

Pupil premium strategy statement

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

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

School overview

Detail	24-25	25-26	26-27
School name	Dixons Unity Academy		
Number of pupils in school	959	918	
Pupil Premium %	51.3%	51.85%	
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	3 years		
Date this statement was published	November 2024		
Date on which it will be reviewed	Annually in December		
Statement authorised by	Ashley Jacobs		
Pupil premium lead	Dave Spencer		
Governor / Trustee lead	Jo Gittins		

Funding overview

Detail	24-25	25-26	26-27
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£540,155	£562,214	
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0	£0	
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0	£0	
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£540,155	£562,214	

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Dixons Unity Academy aims for all students to be successful at university or a real alternative. All students will live happy and purposeful lives. The academy draws on research and evidence from our own experience to allocate funding to activities that are most likely to maximise achievement. We never confuse eligibility for the Pupil Premium with low ability and focus on supporting our disadvantaged students to achieve the highest levels. Our Pupil Premium spend is divided into the following four priority areas:

Quality First Teaching

We understand the importance of ensuring that all teaching meets the needs of each learner, rather than relying on interventions to compensate. Therefore, we develop teacher talent by investing in practice and coaching. We practise key techniques collectively as a staff team every week during morning meetings. Further to this, we engineer tailored practice during weekly one-to-one coaching sessions with all teaching staff.

Targeted Support

We find out where the basic skills gaps exist among students as soon as they arrive in Year 7 and deploy our best teachers to help close these gaps. In addition to our 30 55-minute lessons, we run five 20-minute morning meetings, and optional enrichment in sport and the arts for all year groups over the course of the week. Teacher-led interventions are built into the timetable, enabling teachers to ensure that same day interventions are planned and carried out using formative assessment to ensure all children keep up. Other interventions are implemented based on data to ensure that any groups or individuals who are currently lower attaining in any area are supported to make accelerated progress. Each year we take around 50 year 11 students on a 3-day revision weekend.

Minimising barriers to achievement

We have thought carefully about what barriers to learning our students are experiencing, and how to remove or, at least, minimise them. For example, we have employed literacy mentors to quickly raise the reading age of any student below chronological age on entry. Additionally, we employ staff to provide well-targeted support to improve attendance, behaviour, social and emotional wellbeing or links with families where these are barriers to a student's learning. We insist on good learning habits with the highest of expectations and no excuses. We have very clear rules about homework and equipment because students have to be ready to learn. Our uniform is very professional; students are expected to wear it with pride and there is a strong attention to detail. During lessons, students are expected to track the speaker, teacher or student, and remain focused at all times. All students are provided with learning booklets and Knowledge Organisers for

both class and home use. Students in year 11 are provided with revision books.

Keeping aspirations on track and broadening experiences

Our priority is to support students and their families to sustain high aspirations, encourage young people to have a growth mindset, and to progress on to higher education. The message at Dixons Unity Academy is that ALL students are going to university or a viable alternative. We continuously expose students to university. Like many independent schools, we offer a significant number of enrichment opportunities to allow students the time to focus on their all-round development, especially in the sports and the arts.

The academy draws on research evidence (such as the Sutton Trust toolkit – see Appendix 2) and evidence from our own experience to allocate funding to activities that are most likely to maximise achievement. We never confuse eligibility for the Pupil Premium with low ability, and focus on supporting our disadvantaged students to achieve the highest levels.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Low prior attainment: There are significant attainment gaps on entry.
2	Off-track aspirations: Disadvantaged students often start at Dixons Unity with less understanding of aspiration.
3	SEND attainment: There are significant gaps in attainment between SEN disadvantaged and non-SEN disadvantaged students.
4	Attendance: Significant attendance and persistent absence issues of disadvantaged students.
5	Family / school relationships: Weak relationships with hard-to-reach families
6	English as an additional language: 36% of students do not speak English as their first language.

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
<i>The progress 8 score of disadvantaged students, matches or is improving towards that for other students within school and similar schools nationally.</i>	By 2026-27: At the end of Year 11, the Progress 8 score / Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged students, at least, matches or is improving towards that for other students nationally.
<i>The attendance of disadvantaged students, at least, matches that for other students and similar schools nationally.</i>	By 2026-27: The percentage attendance of disadvantaged students is in line with other students. The PA of disadvantaged students is declining and rapidly moving in line with other students in the academy.
<i>The number of NEET disadvantaged students, at least, matches that for other students and similar schools nationally.</i>	By 2026-27: All disadvantaged students will be reading in line with their chronological reading age and with all other students in the academy.
<i>To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.</i>	By 2026-27: The number of NEET disadvantaged students is 0. Disadvantaged students in all years receive at least one meaningful interaction with an employer.
<i>The EBacc progress of disadvantaged students, matches or is improving towards that for other students within school and similar schools nationally.</i>	By 2026-27: At the end of Year 11, the percentage of disadvantaged students achieving a Grade 5+ across EBacc subjects is in line with others. The percentage of disadvantaged students entered into the EBacc is in line with others.
<i>Quality first teaching for all students.</i>	By 2026-27: All staff receive at least one coaching session per week.
<i>Disadvantaged students are supported by our behaviour system</i>	By 2026-27: The average number of corrections for disadvantaged students is in line with others and rapidly decreasing.

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: £ 95,289.79

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	No addressed
<i>Coaching and CPD time given to staff to support professional development.</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/feedback https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation	1, 3, 6
<i>Design and implement a bespoke CPD programme underpinned by development of a practice culture</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/feedback https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation	1, 3, 6
<i>Further embed intervention and prevention strategies aimed at supporting disadvantaged students</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/individualised-instruction	1, 3, 6
<i>Embed and respond to retrieval practice through a carefully tailored curriculum</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mastery-learning	1, 3, 6
<i>Embed homework expectations and provide support opportunities for students who need it</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework	1, 3, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £ 247,754.90

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	No addressed
<i>Maximise the effectiveness of Lexia reading scheme for students reading below chronology in Y7 / Y8</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies	1, 3, 6
<i>Employ additional staffing to work with under achieving disadvantaged students in English</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/extending-school-time	1, 3, 6
<i>Employ additional staffing to work with under achieving disadvantaged students in mathematics</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/extending-school-time	1, 3, 6
<i>Employ a behaviour support worker to support students with SEMH</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	4, 5, 6
<i>Employ the use of one-to-one tutors to support catch up</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition	1, 2, 3

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

Budgeted cost: £219,167.23

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	No addressed
<i>Provide breakfast every morning so all students are ready to learn</i>	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603946/Evaluation_of_Breakfast_Clubs_-_Final_Report.pdf	4, 5
<i>Maximise the effectiveness of DEAR through tutor system and library lessons so students read widely / often</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies	1, 3, 6
<i>Provide regularly reviewed internal alternative provision for a very small minority of students in KS3 who cannot access our mainstream curriculum</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	1, 3, 4, 6
<i>Offer subsidies for uniform</i>	Experience has taught us over the past year or so that we need a contingency fund to ensure that no student is held back as a result of financial hardship. This includes offering to subsidise uniforms and revision guides and providing equipment for those who need it.	4, 5
<i>Provide targeted support to improve attendance, behaviour and links with families where these are barriers</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement	3, 4, 5
<i>Provide access to a school safeguarding and wellbeing officer to assist with any issues that relate to behaviour and personal development</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/aspiration-interventions	4, 5
<i>Employ a Personal Development and Wellbeing Worker to</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions	4, 5

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	No addressed
<i>provide a link for hard to reach families.</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement	
<i>Employ a careers advisor who provides support to disadvantaged students and prioritises their career aspirations</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/aspiration-interventions	2, 4, 5
<i>Provide a wide range of free extra-curricular enrichment opportunities to raise self-esteem and foster good relationships</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation	2, 4
<i>Subsidise educational trips designed to motivate students to develop good learning habits</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/physical-activity	2, 3, 4
<i>Resources and support for disadvantaged students to participate in Stretch and deliver their presentation to peers and families</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Engage with various external inspirational speakers to provide a broader range of insights into potential future careers</i>	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/aspiration-interventions	2

Total budgeted cost: £562,214

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 2021 to 2022 academic year.

At the end of Year 11, the Progress 8 score / Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged students, at least, matches or is improving towards that for other students nationally.

2023-24: -0.53 vs -1.04 (all vs dis) increase on previous year

2024-25: Estimates -0.44 vs -1.03 (all vs dis) increased progress but also increased gap on previous year

The percentage attendance of disadvantaged students is in line with other students.

2023-24: 82.3% vs 74.9% (all vs dis) increase on previous year

2024-25: 87.2% vs 82.4% (all vs dis) increased attendance and decreased gap on previous year

The PA of disadvantaged students is declining and rapidly moving in line with other students in the academy.

2023-24: 43.6% vs 47.4% (all vs dis) decrease on previous year

2024-25: 33.2% vs 44.2% (all vs dis) decreased PA but increased gap on previous year

All disadvantaged students will be reading in line with their chronological reading age and with all other students in the academy.

2023-24: +1.2 years vs +1.1 years (all vs dis) gap is smaller than previous years

2024-25: +1.2 years vs +1.5 years (all vs dis) disadvantaged students now make more progress

The number of NEET disadvantaged students is 0.

2023-24: At the time of the review the NEET figures have not been confirmed. Six disadvantaged students at present are NEET.

2024-25: At the time of the review the NEET figures have not been confirmed. Four disadvantaged students at present are NEET.

At the end of Year 11, the percentage of disadvantaged students achieving a Grade 5+ across EBacc subjects is in line with others.

2023-24: 9.4% vs 8.6% (all vs dis) increase on previous year

2024-25: 14.3% vs 3.6% (all vs dis) decreased 5+ and increased gap on previous year

The percentage of disadvantaged students entered into the EBacc is in line with others.

2023-24: 71.8% vs 57.1% (all vs dis) increase on previous year

2024-25: 82.3% vs 72.6% (all vs dis) increased entry and decreased gap on previous year

All staff receive at least one coaching session per fortnight. This now includes associate staff.

2023-24: Coaching is in place for all staff including associate staff.

2024-25: Coaching is in place for all staff including associate staff.

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
Sparx Maths	Sparx Maths
Lexia	Lexia
Fresh Start	Ruth Miskin Training