

Durham Dales Partnership

Butterknowle, Frosterley, Hamsterley,
St John's Chapel, Wearhead & Woodland
Primary Schools



Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

Written:	December 2025
Reviewed:	
To be reviewed:	December 2026

This statement details our schools' 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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Number of pupils in school	Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils
Butterknowle Primary School	54	20.37%
Frosterley Primary School	34	41.18%
Hamsterley Primary School	35	11.43%
St John's Chapel Primary School	26	15.38%
Wearhead Primary School	10	30%
Woodland Primary School	25	12%
		2025 - 2028
Date this statement was published		December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed		Annually
Statement authorised by		Richard Sains Co-Executive Headteacher
Pupil premium lead		Richard Sains Co-Executive Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead		Victoria Menzies

Funding overview

Detail	Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	Total budget for this academic year
Butterknowle Primary School	£16,665	£0	£16,665
Frosterley Primary School	£15,150	£0	£15,150
Hamsterley Primary School	£7,575	£0	£7,575

St John's Chapel Primary School	£9,090	£0	£9,090
Wearhead Primary School	£3,030	£0	£3,030
Woodland Primary School	£4,545	£0	£4,545

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At the Durham Dales Partnership, we believe that every child has the ability to achieve their full potential, regardless of background. We are committed to ensuring that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, enriched by a wide range of experiences. Our curriculum is designed to give all pupils—especially disadvantaged pupils—the knowledge they need to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences in later life.

Across our federation, we have identified common barriers to learning for Pupil Premium pupils. These include a lack of basic skills needed for the children to achieve well in national assessments, resilience and self-confidence, limited access to real-life experiences and additional learning needs.

To address these challenges, we focus our Pupil Premium spending on delivering high-quality teaching and targeted interventions, enhancing the cultural capital of disadvantaged children, and supporting pupils to develop resilience.

Our approach is underpinned by high expectations for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. We embed a culture that prioritises early and accurate assessment of pupils' needs and use this information to implement a continuous cycle of planning, action, and review to reduce barriers to learning. Where necessary, we involve specialists to support pupils' development. Our Pupil Premium strategy is carefully designed, evidence-based, and tailored to address the specific challenges that may affect pupils' education and readiness to engage with school.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils often face greater challenges with reading compared to their peers. These pupils struggle with decoding and fluency, as well as being able to make inferences from texts and explaining and justifying their inferences with evidence.
2	Assessments, observations, and pupil discussions indicate that disadvantaged pupils often experience greater challenges with grammar, handwriting, spelling and punctuation compared to their peers.

3	Monitoring of pupils' work, alongside observations and discussions with staff and pupils, suggests that disadvantaged pupils need additional support to identify how to improve their work and address misconceptions in their understanding.
4	Not all parents of disadvantaged pupils are aware of the most effective strategies to support their children's learning at home and are familiar with the expectations of the curriculum.
5	Rural isolation and limited public transport reduce disadvantaged pupils' opportunities to engage in enrichment activities such as swimming, music, sport, visits to public libraries, theatre performances, and live music events within the local area.

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 make accelerated progress in reading, including fluency and comprehension skills, so that the attainment gap with non-disadvantaged peers narrows significantly across the Federation.	Disadvantaged pupils show clear improvement in reading fluency and comprehension, demonstrated through regular assessments and classroom observations. Pupils are more confident readers, able to understand and discuss texts at an age-appropriate level. Engagement with reading increases, with pupils participating more actively in reading activities both in school and at home.
Younger pupils will develop strong phonics knowledge and apply it confidently to decode words, enabling them to become fluent, independent readers by the end of the early reading phase.	Younger pupils confidently use their phonics knowledge to decode words accurately and apply these skills when reading sentences and short texts. Over time, they develop fluency, reading with increasing speed and expression.
Disadvantaged pupils will develop secure skills in grammar, handwriting, spelling, and punctuation, enabling them to write accurately and confidently across a range of subjects and for different purposes.	Disadvantaged pupils demonstrate improved accuracy and confidence in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and handwriting. Their written work shows greater consistency and clarity, with fewer errors and better presentation. Pupils are able to apply these skills independently across different subjects and writing tasks, producing work that meets age-appropriate expectations.
Disadvantaged pupils will develop the skills and confidence to identify areas for improvement in their work and address misconceptions effectively, enabling them to make sustained progress and achieve age-appropriate standards across the curriculum.	Disadvantaged pupils are able to reflect on their work and identify areas for improvement with increasing independence. They respond effectively to feedback, correct misconceptions, and apply strategies to improve the quality and accuracy of their

	work. Over time, pupils demonstrate greater confidence in self-assessment and produce work that shows clear progress across different subjects.
Parents and carers of disadvantaged pupils will have a better understanding of effective strategies to support learning at home and will be familiar with curriculum expectations, enabling them to provide consistent and informed support for their children.	Parents engage more confidently with their child's learning, demonstrated through increased participation in school-led workshops, home learning activities, and communication with teachers. They understand key curriculum expectations and use recommended strategies to support reading, writing, and maths at home. As a result, pupils show improved engagement and progress in core subjects.
Disadvantaged pupils will have increased access to enrichment opportunities, including cultural, sporting, and creative experiences, helping to broaden their horizons, develop confidence, and enhance social and emotional skills.	Disadvantaged pupils participate in a wider range of enrichment activities such as swimming, music, sport, library visits, and cultural events. Pupils demonstrate improved confidence, engagement, and aspiration through feedback, observations, and discussions. These experiences contribute to their personal development and support curriculum learning, ensuring they have opportunities comparable to their peers.

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost:

Butterknowle Primary School - £8332

Frosterley Primary School - £ 7575

Hamsterley Primary School - £3787

St John's Chapel Primary School - £ 4545

Wearhead Primary School - £1500

Woodland Primary School - £2272

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase access to online teaching	EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1	1, 2

<p>materials to support teachers' planning of the curriculum.</p> <p>This will ensure that there is a structured approach to teaching English and the wider curriculum that focuses on developing pupils' literacy skills.</p>	<p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2</p>	
<p>Purchase access to online teaching materials to implement the Nelson Handwriting scheme across KS1 and KS2, and Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle in EYFS.</p>	<p><i>Accurate letter formation is an essential early skill that forms the basis of a fluent handwriting style. However, it is also important to focus on the speed of pupils' writing as well as the accuracy. Slow or effortful transcription hinders writing composition as pupils have to concentrate on monitoring their handwriting and spelling and are less able to think about the content of their writing</i></p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1 Guidance Report</p> <p><i>Monitor pupils' handwriting to ensure accurate letter formation habits, providing effective feedback to promote efficient and fluent handwriting.</i></p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 Guidance Report</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Purchase access to online teaching materials and classroom resources to implement RWI spelling from Years 2 to 6.</p>	<p><i>Accurate spelling is a key component of writing fluency and should be explicitly taught rather than simply tested.</i></p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1 Guidance Report</p> <p><i>It is important to promote the basic skills of writing— skills that need to become increasingly automatic so that pupils can concentrate on writing composition. This includes the transcription skills of handwriting (or typing, where appropriate) and spelling</i></p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 Guidance Report</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Provide release time for teachers to participate in joint planning</p>	<p><i>It is valuable to look for ways of reinforcing key knowledge and skills across the curriculum, capitalising on</i></p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

<p>sessions, ensuring all schools implement a consistent curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p><i>any crossover between topics and subjects where appropriate.</i></p> <p>EEF Support for education professionals - High-quality teaching</p>	
<p>Provide release time for teachers to moderate pupils' exercise books across the Federation, ensuring consistency in standards and expectations, and to share good practice.</p>	<p><i>High quality teaching improves pupil outcomes, and effective professional development offers a crucial tool to develop teaching quality and enhance children's outcomes in the classroom.</i></p> <p>EEF Effective Professional Development Guidance Report</p>	
<p>Purchase additional reading materials to use as class texts and provide books that support pupils' reading across the wider curriculum, linked to topic themes. These will also be used to teach grammar skills within the context of a high-quality text and to teach pupils how to adapt their writing for different audiences and purposes.</p>	<p><i>Reading comprehension strategies are high impact on average (+7 months). Alongside phonics this is a crucial part of early reading instruction.</i></p> <p>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Reading comprehension strategies</p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 Guidance Report</p>	1, 2
<p>Implement Read Write Inc as the Federation's chosen SSP (Systematic Synthetic Phonics) programme with support from the One Excellence English Hub. This will include securing access to online teaching materials and purchasing the resources required to deliver the programme effectively.</p>	<p><i>Phonics has a positive impact on average (+5 months) with extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</i></p> <p>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Phonics</p>	1
<p>Provide training on effective approaches to marking and giving feedback that help accelerate pupil progress.</p>	<p><i>Providing feedback is a well-evidenced and has a high impact on learning outcomes. Effective feedback tends to focus on the task, subject and self-regulation strategies: it provides specific information on how to improve.</i></p>	3

<p>Review the federation Marking and Feedback Policy to include best practice with providing feedback.</p>	<p>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Feedback</p> <p><i>Use accurate assessment of capabilities and difficulties to ensure interventions are appropriately matched to pupils needs.</i></p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1 Guidance Report</p> <p><i>Use high quality assessment and diagnosis to target and adapt teaching to pupils' needs.</i></p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 Guidance Report</p>	
<p>Implement non-negotiables for reading, writing, and maths across all schools to provide staff with a clear understanding of the key end-of-year expectations for each year group.</p> <p>Share these with parents so that they understand key curriculum expectations and use recommended strategies to support reading, writing, and maths at home.</p>	<p><i>Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps.</i></p> <p>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Parental Engagement</p> <p>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Feedback</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Purchase of Testbase standardised diagnostic assessments.</p> <p>Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly.</p>	<p><i>When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups</i></p> <p>Diagnostic assessment EEF</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Enabling staff to undertake professional development such as National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) and CPD courses provided by Education Durham.</p>	<p><i>High quality teaching improves pupil outcomes, and effective professional development offers a crucial tool to develop teaching quality and enhance children's outcomes in the classroom.</i></p> <p>EEF Guidance Report Effective Professional Development</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £

Butterknowle Primary School - £4166
 Frosterley Primary School - £ 3787
 Hamsterley Primary School - £1893
 St John's Chapel Primary School - £ 2272
 Wearhead Primary School - £750
 Woodland Primary School - £1136

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support. This will be delivered in collaboration with our local English hub.	<p><i>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks</i></p> <p>Phonics Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	1

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

Budgeted cost: £

Butterknowle Primary School - £4166
 Frosterley Primary School - £ 3787
 Hamsterley Primary School - £1893
 St John's Chapel Primary School - £ 2272
 Wearhead Primary School - £750
 Woodland Primary School - £1136

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Provide opportunities for parents to participate in school-based workshops that help them understand how to	<p><i>Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps.</i></p>	4

support their children's learning at home. Examples include reading and maths cafés, as well as stay-and-play sessions.	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Parental engagement	
Provide parents with non-negotiable booklets outlining key learning expectations. Refer to their child's progress in achieving these targets during pupil progress meetings.	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Parental Engagement	4
Discounted places for eligible pupils at breakfast & after school club Access to sports coach activities after school Discounted contributions to the cost of residential and educational activities/visits Attend pantomime at Gala theatre Opportunities to participate in instrumental music sessions delivered by Durham Music Service	<i>The EEF believes that all children, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, deserve a well-rounded, culturally rich, education. However, children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to participate in enrichment activities like volunteering and arts and cultural events.</i> EEF press release 9 October, 2019 <i>There are wider benefits from regular physical activity in terms of physical development, health and wellbeing as well as other potential benefits have been reported such as improved attendance.</i> <i>Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds may be less likely to be able to benefit from sport clubs and other physical activities outside of school due to the associated financial costs (e.g. equipment). By providing physical activities free of charge, schools give pupils access to benefits and opportunities that might not otherwise be available to them.</i> EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit Physical Activity	5

Total budgeted cost: £

Butterknowle Primary School - £16,665

Frosterley Primary School - £ 15,150

Hamsterley Primary School - £7,575

St John's Chapel Primary School - £ 9,090
Wearhead Primary School - £3,030
Woodland Primary School - £4,545

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

The 2025 end-of-Key Stage 2 national assessments show that, for those schools with disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 during that academic year, the majority had a lower percentage of pupils meeting the expected national standard in reading, writing, and maths. However, in some schools, pupils performed better than the national average in writing and maths.

Since the formation of the federation in November 2025, a new Pupil Premium Statement has been developed following a detailed analysis of the key challenges to achievement identified among disadvantaged pupils across all schools within the Durham Dales Partnership.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

*For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year***

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils