

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2025 to 2026 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

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

School overview

School name	Houlton School
Number of pupils in school	893
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	20.94%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Paul Brockwell Executive Principal
Pupil premium lead	Angela Lancini Assistant Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Patricia Keating (Academy Improvement Management) Johanne Thomas (TLET Trustee)

Funding overview

Detail	Amount 25/26
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£316,580
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£316,580

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Houlton School is in its fifth year as an academy Free School that opened in September 2021 to pupils in Year 7 only. We have now welcomed our fifth cohort of pupils and currently have 893 pupils on roll which is marginally below our PAN of 900 pupils in our fifth year. We will also be opening a Primary Phase and Sixth Form in September 2026.

Of our 893 pupils, 187 are entitled to support from the PPG; 27 pupils in year 7, 41 pupils in year 8, 40 pupils in year 9, 46 pupils in year 10 and 33 in year 11. As such, this represents 20.94% of the cohort, with 182 pupils being entitled to Free School Meals. This is below average for state-funded secondary schools as the most recent year (2024-25) for which [national data](#) is available reflects that 25.7% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This national data also demonstrates that this is also below the average for the West Midlands which was 33.9% for 2024/25.

This statement contains funding estimates based on the information provided by primary schools and pupils' entitlements in Key Stage 2 as well as information that we already hold for our year 7 - 11 cohorts. We have 4 pupils who are known to be eligible for service pupil premium (SPP), 7 pupils who are previously looked-after children (PLAC), 8 pupils who are looked-after children (LAC) and 182 children who are either currently, or have been entitled to free school meals in the last six years (FSM/Ever6). We anticipate this equating to a total Pupil Premium Grant of £316,580.

In order to anticipate, respond to and diminish the emergence of any differences in the rates of progress for our cohorts we have considered national trends, insights from CAT4 diagnostic assessment tools, the [EEF toolkit](#), information gathered by our teaching staff and intelligence drawn from the Transforming Lives Educational Trust's other local secondary school. We will continue to make appropriate adjustments to our strategy as we reflect on the progress our learners make as well as our local context.

At Houlton School, our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they may face, make good progress and achieve high attainment levels across the curriculum, particularly in EBacc subjects, through a personalised curriculum and high-quality responsive teaching with embedded formative assessment. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve the same or better progress as their peers who do not have a 'disadvantaged background' through high quality learning and teaching experiences, enrichment and co-curricular activities, access to technology and access to learning materials from home. These are all key elements of our Pupil Premium strategy.

Our intention is also to consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker or who act as young carers. The activities that we have outlined in this statement are also intended to support these pupils' needs, regardless of whether they are formally 'disadvantaged' or not.

Our strategy has effective quality first teaching and continued professional development at the heart of its approach. There is also a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. We ensure to equip our highly effective teaching team with additional and refined

pedagogical tools that result in high challenge and knowledge rich-accessible curricula which explore our 'Big Questions' across all subject areas. This is proven to have the greatest impact on diminishing the attainment difference whilst also benefiting all pupils in our school. Implied within the intended outcomes detailed below is the intention that pupils who are not from a disadvantaged background will also see their attainment levels being sustained and improved alongside the progress being made by their disadvantaged peers. However, our 'FIRST' strategy, which is employed by all staff, means that we are able to focus on timely identification and intervention when issues and/or barriers are present that would prevent the desired and expected progress being made.

The 'FIRST' strategy is outlined below:

First marked, and **first visited** in lessons, every time;

Identified on Provision Maps with **personalised** interventions updated

regularly; **Regularly challenged** (data/progress/conduct points);

Seated strategically (and regularly reviewed);

Tackling missing work ('Whilst you were out' sheets and catch-up conversations);

Our strategy is also integral to wider school plans for continued education recovery, notably in its targeted support through the support of our Pupil Experience Leaders, Assess/Plan/Do review in individual subjects and our 'Secondary Ready' Programme from Young Life Warrior to support transition from KS2 to KS3.

Our overall approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. Our approach will ensure that disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they are set and, as a school, we act early to intervene at the point that need is identified. A whole school approach ensures that all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve which reflects the 'aspiration' core value pillar that forms one element of our school ethos.

We strive to build strong relationships with pupils and families so that we can understand the challenges that they face and respond accordingly in order to support each individual pupil holistically. We have robust data collection systems to allow us to monitor and analyse pupil progress, attainment, behaviour and attendance which support timely intervention and help raise the profile of disadvantaged pupils school wide. The overall goal and ultimate objective is that all staff are working collaboratively towards the achievement of a common goal: to diminish the progress / attainment gaps between disadvantaged and all other pupils whilst also providing opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to access experiences and cultural capital which they might otherwise not have access to within their local community and daily lives.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Continuing to raise the profile of DA pupils across the school to ensure that our 'FIRST' strategy is present every day and in every classroom. As a school, our pupil and staff bodies are continuing to grow. As such, the continued embedding of this strategy is of particular importance in order for all pupils to have the same consistency and quality of provision in order to make the expected progress in line with FFT20 data.
2	Historic school closures as a result of the Covid pandemic continue to have an influence on pupils who join us at the start of their KS3 journey. Similarly, the clear and present cost of living crisis continues to have a negative and significant impact upon DA pupils and their families. National studies supported that DA pupils suffered a greater impact of the pandemic than other pupils. It will be important to offer responsive and effective approaches to supporting DA pupils during this time who may experience additional barriers to curriculum and co-curricular access which negatively impact upon the progress being made academically in school.
3	When evaluating our GL CAT4 data, KS2 Test scores, information gathered from KS2 transition and experienced secondary school practitioner insight we are often presented with significant attainment gaps due to a lack of progress being made by DA pupils in comparison with their peers. This is often reflected in a reduced ability to access challenging curriculums as a result of barriers associated with reading comprehension, vocabulary, spelling and numeracy; these gaps are often within KS2 programmes of study which then only serve to create further widening of any gaps when KS3 programmes of study are undertaken.
4	Diminishing the gap in EBacc subjects for DA pupils to reduce the impact of the Covid pandemic as well as the well documented potential impact of being a DA pupil.
5	Creating strong home/school relationships where DA families feel connected and part of the Houlton family and work in partnership with us to achieve the very best outcomes for their children.

6	Attendance can be lower for DA pupils and absence from school has a significant impact on the progress achieved by all pupils. Persistent absence must be swiftly addressed to ensure that progress is maximised for pupils whilst pupil welfare is also carefully considered. DA pupils at Houlton School have had a lower attendance than non DA pupils at Houlton School in the last five academic years. In the 2024-25 school year attendance of FSM6 pupils was 2% lower than FFT national data, attendance of SEND pupils was 4.1% below FFT national data and attendance for EHCP pupils was 8.9% below national figures. As such, this continues to be a key focus of our pupil premium strategy.
7 8	Raising aspirations of DA pupils with regards to their long-term goals beyond KS3-KS4 education. A proactive approach towards creating a culture of high aspiration amongst DA pupils should have a positive impact on progress and achievement as well as future post 16 choices. Nationally, social and emotional issues are more common among disadvantaged pupils and this has been heightened by the pandemic. Anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem are common barriers. This is partly driven by concern about catching up lost learning and exams/future prospects, and the lack of enrichment opportunities due to the pandemic. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment. Our observations suggest many lower attaining disadvantaged pupils lack metacognitive / self-regulation strategies when faced with challenging tasks, notably in their monitoring and evaluation of their answers.
9	A proportion of our disadvantaged pupils are in receipt of support from the PPG as a result of being previously looked-after children or looked-after children (LAC) and most are likely to have experienced childhood trauma in a variety of forms. Therefore, trauma informed practice, pedagogy and the implementation of restorative practices are a priority for all of our staff in order to remove barriers to engagement in learning and social interaction around the school. This continues to be of the utmost importance as our staff body continues to grow and our approaches towards supporting all pupils and especially DA pupils is disseminated to new staff via continued professional development.

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.

Improved attainment among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum, ultimately leading to attainment and progress at the end of KS4 that is consistent with FFT20.	Pupils are on-track to make the appropriate progress within our Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum according to SISRA analytics. End of KS4 attainment data to give a final reflection on this for each cohort in all subjects.
Continued improvement of our quality of education across all year groups in all subject areas.	An ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum for all, will continue to be implemented. A rigorous quality assurance programme will reflect high quality teaching across all faculties with staff continuing to effectively implement CPD around responsive teaching and embedding formative assessment. Use of pupil and staff voice will allow continued reflection on the highly effective CPD sessions that will be required to continue to ensure that the very best learning and teaching is occurring. A coaching culture through Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs) will continue to be utilised to ensure that we are engaged in a constant cycle of improvement. As we enter the 2025-26 academic year we will Continue our TLC approach with Tom Sherrington's WalkThrus resources for CPD util our new T&L Assistant Principal joins us in Jaunary.. This will help us to embed the Houlton School 'Core Princpals' teaching techniques as well as providing direction to individual staff for further teaching and learning related CPD.
A raised profile for DA pupils across the school with a well embedded and	Teachers know which pupils in their teaching groups are DA. Teachers have strategic seating

consistent FIRST strategy within teacher practice. Improved reading comprehension among targeted disadvantaged pupils across KS3.	positions for all DA pupils in their classrooms and can evidence appropriate provisions being made to support their progress in line with their peers through use of provision maps. Staff are able to articulate provisions being made as appropriate for DA pupils. 'FIRST' strategy is evidenced consistently through quality assurance processes. GL standardised diagnostic testing will measure and show an improvement in reading comprehension scores for DA pupils following strategic individual and/or small group intervention as well as a whole school strategy for 'reading for meaning' in class. We will also introduce Renaissance Star Readers testing for all Years groups and use this data to identify pupils in need of intervention and track progress made. Bedrock learning outcomes also demonstrate improved reading comprehension skills amongst DA pupils. Therefore, the disparity between DA pupils and all other pupils will be diminished. Work scrutiny and high standards of engagement in lessons will also reflect these improvements. Improvements in this area will enable pupils to access the school's GCSE curriculum appropriately.
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Improved spelling among targeted disadvantaged pupils across KS3.	GL standardised diagnostic testing will show an improvement in spelling in terms of scores attained following strategic individual and/or small group intervention as well as a whole school strategy for 'reading for meaning'. The disparity scores between DA pupils and all other pupils will be diminished.
Improved numeracy scores among targeted disadvantaged pupils across KS3.	Numeracy screeners will show an improvement in numeracy following strategic individual and/or small group

	intervention as well as a whole school strategy for 'reading for meaning'. The disparity scores between DA pupils and all other pupils will be diminished.
A diminished gap in EBacc subjects between DA pupils and other pupils.	Progress being made by targeted DA pupils compared to all other pupils of a similar prior attainment will show a diminished and / or closed gap.

Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among disadvantaged pupils across all subjects. To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils by enriching the lives of all pupils and raising their aspirations, including those who are disadvantaged.	Rewards and consequences data and quality assurance programmes will demonstrate that DA pupils are able to regulate their own behaviour for learning. These improvements will be underpinning by our whole school implementation of a restorative justice system and excellent pastoral care via form tutors and pupil experience leaders. Sustained high levels of wellbeing will be demonstrated by high quality outcomes from, and engagement with, 'Young Life Warrior - Secondary Ready' (Y7) and self-regulation/empathy programmes. DA pupils will have the opportunity to access additional cultural capital through transformational learning experiences during trips, visits, activities, residential trips and further co-curricular opportunities. A significant and wide ranging co-curricular programme will be implemented and sustained throughout the school year with a focus on engagement of DA pupils. Participation at co-curricular provision will be quality assured. Pupil voice, parent surveys and teacher observation will also be used to provide qualitative and quantitative insight data with regards to pupil wellbeing.
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To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils. To facilitate and achieve high levels of parental engagement with a particular focus on DA pupils.	Staff will consistently utilise a restorative justice approach when addressing behaviour and choices that are not in keeping with Houlton School's high expectations. Sustained high attendance demonstrated by: 1. The overall attendance rate for all pupils being 96% or greater, and the attendance gap between DA pupils and all other pupils being diminished. 2. The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 9% and the difference for DA pupils compared to all other pupils being diminished. Implementation of successful parental engagement activities throughout the school year.
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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:

£70,984

Purchase of GL Assessment diagnostic assessments inc. GL CAT4, NGRT and NGSTs²/ Mathematics Screening Tests. A triangulation of these baselining tools	Making an assessment of pupils' potential using a combination of knowledge-based and cognitive potential testing supports us with identifying disadvantaged pupils who may have fallen behind their peers generally, and in particular during the disrupted learning from the COVID-19 pandemic.	1, 2, 3

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will support the Generation of Ambitious targets for Disadvantaged pupils and training will be Provided for staff to Ensure assessments are interpreted correctly.	Standardised tests and our numeracy screener provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through our waves model of personalised adaptations and quality first teaching.	
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Recruitment and retention of teaching staff. High quality additional CPD training focused on formative assessment, 'FIRST' strategy and the teaching and learning strategy to be delivered throughout the academic year. Purchase of Tom Sherrington's WalkThrus CPD resources has occurred and a robust approach for CPD	Ensuring an effective teacher is in front of every class, and that every teacher is supported to keep improving, is the key ingredient of a successful school and should rightly be a top priority for pupil premium spending. Access to high quality teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for pupils. Hattie ranks collective teacher efficacy as the largest influencing factor on pupil achievement making this a crucial factor. Foundation (EEF) found learners made the equivalent of two months of additional progress. Learners in the lowest third for prior attainment made the greatest progress and teachers within TLCs felt they had improved their practice with regards to formative assessment. Formative assessment strategies / techniques and responsive teaching approaches to be shared with staff during training based on evidence based influences such as, but not limited to, Doug Lemov, Harry Fletcher-Wood and Tom Sherrington. The school's 'FIRST' strategy to be shared with staff frequently as part of CPD and highlighted/reviewed within quality assurance procedures.	1, 7, 9 1, 2, 3, 4, 7
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with regards to teaching and learning has been well planned. The approach for 2024-2026 combines the Teacher Learner Communities approach (SSAT) with a focus on 12 core strategies for implementation over the next two years.	A core 12 of teaching techniques / approaches utilising Walkthrus as well as other influences as outlined above will become a deeply embedded feature of our school culture. The TLCs will support a strong culture of professional reflection, deliberate practice, research-engagement and continuing improvement.	
Purchase of Beacon House Therapeutic resources and CPD programme to support the development of metacognitive and self regulation skills in pupils, in particular disadvantaged pupils and/or those who have experienced trauma. This will involve ongoing teacher training and support and release time. Contextual mentoring and instructional coaching for all teaching staff including bespoke training for ECTs. This is in addition to the coaching cultures created within the TLCs mentioned previously.	Teaching metacognitive strategies to pupils helps pupils become more independent learners. There is particularly strong evidence that it can have a positive impact on maths attainment. Effective mentoring and coaching for staff results in many positive impacts: • enhanced personal effectiveness • professional development • greater reflectivity and personal growth • enhanced energy and job satisfaction • greater openness to share best practice • greater creativity • creation of a whole school learning culture • improved relationships • greater staff and pupil engagement In return indirectly having a positive impact on pupil progress	3, 7, 8, 9 1, 2, 4

	and school improvement .	
Restorative justice training for staff.	Use of this whole school approach develops connectedness, accountability and reflectiveness which results in a more trusting and cohesive school community. This has also been shown to increase attendance, reduce exclusions, reduce truancy levels and improve	5, 6, 7, 8, 9

	attitudes towards learning and levels of achievement. Furthermore, the Department for Education also supports the impacts that this approach can have as an anti-bullying strategy.	
Continuing to improve literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance. We will continue to fund professional development and strategies (see separate Literacy Development Plan) to support improved comprehension and literacy skills. Bedrock vocabulary accessed by all pupils in Y7/Y8/Y9 as part of home learning.	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for pupils as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject. Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English. Reading comprehension strategies have been judged by the EEF to have a potential impact of +7 months of progress among secondary aged pupils globally.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7

Continuing to enhance our maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE KS3 and EEF guidance. We will continue to fund teacher release time to embed key elements of the guidance in school, and to access Maths Hub resources and CPD offers (including Teaching for Mastery training). Use of SPARX Maths for independent learning which provides targeted access to the curriculum to help each individual pupil make progress according to any gaps in knowledge or learning needs. Pupils are rewarded for increased further practice on Sparx with prizes and certificates celebrating	The DfE non-statutory KS3 guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches. To teach maths well, teachers need to assess pupils' prior knowledge and understanding effectively, employ manipulatives and representations, teach problem solving strategies, and help pupils to develop more complex mental models.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
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achievement. Pupils are invited to take part in additional mathematical challenges hosted by UKMT. PP and SEND pupils are supported with homework set on Sparx with 3 weekly drop in sessions and are encouraged to go further in their homework. PP pupils are invited to attend lectures and university days as part of university outreach. Teaching Assistant Interventions and deployment training.	Teaching assistants provide a large positive impact on learner outcomes when deployed effectively including a largest impact when trained to deliver structured interventions including those such as through our small group tutoring programme which will continue despite the removal of the funding previously provided by the National Tutoring Programme.	1, 2, 3, 4,
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £70,984

Continue to adopt the targeted reciprocal teaching programme as a reading intervention for disadvantaged pupils who need additional help to comprehend texts and	Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on pupils' ability to understand a text, and this is particularly the case when interventions are delivered over a shorter timespan.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

address vocabulary gaps.		
One to one tuition. Possible interventions might include but are not limited to: Catch-up literacy; Precision Teaching - spelling, reading and Maths interventions; Toe by Toe reading intervention.	One to one tuition is very effective at improving pupil outcomes and might be an effective strategy for providing targeted support for pupils identified as having low prior attainment or who are struggling in a particular area. The EEF suggests a potential impact of +4 months progress.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Small group tuition. Possible additional interventions might include but are not limited to: 1. Reading and reading inference/reading for meaning 2. Word shark 3. IDL Numeracy Provide school-led tutoring for pupils who require additional support based on academic need as diagnosed by teaching staff and GL assessment data. A significant proportion of the pupils who receive tutoring will be disadvantaged.	Small group tuition is effective when supported by initial diagnostic assessments to help target specific pupils. The EEF suggests a potential impact of +4 months progress. Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, with Wave 2 and 3 interventions. Small group tuition is effective when supported by initial diagnostic assessments to help target specific pupils. The EEF suggests a potential impact of +4 months progress.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Homework club support sessions run daily.	It has been suggested that appropriately set homework linked to classroom learning and supported by homework clubs in school could have an impact of up to 5 months progress.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

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

Budgeted cost: £35,492

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continued adoption of a pupil focused, trauma informed set of interventions for specific pupils who require support with regulating their behaviour and emotions. This includes training for school staff, collaboration with our local behaviour hub and teacher release time. A whole school, quality assured, approach to a wide ranging and well-established co-curricular programme. This programme provides opportunities to access additional cultural capital through transformational learning experiences during trips, visits, activities, residentials and further co-curricular opportunities. Support will also be specifically provided for DA pupils to access music tuition.	There is evidence to suggest that CBT can have a high impact on risk behaviours and behavioural difficulties. EIF's report on adolescent mental health found good evidence that CBT interventions support young people's social and emotional skills and can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. We strongly believe that DA pupils should have access to all the opportunities their peers experience. All pupils have access to co-curricular clubs daily both during and after school. Residential trips run each academic year for pupils. There is much evidence that supports the positive impact of co-curricular clubs on academic performance, attendance, attitudes towards school, confidence, teamwork and higher aspirations. There are also clear benefits that are cited such as relief of stress, socialising with peers and enjoyment. All DA pupils to go to London Science museum cultural/STEM visit. Y7 PGL and Y8/9 Languages/Art/History/Culture	5, 7, 8, 9 5, 7, 8

Residential educational visits will be heavily subsidised to support participation (50% discount)	France (five day visits) enrichment visits promoted to DA pupils with a target of at least 75% take-up on visits from DA pupils.	
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'The Brilliant Club' Scholars' Programme. PhD tutors / world class researchers deliver the Scholars' Programme to small groups of pupils with 55% of those involved being from a DA background. Pupils access challenging courses on subjects beyond the curriculum in 'university-style learning' with two visits to the most competitive universities. <i>Duke of Edinburgh (DofE)</i> Continue to embed the principles of good practice set out in DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance advice in partnership with Warwickshire Attendance Service. Staff will receive training and release time to develop and implement new procedures. Attendance Officer support and training.	Independent analysis by UCAS show that pupils on the Scholars' Programme are significantly more likely to apply to, receive an offer from and progress to a highly-selective university than pupils with similar socio-demographic background and GCSE attainment. The Scholars' Programme is effective at increasing pupil self-efficacy in relation to university study. We have put extensive provision in place to ensure that all PP pupils are able to access the DofE programme. Provision in place includes a 50% reduction in the cost of the programme, a waiving of the registration fee, a bursary from the DofE and an additional bursary for equipment <u>that can be loaned to PP pupils</u>. The DfE guidance is designed to: * help schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance. * summarise the roles and responsibilities of parents and carers, schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities * summarise the support that should be provided to families, and to pupils who are persistently or severely absent, or at risk of becoming so * provide details of the legal interventions available to schools and local authorities when attendance support does not work, is not engaged with or is not appropriate * provide details of what schools are required to record in their attendance and admission register	1, 7 5, 7, 8 6
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Tailored approach for the robust monitoring of attendance of all groups with key staff focusing targeted actions on PP and SEND pupils.	* Fortnightly review of the attendance of key pupils. * Robust intervention for PP/SEND pupils. * HoY action weekly to support pupils and families with attendance to school. * Bespoke reward systems focused on attendance at school.	6
Parental engagement strategies including those around: ● communication ● support with home learning ● developing skills to allow parental access to school curriculum ● sharing of resources Bespoke provisions based on individual pupil need including but not limited to: 1. Language for behaviour and emotions 2. Social games 3. Social time supervision 4. Quiet lunch 5. Zones of regulation 6. Social thinking 7. Drawing and talking 8. Nurture group 9. Guy's Gift 10. Anxiety Gremlin	Positive parental engagement can have an average impact of 4 months additional progress and so it is crucial to consider innovative ways to engage with parents to avoid widening attainment gaps. These provisions are provided to appropriate all pupils as a responsive approach to identified and emerging support requirements. As such, some of these provisions will be accessed by DA pupils.	2, 5 2, 5, 7, 8, 9

Provision of ingredients for Food Preparation and Nutrition lessons.	This provision is in place to remove any financial barriers for pupils accessing the practical element of learning in this area.	2, 5
Contingency fund for acute/and or issues arising/for individual departments to bid for.	Based on the experience of similar schools to ours, we are setting aside a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	All

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 2025 to 2026 Academic year.

Attainment / Progress

Curriculum

The 2025-26 academic year was the fifth year in which our Pupil Premium strategy was implemented within a new Free School with year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 pupils. Internal assessment data processed using SISRA analytics demonstrated important findings regarding pupil progress which have informed our continued approach towards strategic approaches to supporting DA pupils including staff continued professional development.

	All	EAL	PP	Non PP
Cohort Size	179	34	27	152
KS2 Average	104.07	105.83	102.07	104.43
Average Point Score	2.16	2.31	1.94	2.2
Average Grade	Core	Core	Foundational	Core
Average Attendance	95.25%	96.92%	91.65%	95.89%
Average ATL	GD	GD	GD	GD
Average PTT	0.1 ↑	0.21 ↑	0.05 ↑	0.11 ↑
Achieving Target % - English	76.97%	70.59%	66.67%	78.81%
Achieving Target % - Maths	82.49%	88.24%	85.19%	82.0%
Achieving Target % - Science	83.15%	88.24%	85.19%	82.78%

Data for Year 7 is very positive. Year 7 Spring data indicates that PP pupils outperformed their non-PP peers in Maths and Science, but there is a gap of 12.05% for English. PP attendance is 4.24% lower than non-PP peers.

	All	PP	Non PP
Cohort Size	177	42	135
KS2 Average	103.35	100.26	104.31
Average Point Score	2.2	1.96	2.27
Average Grade	Core	Foundational	Core
Average Attendance	93.3%	88.01%	94.94%
Average PTT	0.14 ↑	0.13 ↑	0.14 ↑
Achieving Target % - English	78.36%	82.5%	77.1%
Achieving Target % - Maths	78.36%	76.92%	78.79%
Achieving Target % - Science	81.82%	75.61%	83.7%

Year 8 Summer data indicates that PP pupils are outperforming their non-PP peers in English by 5.4%. However, there is a 1.8% gap for Maths and an 8% gap between the performance of PP pupils and their non-PP peers in Science. PP attendance is 6.95% lower than non-PP pupils.

	All	PP	Non PP
Cohort Size	172	39	133
KS2 Average	103.43	99.57	104.56
Average Point Score	2.17	1.86	2.25
Average Grade	Core	Foundational	Core
Average Attendance	91.77%	85.25%	93.68%
Average PTT	0.15 ↑	0.2 ↑	0.13 ↑
Achieving Target % - English	78.44%	77.78%	78.63%
Achieving Target % - Maths	77.36%	73.53%	78.4%
Achieving Target % - Science	79.07%	79.49%	78.95%

Year 9 data indicates that PP pupils are performing largely in line with their non-PP peers, with very small gaps for Science and English and a 4.87% gap in Maths. The Year 9 PP cohort has a lower than average starting point and the gap between their non-PP peers is 5.11. The average point score for PP pupils' progress is 0.39 lower than that of non-PP peers. Attendance is significantly lower too.

Measure	All	PP	Non PP
Cohort Size	179	46	133
KS2 Average	104.11	102.4	104.73
Estimated Attainment 8	45.42	41.9	46.71
Attainment 8	41.96 📉	36.88	43.71
Progress 8	-0.28	-0.48 📉	-0.2
APS	3.84	3.43	3.97
Average Attendance	90.69	86.17	92.26

Year 10 Spring 'working at' data indicates there are gaps between PP and their non-PP peers in all headline measures above. Their starting point is 1.71 lower, their Attainment 8 is 6.83 lower, Progress 8 is -0.28 lower and their average point score is 0.54 grades lower. Attendance is significantly lower too.

Measure	All	PP	Non PP
Cohort Size	177	33	144
KS2 Average	104.72	101.16	105.51
Estimated Attainment 8	46.51	39.23	48.14
Attainment 8	45.06 📉	30.11	48.48
Progress 8	-0.07	-0.91 📉	0.12
APS	4.45	3.15	4.72
Average Attendance	88.26	73.83	91.56

Year 11 Spring mock exam data indicates there are gaps between PP and their non-PP peers in all headline measures above. Their starting point is 4.35 lower, their Attainment 8 is 18.37 lower lower, Progress 8 is -0.79 lower and their average point score is 1.57 grades lower. Attendance is significantly lower too.

We continue to have work to do in closing gaps between the attainment and progress of PP pupils and also to improve the attendance of PP pupils, especially in KS4.

Quality of Education

The introduction of Tom Sherrington's Walkthrus and moving away from the SSAT EFA programme has resulted in further improvement and refinement of the high quality learning and teaching across Houlton School. Staff voice reflected that the programme has supported them in becoming even more reflective and experimental in their classroom practice which they have discussed within TLCs with colleagues from all faculties across the school.

Similarly, staff voice and quality assurance through lesson visits focused on learning and teaching and provision for our DA pupils has reflected the impact of the professional development delivered within school. The focus of learning and teaching has been to embed formative assessment and to teach responsively and this has resulted in practitioners who are able to articulate the strategies that they skillfully employ, the reasons why they employ them and which strategies they are developing next within their teaching to benefit their pupils.

Overall, we feel that we have continued to ensure that an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum is being implemented. High quality teaching is implemented as staff engage in a cycle of constant improvement as a result of the CPD that they are able to access.

Raising the Profile of DA Pupils

The impact of raising the profile of DA pupils has been significant. Actions taken have ensured that teachers have all of the information readily available to be keenly aware of who all the DA pupils that they teach are. Information regarding DA pupils is delivered to staff through structured CPD sessions to ensure that these learners are always at the front of the minds of our teaching staff.

All staff have access to our 'SEND / Additional Needs Register' and 'Provision Maps' which allow them to access all of the information regarding pupils who fall within this element of disadvantage. Information is available regarding provisions that should be put in place and staff actively add their own bespoke provisions, where appropriate, to provision maps to reflect how they are meeting the needs of pupils in their classrooms. Staff can access information about all of the levels of standardised scoring attained by the pupils that they teach as well as the resulting interventions that have been actioned by our inclusion team giving them greater insight into the pupils that they teach.

With regards to PP pupils all staff have access to a 'PP shared drive' on Google drive which holds information about all of our PP pupils, which has been updated for 2025-2026.

Overall, the profile of our DA pupils continues to be a high priority and we have sustained an approach that significantly raises their profiles in school. Teachers are strategically seating DA pupils using Edulink and quality assurance within lessons reflects that our FIRST strategy is being implemented within the classroom with increasing consistency.

Wellbeing and Aspiration Raising

Young Life Warrior

The 'Young Life Warrior' secondary ready induction programme was again a huge success with our year 7 pupils this academic year. Pupils enjoyed the induction day and felt the day allowed them to build confidence with being in the school and helped them to make some new

friends.

Brilliant Club - Scholars Programme

We ran 3 Brilliant club cohorts for Y7, Y8 and Y9 pupils last year. Our autumn term cohort reflected the following demographic statistics: These images will need updating these are from last year

Our autumn term cohort reflected the following demographic statistics:

The positive impacts of the programme can be measured using the information shared with us by the 'Brilliant Club Scholars Programme'.

Year 9 Autumn Cohort for 2024-2025



Pupil Premium

33 %
(9/27)



**No parental history
of higher education**

41 %
(11/27)



**Living in 40% most
deprived areas
according to IDACI**

11 %
(3/27)



**Target Students
meeting 1 or more
of 3 criteria**

70 %
(19/27)

Pupil Premium

The Scholars Programme has been used at Houlton School to target disadvantaged high prior attainers as evidence shows that these students are especially at risk of underachievement nationally. As a supra-curricular intervention, The Scholars Programme develops outcomes that are important for raising students' attainment, including subject knowledge, critical thinking, and written communication.

On The Scholars Programme this term, **9 students were eligible for Pupil Premium**. Their average attendance was **97 %**, which means they received **70 hours of tutoring** from a PhD researcher. Of these students, **6** received a 2:1.

UK comparison table

This table compares programme attainment and attendance with averages for the 256 schools that took part in The Scholars Programme in Autumn 2024-25 across the UK. Averages are based on students who submitted both their baseline and final assignment.

	Houlton School		UK Comparison	
	Overall	Pupil Premium	Overall	Pupil Premium
Baseline assignment mark average	51	53	50	49
Final assignment mark average	61	62	63	62
Average progress between baseline and final assignment	20 %	16 %	27 %	26 %
% 1st/2.1 final assignment grades	63 %	67 %	67 %	60 %
% Final assignment submission rate	100 %	100 %	89 %	86 %
% Tutorial attendance	97 %	97 %	90 %	88 %

We are really proud that PP pupils in the Year 9 Autumn cohort performed better than PP pupils nationally.

Year 8 Spring Cohort for 2024-2025



Pupil Premium

16 %
(4/25)



**No parental history
of higher education**

40 %
(10/25)



**Living in 40% most
deprived areas
according to IDACI**

20 %
(5/25)



**Target Students
meeting 1 or more
of 3 criteria**

60 %
(15/25)

Pupil Premium

The Scholars Programme has been used at Houlton School to target disadvantaged high prior attainers as evidence shows that these students are especially at risk of underachievement nationally. As a supra-curricular intervention, The Scholars Programme develops outcomes that are important for raising students' attainment, including subject knowledge, critical thinking, and written communication.

On The Scholars Programme this term, **4 students were eligible for Pupil Premium**. Their average attendance was **100 %**, which means they received **32 hours of tutoring** from a PhD researcher. Of these students, **1** achieved a 1st and **2** received a 2:1.

UK comparison table

This table compares programme attainment and attendance with averages for the 341 schools that took part in The Scholars Programme in Spring 2024-25 across the UK. Averages are based on students who submitted both their baseline and final assignment.

	Houlton School		UK Comparison	
	Overall	Pupil Premium	Overall	Pupil Premium
Baseline assignment mark average	54	52	50	49
Final assignment mark average	67	62	63	62
Average progress between baseline and final assignment	25 %	20 %	27 %	26 %
% 1st/2.1 final assignment grades	88 %	75 %	69 %	61 %
% Final assignment submission rate	100 %	100 %	87 %	82 %
% Tutorial attendance	97 %	100 %	87 %	85 %

We are really proud that PP pupils in the Year 8 Spring cohort performed better than PP pupils nationally.

Year 7 Summer Cohort for 2024-2025



Pupil Premium

36 %
(8/22)



No parental history
of higher education

68 %
(15/22)



Living in 40% most
deprived areas
according to IDACI

0 %
(0/14)



Target Students
meeting 1 or more
of 3 criteria

68 %
(15/22)

Pupil Premium

The Scholars Programme has been used at Houlton School to target disadvantaged high prior attainers as evidence shows that these students are especially at risk of underachievement nationally. As a supra-curricular intervention, The Scholars Programme develops outcomes that are important for raising students' attainment, including subject knowledge, critical thinking, and written communication.

On The Scholars Programme this term, **8 students were eligible for Pupil Premium**. Their average attendance was **94 %**, which means they received **60 hours of tutoring** from a PhD researcher. Of these students, **1** achieved a 1st and **2** received a 2:1.

	Houlton School		UK Comparison	
	Overall	Pupil Premium	Overall	Pupil Premium
Baseline assignment mark average	49	49	50	50
Final assignment mark average	58	55	63	63
Average progress between baseline and final assignment	17 %	11 %	26 %	25 %
% 1st/2.1 final assignment grades	55 %	38 %	68 %	63 %
% Final assignment submission rate	100 %	100 %	85 %	79 %
% Tutorial attendance	94 %	94 %	85 %	83 %

We are really proud that PP pupils in the Year 7 Summer cohort performed better than PP pupils nationally.

We feel that the strength of evidence that we have received supports our continued engagement with the 'Brilliant Club Scholar Programme' with regards to both the academic impact and the impact upon the raising of our pupils' aspirations for their futures.

Transformative Learning Experiences

In addition to our involvement with the Brilliant Club, our PP pupils have had access to a huge range of other transformative learning experiences where they have accessed additional cultural capital, gained benefits to their well-being, had their aspirations raised and hopefully experienced a huge amount of enjoyment.

These trips/visits/experiences include but are not limited to the following: 27

- Oxford University trip (Keble College) - A raising aspirations trip
- Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 Brilliant Club Graduation events at Russell Group Universities
- Y7 PGL Residential
- Y8 France Residential
- Y9 Spain Residential
- Dovedale Geography Trip

For pupils who chose not to attend one of our residential trips a week of enrichment activities were provided which included the following trips/visits/experiences.

- Snowdome Trip
- Velodrome Trip
- VAR Experience
- Alton Towers
- Warwick Castle

The enrichment week also included a host of other exciting activities and events.

All of the above trips/visits/experiences were fully funded or had 50% of the costs funded for all PP pupils who wished to attend.

Overall, we are proud of the wide ranging experiences that have been provided and subsidised for our DA pupils and undoubtedly provided enjoyment and a great deal of additional cultural capital.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

At Houlton School, significant progress has been made in enabling disadvantaged pupils to access the DofE Award. In the academic year 2024/25, 35% of PP pupils in Year 9 participated in the Bronze DofE program, supported by 50% funding from the school, amounting to a total of £3000

Year Two Participation

Bronze Level: Participation has grown, with 40% of PP pupils currently enrolled. An increase in the cost has also increased our school financial support to £1800. This increase reflects the school's commitment to expanding access.

Silver Level: 20% of PP pupils are participating, a notable percentage when compared to the total pupil numbers involved in Silver. Efforts are ongoing to further increase engagement at this level.

Completion Rates: From the 2024/25 Bronze cohort, it is estimated that 90% of PP pupils will complete the program in time for the celebration event in March. This high completion rate highlights the effectiveness of targeted support and the dedication of both staff and pupils.

Financial Support and Sustainability: The financial support provided by Houlton School plays a crucial role in removing barriers for disadvantaged pupils. Subsidising 50% of the cost has made the program accessible to many families who would otherwise struggle to afford participation. Continued investment is vital to sustain and expand the program, ensuring that more pupils can benefit in the future. Where appropriate 100% funding has been made available in specialist cases for 24/25.

The DofE Award is a powerful tool for bridging the opportunity gap faced by disadvantaged pupils. At Houlton School, the program's positive impact is evident in increased participation, high completion rates, and the personal growth observed among pupils. To build on this success, it is recommended that:

- Further Funding: Resources continue to be allocated to increase participation at higher award levels (Silver and Gold).
- Outreach Efforts: Targeted communication with PP families to raise awareness of the program's benefits.
- Community Partnerships: Collaborations with local organisations to provide additional support and resources for expeditions and activities.

By continuing to prioritise and expand access to the DofE Award, Houlton School can empower even more disadvantaged pupils to achieve their potential and continue to thrive.

Co-curricular Programme

In the last academic year we provided a significant and wide ranging co-curricular programme for our pupils. Over 40 different clubs were offered over the course of the 2024-25 academic year which means that our pupils had an incredibly diverse plethora of co-curricular clubs / activities that they could join.

It is our ambitious aim that all pupils will attend at least one co-curricular club per fortnight during an academic year. During the year an analytical tracking tool was created to support us in monitoring attendance at clubs and begin to intervene where pupils were not accessing co-curricular clubs as per our expectation. O

We continue to have work to do in this area to ensure that as many disadvantaged pupils as possible are attending at least one co-curricular club per fortnight. This is particularly important as the benefit of pupils engaging in co-curricular activities and developing positive relationships with each other, and our staff, outside of formal lesson time cannot be overlooked.

Music Lessons

Our additional music lesson provision has been substantial for our PP pupils with the intention of enriching their school experience. 33% of PP pupils at Houlton School accessed free weekly music lessons. 24% of pupils with SEND also attended additional music lessons. Pupils were able to select lessons from any of the following areas: drums, guitar, keyboard, saxophone, vocals and flute. Keyboards were also loaned to a number of pupils to further support their development from home.

We are very proud of this provision for our pupils particularly considering that the [‘Music in schools: wider still, and wider’](#) report on quality and inequality in music education highlighted that only 6% of pupils with SEND were involved in additional instrumental or vocal tuition. Similarly, a review of Music Education in England by [Musicians’ Union](#) stated clearly that their research reflected that ‘children from poor backgrounds are not getting the same access to music education as their wealthier peers’. As a result, the report recommended that ‘free access to instrumental lessons for children from low income families’ should be provided; a recommendation that we feel that we have clearly taken action upon.

In addition, 5 of our PP pupils took part in 6 months of planning and rehearsals before then delivering shows of the school musical.

Restorative Justice, Mentoring and Additional Support

As a result of our pupil premium funding we have been able to fund access to restorative justice (RJ) training for a number of our staff. This has allowed the school to ensure that RJ is at the heart of all of the interactions that we have with our pupils and particularly those that take place as part of our positive behaviour policy. The impact of this can be seen in the positive and purposeful relationships and interactions that pupils have with each other, our staff and visitors to our school.

Fixed Term suspension data shows that 31.2% of the full cohort received one or more FTS, of the PP cohort, 13.2% received one or more FTS.

Where recurring FTS have been issued, 3.5% of the whole cohort went on to receive three or more FTS consequences whereas the recurrence in PP pupils was 1.7%.

Rewards

Houlton School takes a rewards focussed approach with pupils being given clear direction both in lessons and in the wider school community on how to achieve rewards. Rewards are given for Values being demonstrated both in terms of the school character values and also for British Values. All lessons as part of the bell task make clear how pupils can achieve rewards through exceptional work.

We have half termly rewards assemblies in which pupils are celebrated for a range of different awards including, Attendance, SLT, Head of Year, Tutor, Faculty winners. Pupils are chosen by a broad range of staff each term.

In 24/25 Houlton School staff awarded 123,726 reward points in line with our policy!

Final Statements

We feel that the pupil premium strategy for Houlton School delivered some positive results in the 2024-25 academic year. Our strategy continues to develop as part of a revised three-year plan and we will continue to have an ambitious strategy which is reviewed and updated according to the needs of our pupils and our local context.

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

Bespoke, post-pandemic 'Secondary Ready' Induction Programme created in partnership with Young Life Warrior.	Young Life Warrior Programme
Supportive coaching, mentoring and Restorative Practice Wave 2 and 3 Support / Anti-bullying Support.	Dale Vincent Coaching
The PhD Scholar's Programme for KS3 by The Brilliant Club	Scholars' Programme from the Brilliant Club

PiXL Edge and PiXL Green Edge
[PiXL Edge](#) Leadership LORIC Programme