Improved mental health and wellbeing of disadvantaged students, thus providing improved access to the curriculum.	Observations and conversations with students and their families will demonstrate improved outcomes in terms of mental health and wellbeing. These outcomes will show improvement following on from additional provisions and therapeutic interventions.
To provide education and support for students with vulnerabilities in terms of exploitation, online and social media use and community activities.	Students with risk factors and vulnerabilities will be identified early by school and intervention will take place at universal, targeted and specialist level for students in order to prevent disengagement from school and involvement in negative activities online and in the community. School will work in partnership with key providers externally who work to engage young people in a range of positive experiences and activities.
Improve confidence and self-esteem of disadvantaged students enabling improved engagement, participation and independence.	Impact will be noted through observations and discussions with students, their families and staff. PP students will present with improved levels of self-esteem and will increase their participation and engagement with school activities, particularly those involving oracy. PP students will demonstrate increasing levels of independence in relation to learning and be aware of how they learn in order to retain the most knowledge.
Students who leave in families with the most significant challenges, receive help at early stages to support engagement, attendance and achievements.	Students who require this support will access support via early help and/or team around the family support. School will be able to creatively provide support for students through partnership working and co-production of plans whilst the needs of families are championed by the school. This

	will enabled more barriers to learning to be overcome with the support of school.
The school will begin to provide 'guided options' at the end of key stage 3 which is focused on the use of a variety of assessments in order to provide students with the guidance they need in order to access the more appropriate and aspirational pathways for them individually in key stage 4.	Students on Key stage 4 pathways will access options which are aspirational and focused on preparing them for their next steps: FE, training/employment or preparation for adult life and independence. Students and parents will have greater clarity on the planned outcomes for learners, ensuring that achieve their best outcomes and are well prepared for transitions. Through this objective, we plan to grow our curriculum offer in terms of entry level, level 1 and vocational qualifications.

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: £20,490

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Thrive training cascade for all staff	<p>The school continues to invest in a rolling programme of Thrive training and provides training at universal, targeted and specialist level for staff. We have several trained Thrive practitioners in school and two staff currently undergoing apprenticeship training.</p> <p>Whole staff induction to Thrive training is scheduled for INSET in spring term 2026 and specific staff also accessed INSET training with Thrive which focused on the barriers for adolescents who may have experienced ACEs.</p> <p>Each year, the school is committed to increasing the awareness and skills of all staff in relation to Thrive as a key approach to supporting the social and emotional skills of students.</p> <p>https://www.thriveapproach.com/impact-and-research</p>	2, 3
Rolling programme of Lexonic Leap training and resources	<p>There is extensive research, outlining the significant impact of teaching a systematic phonics programme to readers who are developing early reading skills.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</p>	5, 6

Makaton training cascade	<p>As we are welcoming more students with complex communication needs to our setting, we are focusing on training to enhance the skills of staff in communicating with students in the most effective ways.</p> <p>Makaton, a communication system combining speech, signs, and symbols, is widely used to support adolescents with communication difficulties such as autism, Down syndrome, or developmental language disorders. Its multi-sensory approach enhances understanding, encourages speech development, and reduces frustration by providing visual and kinesthetic cues alongside spoken language. Research suggests that Makaton improves social interaction, emotional regulation, and overall participation in educational and social contexts, fostering independence and inclusion during a critical stage of development. For more details, see the study: https://adc.bmjjournals.org/content/106/Suppl_1/A177.1</p>	1, 2, 3
ELKLAN Communication Friendly School journey	<p>Alt Bridge School have joined the ELKLAN communication friendly school programme and have funded two staff members to train as trainers for the rest of the staff. They will deliver the communication counts programme. Two more staff from the support staff group are also training as communication leads and will support a cascade of further training over a three-year period whilst we work towards communication friendly status.</p> <p>https://www.elklan.co.uk/OurWork/CaseStudies/CFSe/</p>	2, 3, 6
Safeguarding training in Prevent 2025	<p>The school invests in additional training annually for the purposes of our Prevent strategy and in line with our Prevent risk assessment. Staff access additional INSET which is focused on identifying needs in pupils and being able to manage difficult conversations around what might be concerning special interests. Staff also have access to additional training via National College.</p> <p>Although there is not a great deal of research dedicated to this topic, some research has taken place by young people's groups which highlights the importance of communication between young people and staff.</p> <p>https://arc-nenc.nihr.ac.uk/news/young-people-lead-research-to-help-autistic-pupils-feel-safe-and-included-in-mainstream-secondary-schools/</p>	1, 2, 3, 4
External supervision of staff	<p>School to commission external supervision sessions half-termly through Jo Whalley associates. This provides those staff working with the most vulnerable students, the opportunity to speak with an external consultant. By supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff working with the most vulnerable students our students will receive a high-quality offer of support.</p> <p>The DfE charter on mental health outlines the importance of staff mental health and wellbeing:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges</p>	4, 5, 6

ELSA training	<p>School continue a rolling programme of ELSA training – training two further staff members annually and funding the supervision of their work via the Educational Psychology Service in Knowsley.</p> <p>There is some research highlighting the importance of ELSA in supporting wellbeing</p> <p>https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02643944.2024.2381743</p>	2, 3
Training HLTA to deliver BTEC in vocational students	<p>Currently, our HLTA group are training to be able to provide a BTEC course for all students as part of enrichment. HLTA, once trained will be timetabled to deliver this course in groups of learners in years 10, 11 and post-16. This will provide a further avenue for students to develop their qualifications range and support onward transition to planned courses in FE.</p> <p>the EEF emphasizes that personalized, practical, and skills-based learning can be highly beneficial for SEND students, particularly when combined with high-quality teaching and targeted interventions.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send</p>	6

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

Budgeted cost: £106,745

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Level 3 subject specific TA intervention	<p>Alt Bridge employs 8 level 3 TAs who provide targeted academic support across the curriculum for learners, enabling greater progress and engagement for our most vulnerable learners. These staff members receive direction from our subject specialist curriculum leaders and are deployed into classes with a focus on the engagement and progress of learners most in need of support.</p>	1, 2, 3, 6
Speech and language therapy	<p>Alt Bridge School commissions speech and language therapy via Shine therapies two days per week and the practitioners manage a case load and also support with staff training and development. This activity supports students in developing their language and communication skills to enable them to access the curriculum, develop social skills and communicate their wants and needs.</p> <p>https://ican.org.uk/media/1926/ican_talkseries10.pdf</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
ICT	<p>The school has purchased licences to use the Century learning platform which provides students with an online</p>	2, 6

	<p>resource to access learning activities to support learning across the curriculum.</p> <p>Observations of student engagement and internal engagement tracking show that KS4 students in particular, have engaged well with Century learning to boost learning opportunities at home and in school.</p> <p>The school also uses SeeSaw to track progress against SEND outcomes, set activities for home learning and provide evidence of learning taking place within school for parents and teachers across school to access.</p> <p>More recently, we have purchased and began to use Evidence for learning in our semi-formal and informal curriculum classes to support formative assessment and engagement.</p> <p>EEF research highlights how technology can improve learning outcomes:</p> <p>https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED612157.pdf</p>	
Shine therapy SLA providing occupational therapy for students	<p>Pupil engaging may often be affected by sensory or physical needs which is a shared profile amongst our student population. Sensory integration supports students to increase engagement and access more learning. It enables them to self-regulate and develop learning behaviours.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation</p>	2, 3
Careers Advisor support and expansion of careers team	<p>Training and time allocation from a level 4 HLTA for additional careers advice from Year 7 to support improved outcomes in terms of preparation for adulthood – we aim to ensure that all of our learners, particularly those who are disadvantaged, go on to secure employment as a key long-term outcome.</p> <p>Two job coaches appointed and fully trained to support students into employment in 2024.</p> <p>Disability Rights UK highlights the importance of careers advice for SEND learners:</p> <p>https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/system/files/paragraphs/cw_file/2023-01/Careers%20Guidance%20for%20YP%20with%20SEND.pdf</p>	6

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

Budgeted cost: £91,596

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
OSSME Autism Initiatives SLA	<p>Our OSSME SLA provides a one-hour weekly session for students with an Autism diagnosis in order to understand their diagnosis and make progress with personal, social and emotional development. OSSME can coach students and advise staff around removing barriers to learning. OSSME SLA has been enhanced to 1.5 days weekly to provide 1:1 support, family coaching, Prevent work and support for maths-related anxiety.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Forest school	<p>Outdoor activities for our learners massively enhanced their learning experience and engagement. Delivered through our Physical Development curriculum by our two trained forest school leaders, this provision enable students to access learning experiences outdoors and engage in healthy activity which furthermore enhances concentration and communication skills.</p> <p>"Seeing the Forest and the Trees: A Historical and Conceptual Look at Danish Forest Schools" – International Journal of Early Childhood Environmental Education. This paper explores the benefits of Forest School, including holistic development, resilience, social skills, and emotional wellbeing, and discusses implications for outdoor learning beyond early years, which can be adapted for adolescents: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1225663.pdf</p> <p>EEF research also focuses on the importance of outdoor learning: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Shakespeare North Playhouse partnership SLA	<p>Students will access workshops in vocalisation techniques and visit the new theatre for activities, plays and workshops over the course of the academic year. The school will work in partnership with the playhouse to ensure that disadvantaged students build cultural capital through the variety of experiences and gain confidence in communication. The SNP will also support school</p>	3, 4, 5, 6

	<p>on it's journey to achieve the Arts Mark and to enhance our citizenship curriculum.</p> <p>SLA enhanced in 2024-205 to provide workshops for post-16 students to prepare for work experience and supporting internships. 10 week programme run in 2025 to be repeated annually.</p> <p>Research outlines the benefits of oracy interventions:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</p>	
Wellbeing hub staff team – 5 learning mentors and manager	<p>Our learning mentor team manage and respond to pupil absence, mental health issues, behaviour for learning barriers and any other factors affecting pupil wellbeing. We provide a dedicated learning mentor for each year group and implement the Knowsley LA strategy and offer EHATs to overcome ongoing attendance issues and also to provide families with complex circumstances with early help and signposting to support.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Access to ELSA training staff members	<p>Alt Bridge school have trained several members of staff to the level of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants. Their work is overseen by the Educational Psychology Service and they are able to work with a range of pupils via 1:1 interventions.</p> <p>Research demonstrates the importance of social and emotional learning:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p>	1, 2, 3, 4
Access to Thrive practitioners	<p>Alt Bridge School has trained several staff members to the level of Thrive Practitioners. These individual provide Thrive assessments and contribute to pastoral support plans for learners with difficulties developing behaviour for learning skills. Support is provided through individually planned sessions.</p> <p>Research demonstrates the importance of social and emotional learning:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p>	1, 2, 3, 4
Team Teach training	<p>Eight members of staff trained to trainer level, including three to advanced level to enable our school staff to access ongoing, regular Team Teach training which focuses on de-escalation strategies and how to conduct physical</p>	2 and 3

	<p>interventions. These approaches enable staff to manage more challenging behaviour effectively which affects the learning of all students and also to re-focus students on their learning.</p>	
Alpaca farm visits 2024-2026	<p>For the first time, Alt Bridge students will access some additional animal assisted therapy through access to alpacas. Groups will attend regular off-site opportunities with alpacas to engage in animal assisted therapy.</p> <p>EEF research on the importance of outdoor learning includes a focus on school trips:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, and 6
Attendance Officer SLA with Knowsley CC	<p>We have allocated funding to provide further support and involvement with attendance issues through the local authority attendance team offer. This supports the workload of the learning mentors and allows for a larger proportion of home visits and escalation strategies when attendance is not improving.</p>	1
Zones of Regulation membership to resourced curriculum online and delivery of regular sessions to all year groups	<p>The Zones of Regulation is a structured social-emotional learning program designed to help learners identify emotions, develop self-regulation strategies, and improve coping skills. Research indicates that self-regulation is a critical predictor of academic success, social competence, and overall wellbeing, particularly for learners with SEND and complex needs (Pandey et al., 2018). Studies and practice-based evidence show that implementing Zones of Regulation can lead to improved emotional awareness, reduced emotional distress, and enhanced positive social behaviors, including better communication and relationship skills. While formal empirical evidence is still emerging, reviews highlight its strong theoretical foundation in cognitive-behavioral approaches and social-emotional learning frameworks, making it a widely accepted intervention in special education settings. Dedicated sessions will provide consistent opportunities for learners to practice these skills, reducing behavioral incidents and supporting inclusion, engagement, and readiness for learning.</p>	2, 3
Access to school trips	<p>Subsidies for school trips to enable all students to access off-site visits and prevent non-attendance due to financial barriers. School trips continue to build student's cultural capital by enabling their access to high-quality.</p>	1, 2, 4

	EEF research on the importance of outdoor learning includes a focus on school trips: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning	
Daily free breakfast club	Provision of a free breakfast club available to all students to access health choices to avoid hunger affecting learning and engagement. Daily morning snacks are also provided for students who may miss breakfast or become hungry during the morning.	5

Total budgeted cost: £218,830

Total Funding: £218,830

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 2024-20245 academic year.

We are exceptionally pleased with our attendance outcomes. The data demonstrates that the gap between PP and non-PP attendance has closed since the start of our strategy and was at -1.5% at the end of the 2024-2025 academic year as opposed to a gap of 4% at the end of the 22/23 academic year. Pupil attendance overall is consistently higher than Knowsley special school attendance rates and in the last academic year, we also exceeded national special school attendance at a difference of +2.4%.

Our therapeutic offer has been updated during the course of this strategy with Music Therapy, ADHD foundation and military school coming to an end following a period of input in favour of the extension of other therapies such as Occupational Therapy, OSSME Autism Initiatives and Speech and Language Therapy. These therapies continue to be significantly well received, and the impact has been wide ranging in terms of confidence building, self-esteem, school engagement and attendance. The provision of these services internally reduces the waiting times usually experienced by our families for NHS services via Alder Hey. Our disadvantaged pupils might otherwise not access this offer, were this not to be provided in school. Moving forward with our pupil premium strategy, we now need to focus on the skills of all staff in providing universal support with speech and language needs via training in ELKLAN and working towards communication friendly status as a setting.

Our speech therapy service have continued to provide 1:1 and small group interventions and targeted supported for students who required it. They have also delivered staff training sessions and provide advice and guidance to individual teachers and support staff in order to support the needs of students in class. They have contributed to the work undertaken to achieve the National Autistic Society Award which has enhanced our SEND provision. This achievement was reached within the period of the last pupil premium strategy which has significantly enhanced provision for learners with Autism. The work of the SEND strategy leader has been pivotal in making sure the school met the standard.

Students who engaged with Shakespeare North Playhouse demonstrated an observed increased in confidence and oracy ability following their engagement. This provides students with the personal skills they need to then prepare for next steps and success in adulthood.

Our breakfast club provision, daily morning snacks and access to more trips and visits enhance our offer and ensure that no student is affected by a lack of access to basic provisions or activities which build cultural capital.

Our safeguarding curriculum and offer provide students and staff with further education around keeping safe. Staff have been trained in more specialised approaches to contribute to our Prevent strategy and learners access a strong curriculum offer via PSHCE in relation to keeping safe. Our educational program contribute to the main areas of need for pupils according to local contextual safeguarding factors. We focus on supporting students to resist exploitation and raise concerns when they recognise that this may be taking place.

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
Zones of Regulation Curriculum	Zones of Regulation
Century Learning	Century Tech
SeeSaw	Criterion Media Group
Lexonic Leap Phonics programme	Lexonic Leap

Service pupil premium funding

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	Pet Therapy: To provide emotional support, helping student cope with stress, anxiety and depression. Improve mental health, it can trigger release of oxytocin, reduces stress levels. Support student with a diagnosis of ADHT/Autism.. 1-1 Support in English and Maths: lessons. Identifying gaps in

	learning and provide support to close those gaps, use of Diversity team to provide that support TA Level 3/ HLTA.
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	<p>Students increased attendance reduced anxiety, increased levels of relaxation. Provided companionship so that students emotional resilience and overall mental health improvement.</p> <p>Students made good progress in English & Maths. Attends top set for both and will leave with a qualification in both subjects.</p>