PUPIL PREMIUM POLICY

Date reviewed	September 2026
Frequency	Annually
Next review date	October 2027
Reviewed by	Academic Standards, SEND and Educational Trips Committee

Signed:..... Dated: 22/10/2026

Chair of Governors

Signed:..... Dated: 22/10/2026

Principal

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how we will strive to ensure that the Pupil Premium Grant allocated to us has an impact on narrowing the attainment gaps between our disadvantaged students and their peers.

As a school in receipt of Pupil Premium funding, we are accountable to our parents and school community for how we are using this additional resource to narrow the attainment gaps of our students. Measures are included in the performance tables published annually on a national level, and these capture the attainment of disadvantaged students covered by the Pupil Premium.

We acknowledge that there is specific information which must be published on a school's website as stipulated by the Department of Education *(What academies, free schools and colleges should publish online (updated October 2024)*. This information can be found on the Goldington Academy website: Pupil Premium | Goldington Academy Secondary School Bedford

Background and context

A good education, with the qualifications to show for it, can transform lives for the better. Conversely, students who complete their studies without attaining the expected standards will face challenges both in further study and the world of work.

In February 2024, the Sutton Trust recorded its concerns that the difference in education outcomes between low-income students and their better-off peers – known as the attainment gap – has widened considerably since the pandemic, wiping out a decade of progress. The gap decreased slightly during the early 2010s, before progress stalled prior to the pandemic. However, the disruption to learning caused by COVID-19 saw the gap widen drastically again to levels not seen since 2011.

More recent reports from the Sutton Trust in February 2026 show that "Children from less well-off homes start school already behind their classmates, and gaps in their attainment widen further through primary and secondary school."

Government data shows that:

- By GCSEs, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is equivalent to 19.1 months of development.
- Only 26% of disadvantaged pupils achieve a grade 5 or higher in English and maths, compared to 53% of all pupils.

Despite the gap narrowing slightly in 2024/25, it remains wider than it has been since 2012, having increased significantly during the pandemic.

In short, the national picture shows that in comparison with their peers, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds:

- are less likely to progress into higher education
- may have doors closed to many career paths despite previous aspirations
- have lower average earnings
- have poorer health and a shorter life expectancy.

The impact on the economy is equally large as a huge amount of potential is being missed out on.

To close the attainment gap, the Government launched the Pupil Premium (PP) in 2011, at a cost of £623 million (£430 per eligible pupil). The pupil premium grant provides funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in state-funded schools in England. The pupil premium grant plays a critical role in supporting the work of government's Opportunity Mission, to drive high and rising standards and ensure every child, no matter their background, can achieve and thrive.

The grant also provides support for children and young people of service families, referred to as service pupil premium (SPP). This has been combined into pupil premium payments to make it easier for schools to manage their spending. Pupils that the SPP intends to support are not necessarily from financially disadvantaged backgrounds and the funding is for schools to provide mainly pastoral support, although this is not exhaustive.

Changes to the Pupil Premium funding based on implications of the free school meals expansion

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, the Department for Education (DfE) has been delivering an expansion to FSM eligibility to include all pupils from households in receipt of Universal Credit. There are now 2 categories of FSM:

- Targeted FSM, which continues to be based on the existing £7,400 income threshold
- Expanded FSM, which will apply to meals only, covering pupils who do not qualify for Targeted FSM, but who are in households in receipt of Universal Credit

Following the expansion of FSM, only pupils eligible for Targeted FSM will be part of the Ever 6 FSM cohort. This means that pupils who become eligible for FSM for the first time through the new Expanded FSM category will not attract pupil premium funding.

Pupils who were eligible for FSM before the expansion will continue to be part of the Ever 6 FSM cohort after the expansion. That includes any pupil whose household income increases after the expansion, such that they either lose FSM eligibility altogether or become eligible for FSM through Expanded FSM. Such pupils will remain part of the Ever 6 FSM cohort for 6 years.

Funding criteria:

Pupil premium funding is allocated to **eligible schools** based on the number of:

- pupils who are recorded as eligible for free school meals (FSM), or have been recorded as eligible in the past 6 years (referred to as Ever 6 FSM)

- children previously looked after (PLAC) by a local authority or other state care, including children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales

Pupil premium funding is allocated to local authorities based on the number of:

- looked-after children (LAC), supported by the local authority
- For pupils who are looked-after children, funding is managed by the local authority's virtual school head (VSH) in consultation with the child's school.The portion of PP grant funding for LAC and PLAC pupils is referred to as 'pupil premium plus' (PP+)

Pupil premium is not a personal budget for individual pupils, and schools do not have to spend pupil premium so that it solely benefits pupils who meet the funding criteria. It can be used:

- to support other pupils with identified needs, such as those who have or have had a social worker, or who act as a carer
- for whole class interventions which will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils

Looked-after children (LAC)

In order to achieve the aims for LAC, it is the stated responsibility of the Virtual School Head (VSH) in the local authority that looks after the child, in consultation with the academy, to ensure that the PP grant is used to support those children's educational needs in accordance with their personal education plans. The funding should be used on evidence-informed interventions that are clearly linked to robust personal education plans and in line with the menu of approaches. The VSH should ensure there are arrangements in place to discuss how the child will benefit from the LAC PP grant with the designated teacher in the child's education setting who best understands their needs.

Previously Looked-after children (PLAC)

In order to achieve the aims for PLAC, it is the stated responsibility of an academy to ensure that their use of the PP grant on evidence-based interventions, in line with the menu of approaches, addresses the specific needs of PLAC attending the academy.

Service Pupil Premium (SPP)

The primary purpose of the SPP (Service Pupil Premium) is to enable schools to offer mainly pastoral support to eligible students during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact on service children of family mobility or parental deployment. It can be used to help improve the academic progress of eligible students if schools deem this to be a priority. Pupils in state-funded schools in England attract the service pupil premium grant at the rate of £360 per eligible pupil in the 2026 to 2027 financial year.

unding allocation:

For the academic year 2026-27, funding is to be allocated based on the following allocations:

Funding rates for the 2026 to 2027 financial year

This table shows how the pupil premium grant is allocated to schools and local authorities in the 2026 to 2027 financial year, based on per pupil rates.

Funding criteria	Amount of funding for each primary-aged pupil per year	Amount of funding for each secondary-aged pupil per year	Funding is paid to
Pupils who are eligible for free school meals, or have been eligible in the past 6 years	£1,550	£1,100	School
Pupils previously looked after by a local authority or other state care	£2,690	£2,690	School
Children who are looked after by the local authority	£2,690	£2,690	Local authority

Funding received:

The PP funding for 2026-27 is £226, 600.

In the recent academic years listed below, Goldington Academy received the following Pupil Premium funding:

2025-26 - £209,625

2024-25 - £190,050

2023-24 - £207,000

2022-23 - £177,300

2021-22 - £148,980

Conditions of grant for 2026-27 financial year

Schools must use their Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) to accelerate disadvantaged pupils' progress, in order to raise their attainment. This will contribute to closing the national attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

The government's conditions of grant stipulate that the Pupil Premium Grant can be spent in the following ways:

- for the benefit of eligible pupils registered at settings that meet the funding criteria
- for the benefit of pupils who meet the funding criteria and are registered at other state funded schools - for example, when hosting summer schools which welcome pupils from other schools
- on community services whose provision furthers the benefit of eligible pupils at the setting. For example, where virtual school heads (responsible for LAC PP grant) deem it beneficial to do so, such as art therapy outside of the classroom, or training of local authority staff to raise awareness of LAC
- Schools do not have to spend PP so that it solely benefits pupils who meet the funding criteria.
- PP grant can be used to support other pupils with identified needs, such as those who have or have had a social worker, or who act as a carer.
- It can also be used for whole class interventions which will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils.

Using the PP grant

To ensure PP grant is focused on effective approaches to raising the educational outcomes of eligible pupils, settings (including local authority virtual schools) must spend their PP grant (excluding SPP) on evidence-informed activities in line with the 'menu of approaches' set by DfE.

Schools should use their pupil premium to address the specific challenges their disadvantaged pupils face, through high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and wider strategies to help pupils to attend, belong and succeed. It can also be used to support pupils that schools believe to be economically disadvantaged but have not been identified as pupil premium eligible, and on whole class approaches that benefit all pupils, for example high-quality teaching. Schools are not required to allocate PP grant to every approach on the menu, but any activity funded by PP grant must fall under one of the approaches listed.

This means that in line with the 3-tiered approach in the EEF's pupil premium guide, activities **must** be those that:

- support high quality of teaching, such as staff professional development
- provide targeted academic support, such as tutoring, and targeted interventions
- use wider strategies to tackle non-academic barriers to academic success, such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support

Accountability

Schools are required to spend the PP grant for the purpose that it was intended and will be held accountable through the following:

- the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) tables which show the performance of disadvantaged students compared with their peers
- the Ofsted school inspection framework, under which inspectors focus on inclusion and the academic attainment of student groups, including those who are disadvantaged and/or eligible for the pupil premium
- the annual reports for parents that schools are required to publish online.

How we will make decisions regarding the use of the pupil premium

In making decisions on the use of the Pupil Premium Grant, we will:

- Ensure that Pupil Premium funding allocated to our school is used for its intended purpose.
- Use the latest evidence-based research on proven strategies which work to narrow the attainment gaps and adapt these as necessary to meet the needs of our students.
- Be transparent in our reporting of how we have used our Pupil Premium funding, so that our parents, interested stakeholders and Ofsted are fully aware of how this additional funding has been used to make a difference.
- Encourage take up of FSM by working proactively with our parents and carers in a sensitive and supportive manner and to remove any potential barriers or stigma attached to claiming FSM. In doing so, we also recognise the vital role that parents and carers play in the lives of their children.
- Be mindful of the fact that eligibility and take up of FSM does not equate with pupils being considered to be of 'low ability' because of their social circumstances.
- Ensure there is robust monitoring and evaluation in place to account for the use of the Pupil Premium by the school and Governing Body.
- Recognise the fact that there is no typical disadvantaged child. As such the strategies we use to raise attainment will take these group and individual needs fully into account.
- Focus on high-quality teaching and learning as the preferred way to narrow the gaps in attainment in the first instance. We will also use high-quality interventions with proven evidence of impact to assist our students who need additional support in a time-limited way.
- Use the funding to develop the skills and personal qualities of our students.
- Use the funding to respond to individual need (e.g. supply equipment or uniform; support extra-curricular activities both in school and outside of school).
- Use the funding to offer opportunities that other students might take for granted (e.g. learning a musical instrument; school trips).
- Use the grant for all year groups, not just those taking examinations at the end of Year 11.

Development of the policy

This policy reflects our commitment to further reducing inequalities in outcomes and promoting the inclusive nature of the work we undertake at our school.

When developing this Pupil Premium Policy, we have also taken into account the Ofsted Inspection Framework, which places a strong emphasis on inclusion, improving the learning and progress of different groups and on narrowing gaps in educational outcomes.

Roles & responsibilities

Governing Body

- The Governing Body will approve the overall strategy for deploying Pupil Premium funding prepared by the Pupil Premium Coordinator.
- The Governing Body will hold Senior and Middle leaders to account for implementing the school's strategy and for evaluating its impact on the attainment of targeted students.
- The Pupil Premium Governor will ensure that the pupil premium grant is used to support eligible students within the context of this policy and evaluate the impact of increased support on the attainment of targeted students.

Principal and SLT

- At Goldington Academy, the Principal retains overall responsibility for leading the Pupil Premium strategy.
- Subsequent to each TA data collection point, the Data Team will produce a gap analysis so that the Pupil Premium Coordinator can identify and follow up with departmental teams and relevant stakeholders, those students who are furthest away from their targets. The aim will be to intervene in order to reduce the gaps between our disadvantaged students and their peers.
- When requested, the Pupil Premium Coordinator/Data Manager will produce reports for the Governing Body, showing the progress made by disadvantaged students.
- The Principal will have overall responsibility for evaluating the impact of the support programme.

Curriculum leaders

Subject leaders are responsible for the progress of all students within their subjects and will contribute to reports to the Governing Body through the SLT.

Teaching and Support Staff

- Staff will maintain the highest expectations of **all** students.
- Staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classrooms which enables **all** students to thrive.
- Teaching staff will plan and deliver curricula and lessons to a high standard and support the acceleration of progress in learning, so that gaps can be narrowed and improvements maintained.
- Staff will support disadvantaged students in their classes through adaptive planning and teaching, not least for those who find aspects of learning difficult and are therefore in danger of falling behind.
- Staff will keep up-to-date with teaching strategies and research which have a proven track record in narrowing the gaps in attainment and achievement.

We will provide opportunities for staff to engage in a range of professional development opportunities suited to their particular needs and role. This will support them in implementing successful strategies to accelerate the progress of students and narrow the gaps.

Monitoring and reviewing the policy

Our work in relation to the Pupil Premium will be reviewed on a termly basis to ensure it is having the intended impact in narrowing the gaps. This will allow us to make adjustments if particular strategies are not working well, rather than waiting until the end of the year.

Our Pupil Premium Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and adjustments will be made to it according to the impact the school is having in narrowing the gaps. It will also take into consideration any increased funding that becomes available under the Pupil Premium Grant.

We recognise the importance of context and will evaluate new strategies as robustly as possible to ensure that the approaches we are using have the desired effect. In order to do this effectively, we will where relevant, undertake ongoing evaluations of the strategies we are using.

Disseminating the policy

This Pupil Premium Policy along with our Pupil Premium Strategy will be:

- Published on our website (with paper copies available on request in the school office).
- Disseminated to teaching and support staff through staff training.

We will also use other methods and occasions such as Parentmail, parents' evenings, as appropriate, to share information about the Pupil Premium.

Links to other policies and documentation

This policy should be read in combination with our Pupil Premium Strategy document (available on our website), which outlines our approach to narrowing the gaps in attainment and achievement for our disadvantaged students. We will also ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 for other students for whom narrowing the gap remains an issue but are not covered by the Pupil Premium, are also included in key documents such as our school development plan, self-evaluation documents and the school web site.

Linked polices:

- Behaviour Policy
- Admissions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy

Minutes of meetings will, where appropriate, reference disadvantaged students. (e.g. Governors, SLT, Head of Year, Curriculum Meetings, etc.).

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Any appeals against this policy can be made through the Governors' complaints procedure.