



Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

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

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Thomas Harding Junior School
Number of pupils in school	227
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	2025-26 30% 2024-25 24%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	Autumn 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	Autumn 2026
Statement authorised by	Samantha Ruddell Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Alison Arnott Inclusion Manager
Governor / Trustee lead	Viraj Rajadhyaksha Pupil Premium Governor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£79,920
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Thomas Harding Junior School, we have high aspirations and ambitions for our children, and we believe that no child should be disadvantaged for any reason. We strongly believe that it is not about where you come from but your passion and thirst for knowledge, and your dedication and commitment to learning that make the difference between success and failure. We are determined to ensure that all our children are given every chance to realise their potential.

When making decisions about using pupil premium funding it is important to consider the context of the school, and the subsequent challenges faced. Common barriers for FSM children can be less support at home, weak language and communication skills, lack of confidence, more frequent behaviour difficulties, and attendance and punctuality issues. There may also be complex family situations that prevent children from flourishing. The challenges are varied and there is no “one size fits all”.

Key Principles:

By following the key principles below, we believe we can maximise the impact of our pupil premium spending.

Building Belief

We will provide a culture where:

- staff believe in all children.
- there are “no excuses” made for underperformance.
- staff adopt a “solution-focused” approach to overcoming barriers.

staff support children to develop positive mindsets towards learning.

Analysing Data

We will ensure that:

- All staff are involved in the analysis of data so that they are fully aware of strengths and areas for development across the school.
- All governors, but especially the pupil premium champion, are involved in data analysis.
- We use research to support us in determining the strategies that will be most effective.

Identification of Pupils

We will ensure that:

- All teaching staff and support staff are involved in the analysis of data and identification of pupils.
- All staff are aware of who pupil premium and vulnerable children are.
- All pupil premium children benefit from the funding, not just those who are underperforming.
- Underachievement at all levels is targeted (not just lower attaining pupils)
- Children’s individual needs are considered carefully so that we provide support for those children who could be doing “even better if....”

Teacher Development

We will continue to ensure that **all** children across the school receive at least good teaching, with increasing percentages of outstanding teaching achieved by:

- Setting high expectations of teaching staff
- Ensuring consistent implementation of the school policies
- Sharing good practice within the school and draw on external expertise.
- Providing high quality CPD
- Maintaining highly accurate assessment through joint levelling and moderation

Individualising support

- We will ensure that the additional support we provide is effective by:
- Looking at the individual needs of each child and identifying their barriers to learning
- Ensuring additional support staff and class teachers communicate regularly.
- Matching the skills of the support staff to the interventions they provide
- Providing extensive support for parents to develop their own skills (, Literacy, Maths, e-safety, ICT,) to support their children’s learning within the curriculum to ensure that they are best equipped to support

the needs of their children.

- Tailoring interventions to the needs of the child (e.g. Targeted maths and English pre-teaching and revision sessions in the afternoons)
- Recognising and building on children's strengths to further boost confidence particularly in sports, the arts and in music.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1.	Readiness to learn for the most disadvantaged pupils, particularly for those that are also SEND. For many of our pupils, the skills of self-regulation and stamina for learning need to be taught and embedded for them to make progress.
2.	Many of our children on entry lack the wider vocabulary and syntax styles needed to fully access the wider curriculum.
3.	Many of our children would benefit from developing cultural capital
4.	Progress of those identified as disadvantaged is below their peers.
5.	Children to further develop their resilience strategies to assist their Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) need.
6.	Attendance and punctuality for a large proportion of children
7.	Parental engagement

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
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Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment. Fluency is evident, both verbally and in written tasks. 2025 Pupil Premium pupils use a wider and more precise vocabulary in spoken tasks across the curriculum, showing increased use of tier-2 and subject-specific vocabulary in classroom dialogue and presentations. Pupil Premium pupils participate confidently and purposefully in structured talk activities (e.g., paired share, group discussions, presentations), with teachers observing increases in length and quality of contributions over time. Schools see positive links between improved oral language skills and wider literacy outcomes (e.g., reading comprehension), with disadvantaged pupils making at least the equivalent of the expected progress or better. Verbal contributions to whole class discussions increases. Children are able to verbally express any challenges and are more self-regulated.
Improved attainment in reading, writing and maths for our disadvantaged pupils.	Improve attainment of disadvantaged pupils to be in line with non-disadvantaged peers. Pupil Premium EXS combined 2024 Sch 18% Nat 46%, 2025 Sch 55% Nat 47% Reading 73% achieving EXS, 10% above national data. 41% achieving EXS Writing 64% achieving EXS, 5% above national data. 47% achieving EXS Maths 82% achieving EXS, 21% above national data (1% above Nat Non PP achieving EXS) 41% achieving EXS Teacher assessment and work scrutiny show improved quality, accuracy and independence in reading comprehension,

To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by: - qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations 2025 JLT survey results analysed – show a need for discussion re. what ‘safe’ looks like. - a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils An increase in PP children attending extra curricular activities, especially running club – resulting in reduction in lates and improved readiness to learn. Low attendance of PP child in extra curricular activities - improved readiness/capacity to learn. Increased engagement in learning, with disadvantaged pupils showing improved concentration, confidence and readiness to learn. Oracy work supporting engagement. Disadvantaged pupils demonstrate improved emotional wellbeing, as evidenced through pupil voice, wellbeing check-ins and teacher observations. - Reduced incidents of behaviour linked to emotional need, with fewer referrals, exclusions or time out of class for identified pupils. 2025 – 2026 – 0 children 2024 – 2025 – 0 children 2023 – 2024 – 0 children - a reduction in incidents logged on internal systems under the category of Mental Health and Wellbeing 2025 – 2026 Autumn Term 51% 2024 – 2025 53% PP of all incidents reported under Mental Health (increase due to changes in sub categories and not reflective of incidents) 2023 – 2024 25% PP of all incidents reported under Mental Health
To achieve parent/carers attendance – especially of those considered ‘hard to reach’ - to parents’ evening and at least one event every half term.	Attendance of parents identified as in receipt of Pupil Premium is in line with non.

	• An Increase in parent numbers at curriculum events • Increased attendance at parents' evenings, with a higher proportion of identified 'hard-to-reach' families attending compared to previous years. 2025-26 Introduction of Inclusion Coffee Morning – well attended. Provision map meetings – Parents able to book meetings with Inclusion Manager and SEN assistant to discuss • Share how your child is getting on in school • Talk through the support they are receiving • Listen to your views and any questions you may have • Agree together on next steps to best support your child
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This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments. (<i>National Test-style Standardised Assessments - NTS</i>) Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly (Sandwell & Nara). Purchase of Boxall profile EBPs assessments	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific areas of need of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction. Reading ages gained to measures small steps of progress. This data is used to assess the impact of class teaching as well as intervention. The Boxall Profile is a psychosocial assessment tool used to determine children's social and emotional functioning and wellbeing. An online tool to assess and support the social, emotional and mental development of children. It provides a picture of a pupil's areas in need of development to inform staff	1,2 & 4

Purchase of assessment to establish children's cognitive profiles and therefore 'readiness to learn'. Maths coordinator to complete the NCETM maths – Bucks, Berks and Oxon hub embedding phase.	of how to better support these children. Improved outcomes would include an improvement in: Their ability to learn and retain information. Improved learning and social behaviour Improved attendance and wellbeing. To develop teaching strategies/classroom practise to target specific areas of need – for example verbal sequential, visual sequential and auditory sequential. Professional Development – to develop ways to further improve classroom practice and pedagogy with professional development that leads to improved maths teaching for all.	
CPD We will purchase resources and fund ongoing teacher training and release time. CAMHS & SaLT Diagnostic assessment training Behaviour management strategy training. For example Step On/Step Up	Courses develop knowledge and therefore further improve the teaching and intervention delivered by teaching staff. Courses will address Mental Health and well-beings needs as well as academic needs. To become a Rainbows school. To support children who have experienced loss and bereavement and other Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – Inclusion Manager and Family Liaison Officer. National College CPD, SENCO (NPQ) – Learning Support Assistant & Head Teacher TAs in SEND training	1,2 & 4
Review of teaching opportunities to further develop well-being	Social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions seek to improve pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions.	1,4,5 & 6
CPD for teachers and support staff on the teaching of vocabulary and how to monitor this in class for all pupils, with a focus on disadvantaged pupils.	The EEF guide to pupil premium shows that oral language approaches which explicitly extends pupils' spoken vocabulary adds 6 months of impact to pupil learning.	2
Continued development of the teaching of phonics for staff using high quality	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading	1,2 & 4

resources (including books) to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils but especially those who are disadvantaged.	(though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils:	
CPD training to support a change in behaviour culture of key disadvantaged children around school and improve their learning experience.	EEF research shows that Social and emotional learning (SEL) support improves children's outcomes at school and later in life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour, and relationships with peers)	5
Whole school approach and CPD and refresher training for Zones of Regulation, or an equivalent scheme. Inclusion Manager to support teachers to model and embed Zones of Regulation strategies and language.	EEF research shows that Social and emotional learning (SEL) support improves children's outcomes at school and later in life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour, and relationships with peers)	5
METACOGNITION AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING Teachers to acquire the professional understanding and skills to develop their pupils' metacognitive knowledge. Teachers to explicitly teach children metacognitive strategies, including how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning. Model your own thinking to help pupils develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills	EEF evidence suggests the use of 'metacognitive strategies' – which get pupils to think about their own learning – can be worth the equivalent of an additional +7 months' progress when used well. The potential impact of these approaches is very high, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.	1
CPD delivered to continue to enhance Quality First Teaching with a focus on Mastery.	Like "mastery learning", "teaching for mastery" aims to support all pupils to achieve deep understanding and competence in the relevant topic. However, "teaching for mastery" is characterised by teacher-led, whole-class teaching; common lesson content for all pupils; and use of manipulatives and representations. The impact of mastery learning approaches is an additional five months progress, on average, over the course of a year. Mastery learning also appears to be particularly effective when pupils are given opportunities to work in groups or teams and take responsibility for supporting each other's	4

	progress – this links with Collaborative learning and Peer tutoring. Mastery learning approaches aim to ensure that all pupils have mastered key concepts before moving on to the next topic – in contrast with traditional teaching methods in which pupils may be left behind, with gaps of misunderstanding widening. Mastery learning approaches could address these challenges by giving additional time and support to pupils who may have missed learning, or take longer to master new knowledge and skills. In order for mastery approaches to be effective for pupils with gaps in understanding, it is crucial that additional support is provided. Approaches that simply build upon foundational knowledge without targeting support for pupils that fall behind are unlikely to narrow disadvantage gaps.	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Phonics training	Courses develop knowledge and therefore further improve the teaching and intervention delivered by teaching staff. Staff to receive refresher course and new staff to be trained	1 & 4
Books to match gaps in phonics	Reading books to specifically targeting gaps in phonics knowledge will provide practice of these gaps in knowledge and correct errors in pronunciation.	1 & 4
CPD OF Learning Support Assistants to further develop the teaching of interventions.	The delivery of high-quality, structured and targeted interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching show positive benefits.	4

Read, Write Inc training for all new staff as well as refreshers.	EEF research of impact states the potential for six additional months of progress being achieved.	4
Whole class reading sets of books for guided reading activities.		
New banded age-appropriate books		
Fluency Factory Herts for Learning – Fluency training	Reading fluency is the ability to read accurately, smoothly and with expression. Fluent readers recognise words automatically, without struggling to decode. Fluent readers group words rapidly to help gain meaning from their reading, which then translates into their understanding of the text. When reading aloud, fluent readers sound natural, as if they are speaking. Non-fluent readers read slowly, and the text sounds disjointed. Fluency is important because it builds a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. It allows students time to focus on what the text is saying, therefore, they are able to concentrate on comprehension. On the other hand, non-fluent readers have to spend more time decoding, leaving less time for comprehending the text. Due to mistakes made when reading, they will often have to read the same passage over several times to attain comprehension.	4
EdShed - SpellingShed	Spelling Shed is based on research into the teaching of spelling. Spelling Shed uses the Science of Spelling to teach spelling, which includes using phonics as a base and drawing upon proven approaches such as teaching morphology, etymology and orthographic mapping as well as explicitly teaching spelling patterns.	

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

Budgeted cost: £19,920.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To carefully monitor attendance and act swiftly when there are dips. To support children who are struggling to attend due to Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA).	Evidence suggests that a robust approach to attendance improves parental involvement, and pupils therefore attend more often and on time. Using a partnership approach protects our relationship with families.	6
Family Liaison Officer	The FLO provides support and information, in a sensitive and compassionate manner, securing confidence and trust of families. They ensure family members are given information in accordance with their needs and those of their children. The FLO also addresses attendance challenges facing our children and improves attendance, especially of those children most vulnerable. The FLO also accommodates the needs for movement breaks, time outs and social interaction intervention. 'Nurture' group work is delivered.	5 & 7
Lego Therapy	Lego-based therapy (LeGoff et al 2014) is an evidence-based approach that aims to develop social communication skills in autistic children, such as sharing, turn-taking, following rules, using names and problem-solving. Significant development of listening skills, turn taking, joint attention, resilience, patience, perseverance, and problem solving. Children demonstrate a greater awareness of social expectations. Children develop a team approach to problem solving. An increase in the development of language. Children become motivated to understand and use language they initially found challenging.	5

	Improvements in the length of spoken sentences and the grammatical structures of sentences used. Increased self-esteem in majority of children. Improvements in the flexibility of language used – children adapt vocabulary to accommodate the needs of their listener. Behaviour that indicates an increased awareness of the feelings of others.	
Parent workshops delivered both internally and by external providers to upskill parents. Social media used to signpost parents to available courses/parenting groups.	Workshops delivered by subject leaders to support/widen parents' understanding of subjects and strategies to support their children at home. FLO to arrange to host parent workshops within school. Flo and Inclusion Manager to also signpost parents to courses relating to their child's specific needs.	1,4,5,6 & 7
Trips	Stepping outside of the usual classroom environment and participating in external, interactive learning experiences brings learning to life. These experiences tie learning to personal experiences and memories, helping children develop a deeper understanding of subjects and topics. Children explore the world around them and gain cultural capital. For many students, visual and sensory experiences and cues benefit their grasp and deepened understanding of topics being covered and these experiences outside the classroom promote positive engagement with people, places, activities and new environments.	3

Total budgeted cost: ££79,920

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 previous academic year.

Careful consideration has been applied to the spending of the Pupil Premium funding. Focused teaching/intervention to address children's gaps in learning has improved children's academic progress as well as their confidence and well-being. They are becoming even more engaged learners who feel better equipped and ready to learn. New learning is now built upon firmer foundations and improved levels of resilience which has increased pupil confidence. In particular, the pre-teaching of subject specific vocabulary has helped to reinforce the importance of developing word knowledge to improve and enhance future learning.

Readiness to Learn

Intervention has consisted of high-quality one-to-one and small group teaching, supported by EEF research. Intervention timetables are a working document, intervention activities and groups are under regular review and progress is good.

A child's vocabulary level at age four is a strong indicator of their attainment at 18. By the time learners enter primary school, their vocabulary level is already influenced by the vocabulary of their parents: learners who come from a language-rich background are equipped with a wider vocabulary than their peers. Without intervention, this attainment gap would continue to widen, and peaks at a gap of over 18 months by the time learners sit their GCSEs. As learners progress through Thomas Harding, the vocabulary of academic texts becomes increasingly complex. While a confident reader from a language-rich background may pick up this new vocabulary, those children who find reading challenging would be at risk of not achieving their full potential. Our pre-teach intervention has allowed teachers to place more emphasis on explicit vocabulary instruction for every learner. By prioritising vocabulary instruction, teachers can be sure that every learner in the classroom has the vocabulary knowledge to grasp new concepts and craft written responses. Knowledge gaps have been identified and addressed before teaching even begins. As well as this, pre-teaching vocabulary has allowed the classroom lesson to function as a recap session for the taught vocabulary, improving long-term retention and boosting learners' mastery of every topic. Learners are more engaged from the start of the lesson, offering contributions as well as being ready to respond. Participation in conversations has increased and learning behaviours are even more positive.

Our curriculum is comprehensively reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains highly effective for our current cohorts and full coverage has been achieved. Our annual curriculum review also looks to ensure that it remains suitably ambitious and inclusive for all learners, as well as being focused on closing the disadvantaged gap. Extensive CPD for staff on curriculum design, for example memory hacks training, has ensured that learning is embedded for pupils. Lesson sequences, along with the wider curriculum picture, are specifically designed to ensure that knowledge is retained over time.

Significant people/role models have been incorporated into our curriculum to enable our children to see how particular people from a variety of cultures and historical periods, aspired highly and achieved greatly. These people have been carefully selected to mirror the diversity of pupils in our school, and we use these individuals as aspirational role models for our pupils, showing them how an individual's path to success (and setbacks that were overcome along the way) can be used to create 'road maps' for our own individual aspirations. This work has now stretched into all areas of the curriculum. For example, art and music also now has a focus on raising aspirations and enhancing cultural understanding by exposing our pupils to some of the most significant artists and musicians throughout time and across genre.

The school's science coordinator has enrolled in a STEM facilitator course to not only further develop their own subject pedagogy and expertise but to also keep informed of the latest educational developments and research. This has also enabled them to participate in a network of outstanding practitioners. Good practice is shared with the whole teaching team and there is a drive to further improve the curriculum opportunities and experiences. The curriculum is at the forefront of educational research.

'The curriculum is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. As a result, pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, achieve exceptionally well.'

Cultural Capital

Cultural capital – the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said, and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement is now embedded within the curriculum. All our children have benefitted from developing their cultural capital knowledge. Standard reference points are more known, and our children are more able to learn about and name things that are, for many, outside their daily experience.

Internal data suggests that the gap between those identified as disadvantaged and their peers is closing.

Attendance

Additional attendance guidance has been included in the Year 3 September pack. This report highlights not only the importance of good attendance but also details the negative impact of poor attendance. Attendance is also discussed during open days and at the year 2 parent evening - a clear message regarding our expectations is delivered.

Attendance continues to be challenged daily, however; our early intervention strategy of sending formal correspondence to parents notifying them of 'poor' attendance has been effective in raising awareness and instigating conversations/meetings to address any obstacles that the school may not have been aware of. The approachable nature of the FLO role has also continued to build relationships with those who may be hard to reach.

For those children who find school settings challenging to attend due to a variety of reasons, including SEND, a given daily rewards/incentive when they overcome personal barriers to attendance. These activities are nurture themed, and commonly with the FLO.

Attendance will continue to be monitored on a weekly basis. The FLO and HT hold an attendance meeting weekly to discuss and record support and/or sanctions given to individual families. All policies are followed carefully, and letters are sent out and followed up on a weekly/half termly basis as required.

Parental engagement

Parents are encouraged to celebrate achievements alongside their children. For example, aspiration assemblies' awards and certificates are shared on social media and within our weekly newsletter. The newsletter also contains 'ask me' questions. These are created by class teachers to prompt conversations at home. The number of posts on social media has increased and therefore the frequency of opportunities for parents to see classroom learning and activities has been beneficial. This enables some to discuss this at home with their children and the images provide conversation prompts. This has helped to immerse parents and careers into the culture and values of the school, helping them to feel part of our community.

Music events and publishing parties continue to be effective in welcoming parents in to see their children's work. Publishing parties have proved very rewarding for the children in celebrating their achievements. A publishing party is an authentic way to celebrate 'published' work. Such a gathering brings the children face to face with their audience and gives them an identity as an author. Feeling like a true author has proven motivating, and this positive approach to learning is taken forward to future writing tasks, as well as giving them confidence in their ability to create, revise, and publish their writing.