

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil 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

Detail	Data
School name	King James I Academy
Number of pupils in school	957 (805 11-16)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	49.9%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025 – 2026
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	Autumn 2026
Statement authorised by	Simon Whitehead
Pupil premium lead	Rachel Glen
Governor / Trustee lead	Elizabeth Varley

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year*	£432,150
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£ 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	£432,150

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

King James I provides an inclusive and ambitious curriculum offer which enables both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students to make academic and social progress during their time here. This subsequently enables them to go on and be young people who can thrive in the modern world. We want our students to be upstanding members of society who can conduct themselves well in a range of situations, no matter what their starting point in life is.

Whilst academic success is important, and invariably leads to appropriate progression after leaving school, we firmly believe in developing the whole child, and our Strategy Plan reflects this. Funding is distributed toward academic and social strategies in equal measure, with significant roles for our Attendance Officer, as well as Student Support Workers alongside our teachers and academic mentors who provide both Academic Support and Challenge to all King James students.

The key elements of our plan focus on removing the barriers that our disadvantaged students face, promoting positive attitudes to school and appropriate behaviour for learning in order that they can access high quality teaching and fulfil their potential. Whilst some activities are targeted towards disadvantaged students, many are intended to support the needs of all students, whether disadvantaged or not (*EEF Guide to Pupil Premium*) and with high quality teaching at the heart of our approach we understand that all students stand to benefit from this.

In order to secure our goals for disadvantaged students we will:

- Ensure that students are consistently challenged in lessons
- Deliver high quality lessons for all students
- Ensure a program of intervention addresses the specific needs of students
- Have high expectation of all students, with all staff taking responsibility for student outcomes.
- Implement a range of strategies to support the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of all students

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Low Levels of Attainment on Entry into Year 7</p> <p>The NGRT standardised reading tests upon entry for the current Year 7 cohort identify that overall, 36.1% of the students had a reading age of below their chronological age. In terms of NGRT Reading from this year, current Y7 FSM are starting at 102.6 compared to non-FSM 111.2</p> <p>The current year 7 cohort have taken the CAT4 tests, and it shows our year 7 cohort are well below the national data on entry (96.5 with 100 being the national average) with high proportions scoring very low to below average across the tests and are below the national average for scoring average, above average or very high CAT4 scores. CAT4 tests shows current Y7 FSM are starting at 93.9 compared to non-FSM (99.3) with the national average SAS being 100.</p>
2	<p>Attainment & Progress of students across the curriculum, including those classed as High Attainers</p> <p>National figures suggest that disadvantaged students achieve an A8 score 15.4 points lower (34.9 vs 50.3) than their peers at the end of Key Stage 4, In King James I, the A8 gap is only 8.19 points (39.39 v 47.58).</p> <p>Disadvantaged students continue to make good progress at King James with students exceeding of the national performance of Disadvantaged students when comparing A8 data. This is most significant when considering the percentage of disadvantaged students at King James is 44.8% (Y11 2025 data) v NA 28.1%. It has been this way over time as a result of the way funding has been distributed to support those who are disadvantaged. Maintaining this position poses a constant challenge. Students in this academic year were also affected by the changes to grade boundaries in the summer 2025 exam series, which saw a continued rise of many subjects' grade boundaries above even those of pre-Covid levels.</p>
3	<p>Student Aspirations</p> <p>The Academy recognises that participation rates for disadvantaged students nationally in extra-curricular activities are significantly lower than their peers. The Academy has identified the need to take action to combat this issue in order that all students have opportunities to access a range of opportunities in addition to the taught curriculum. Two Aim Higher mentors were appointed in 2024-25 to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have exposure to various careers and pathways including university.</p>
4	<p>Student Engagement</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p>School engagement is reflected through attendance figures with 2024-25 data (taken from VYED & the Explore Education Statistics website) showing that overall attendance of disadvantaged students nationally is 7% lower than their peers, whilst Persistent Absence figures show a gap of 24.3%.</p> <p>Figures for the KJI reflect the ongoing work in supporting attendance, with overall attendance in 2024-25 being at least in line or better with national</p>

	<p>figures for both disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged (KJI dis 88.3% vs national 86.4%. KJI non-dis 93.6% vs national 93.4%), whilst rates of PA (Autumn and Spring term only) are also better for both disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged (KJI dis 30.1% vs national 36.8%. KJI non-dis 14.2% vs national 14.7%).</p> <p>Behaviour & Exclusions:</p> <p>Behaviour of disadvantaged students shows a lower positive v negative % points ratio than that of non-disadvantaged students.</p> <p>In the 2024-25 academic year, 57 students were issued with at least one fixed-term exclusion. Of these students, 47 were disadvantaged (82.5%).</p> <p>105 FTE were issued in total, 88 of which were issued to disadvantaged students (84%). 17 students were issued with more than one fixed term exclusion, representing more significant behavioural issues, and 15 of the students were disadvantaged (88%).</p> <p>In 2025-26 to date (half-term 1 only), this pattern has continued. 14 students have received a fixed term exclusion, 12 of these students are disadvantaged (86%).</p>
--	---

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
Improved fluency of reading amongst disadvantaged students in Key Stage 3 whilst promoting reading for pleasure and understanding context	<p>Structured curriculum time within Key Stage 3 to enable students to access an additional reading lesson each week which focuses on targeted areas for development</p> <p>Standardised reading assessments across the year for Year 7 student to demonstrate better than chronological progress in reading.</p> <p>Active Reading and literacy-based tasks incorporated into all formal assessments across the Key Stage, including comprehension activities</p> <p>Development of the 'Read to Succeed' Programme.</p>
Academic progress of disadvantaged students in Key Stage 4 will continue to be significantly better than national figures whilst reflecting improved A8 score in summer 2026 examinations	<p>Incorporated into our school day are Core subject support and intervention sessions, utilising students' time in school with subject specialists. Period 6 interventions within the school day also ensure disadvantaged students can engage fully in the GCSE and vocational sessions. Holiday sessions run throughout the year to support revision, and breakfast sessions nearer to exams ensure</p>

	<p>disadvantages students are thoroughly prepared.</p> <p>Disadvantaged students will achieve an A8 score of 45.26 (School Target set between FFT20 and FFT50))</p>
All students will participate in extracurricular activities with an academic, sporting, or other focus to develop a broad range of experiences	<p>Enrichment will be an integral part of the academy day, enabling students, particularly in KS3, to engage in a carousel of activities and broadening their experiences. In addition to this the Academy will run additional after school clubs enabling students to further widen their experiences.</p>
Students are offered a comprehensive package of support to promote engagement in school, resulting in improved attendance and reduced levels of exclusions	<p>Overall attendance is at least maintained at a level above or in line with national figures. Persistent absence rates are in line or below national figures.</p> <p>Attendance gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers are reduced for both attendance and persistent absence</p> <p>Appropriate use is made of alternative provision where the offer is appropriate to student needs and interests and enables them to progress towards further education, employment, or training.</p> <p>Fixed term exclusion rates for disadvantaged students fall and the gap between them and their peers narrows</p> <p>Appropriate pastoral support is provided to targeted students with mental health issues as part of the student support package on offer.</p>

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching

Budgeted cost: £ 99,579

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continuous program of quality assurance to ensure that work is assessed in line with academy expectations identified within the assessment policy, and that all students receive high quality feedback which enables them to improve their work	Providing high quality, timely feedback enables students to identify areas for improvement within their work. This feedback can be verbal or written, and where possible should allow students to respond to it. Feedback EEF	1, 2
Continued investment in Core staffing in order to reduce class sizes, thus enabling staff to focus more on students and provide high quality lessons which can be tailored to meet individual needs as well as providing high quality feedback. Core staff take part in regular coaching sessions to further improve their practice and continue to deliver high quality teaching.	Whilst recognising that reducing class sizes alone does not have a significant impact on progress, it is recognised that combining this reduction in teacher to student ratio with tailored approaches to individual students and the provision of high-quality feedback enables students to improve their progress over time Individualised Instruction EEF Reducing Class Size EEF	1, 2
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments for Year 7 students to undertake on entry, with opportunities to revisit throughout the year	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into specific strengths and weaknesses of individual students to ensure that staff within school can adapt strategies to ensure they are tailored to student needs. Information from the tests can be shared with parents to promote home/school collaboration Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1, 2

Improving literacy across the curriculum as identified by the EEF is an academy priority, with a continued focus on developing disciplinary literacy and a new focus on improving fluency	It is widely understood that weak literacy skills can form a barrier to accessing texts and information within all subjects. As a result, the Academy has invested heavily in the development of disciplinary literacy in all subjects as well as transferring these skills between lessons. Developing comprehension has been a focus over time and will continue to feed into the latest approach. Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF Reading Comprehension Strategies EEF	1, 2
Development of a range of study skills across the year for students to embed into their own learning as appropriate	Teaching metacognitive strategies to pupils is an inexpensive method to help pupils become more independent learners. The evidence surrounding this is strong, particularly in Maths. Metacognition and Self Regulation EEF	1, 2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 16,245

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Recognising that some students entering the academy are operating with a reading age under 5, implementing a targeted reading program incorporating phonics will support their progress. Targeted reading intervention offered by our support staff and paired reading opportunities for our Y7s to be supported by our Y10s.	Evidence demonstrates that this is particularly effective for younger students, however with low reading ages on entry this principle supports the literacy development of weaker students Support staff are used to deliver targeted one-to-one support for our weakest readers to enable them to improve their reading ability. Phonics EEF	1, 2
Engagement in the tutoring (specific Maths tutor), keep-up Fridays for KS4 students, and homework support sessions	Maths tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support pupils who are currently under-performing in Maths but are a key English-Maths match up student. Our Maths tutor is a former	1, 2, 3, 4

	<p>SEND pupil who went on to secure a Masters in Mathematics from Durham University; he is a good role model for our students.</p> <p>Friday Keep-Up sessions are used to support KS4 students who have fallen behind. Homework sessions are also available for all students in order to provide structured support with their weekly homework tasks.</p> <p>Mentoring EEF</p> <p>Small Group Tuition EEF</p> <p>One to One Tuition EEF</p>	
--	---	--

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

Budgeted cost: £ 359,877

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Embedding the principles of good practice set out in the DfE's Improving School Attendance advice</p> <p>Attendance Coordinator is supported by the pastoral and wider staff team to ensure high levels of attendance for all students</p>	<p>There is an irrefutable link between school attendance and academic success. So, it is vital that we encourage students to attend school and part of this involves working closely with parents in order to ensure that students comply with Academy and DfE expectations</p> <p>Parental Engagement EEF</p>	3, 4
<p>Behaviour, pastoral and emotional support provided by six student support workers across different year groups</p>	<p>The EEF's research into support beyond the classroom identifies the need for a positive ethos within schools and the impact this has on students' mental health as well as their engagement and progress</p> <p>Social and Emotional Learning EEF</p> <p>Behaviour Interventions EEF</p>	1, 2, 3, 4
<p>Structured extra-curricular provision incorporated into the academy day and beyond. (Period 6)</p>	<p>It is seen as vital that students engage in extracurricular activities as enrichment opportunities in order to support their own physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Arts Provision EEF</p> <p>Extending School Time EEF</p>	1, 2, 3, 4
<p>Employment of a 0.5 Careers Advisor to support students with</p>	<p>Local levels of deprivation and a lack of aspirations and employment opportunities within the area mean that</p>	3, 4

<p>transition between KS4/5 and beyond, as well as providing CEIAG to students throughout the Academy, raising aspirations.</p> <p>Employment of an Aim Higher Mentor (Y9 focus) to raise aspirations and show a range of careers and progression routes.</p>	<p>there is a distinct need to raise awareness of job roles, promote cultural capital and develop social mobility. Through the employment of a Former Connexions Advisor, the Academy is able to furnish students with a full range of opportunities available to them.</p> <p>Evidence of the success of this comes from recent NEET figures being in line with or better than national and local figures.</p> <p>Aspiration Interventions EEF</p>	
---	---	--

Total budgeted cost: £ 475,701

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

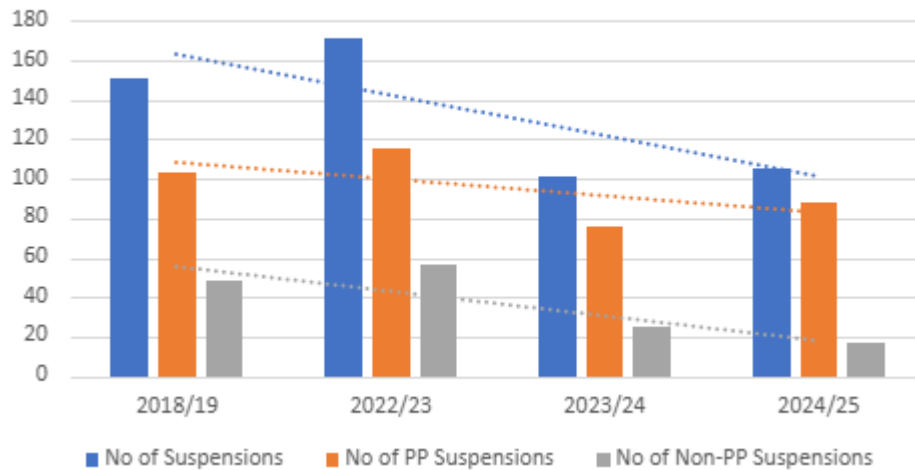
This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

We made strategic use of our lead practitioners and Maths mentor to fully prepare our disadvantaged pupils for their GCSE examinations. We offered many OOHL opportunities including during school holidays and weekly after school revision sessions. In terms of exam performance, the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged is smaller for KJ1 students when compared to national data for A8 measure (A8 gap: national 15.4 lower v. KJ1 8.19 lower).

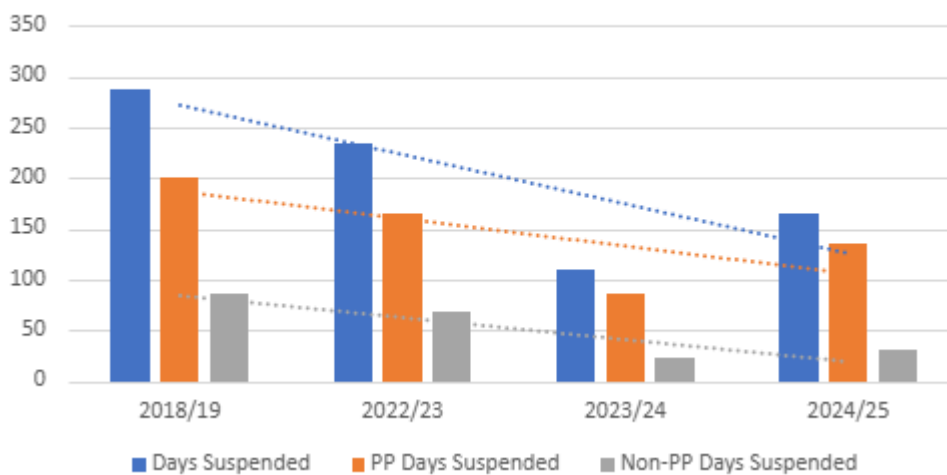
There is a weight of evidence which demonstrates that disadvantaged students were affected disproportionately in comparison with their peers by Covid lockdowns and the subsequent home learning that resulted from these lockdowns. Despite a return to full time learning in 2021-22, the impact on pupils both academically and socially due to lockdowns is still being felt and will continue to be felt for many more years. This in turn had a disproportionate impact on schools like King James with almost double the national average of disadvantaged students on roll. All of our pupils, especially our disadvantaged pupils, greatly benefit from being back in the classroom with ready access to both academic and pastoral support to support their progress and their mental health and wellbeing.

The strategies that were implemented during the last academic year (2024-25) continued to have an impact on students in the Academy. PP students have a positive v negative ratio of 93% (non-PP ratio was 97%), which is higher than the total figure for 2023-24 academic year (92%). The 93% positive v negative ratio for the 2024-25 academic year is significantly higher than figures in the years prior to 2022-23 and evidences a consolidation of the good previous progress made against this measure. The strategies we have implemented over the last few years show a steadily decreasing trend in the number of suspensions and the number of days of suspensions for both PP and non-PP students (see graphs below). The school's NEET figures for September 2025 were 1.4%. Our attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils in 2024-25 are better than national figures, and our rates of PA are lower than the national data for the same group of students.

Comparison of Number of Students Suspended



Comparison of Number of Days Suspended



There have also been improvements in students' reading levels from their initial low starting points due to the extensive strategies put in place i.e. Reading Lessons, Sounds Write programme (for those with weakest reading ages), NELT Fluency programme, reading with academic mentors (for students with reading ages under 11), etc. Evidence from reading assessments throughout the year show that the SAS score has moved from 100.9 in autumn, to 106.6 with re-tests, showing significant progress and impact.

Our Period 6 enrichment sessions continued for our KS3 students which support mental health and well-being as well as exposing students to extra-curricular activities and metacognition strategies through our Steps to Success programme.

There was still an ongoing impact on student wellbeing, particularly around mental health, with Academy support staff seeing more referrals than previous whilst contending with reduced support from external agencies. The academy continues to build on successful approaches from previous years and develop them further in 2025/26.

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	The Academy received £4420 (13 pupils at £340 each) of Service Pupil Premium during the 2024/25 Academic Year. This was used as a contribution towards the salaries of Student Support Workers in addressing any social and emotional issues that service children may have had.
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	Quantifiable impact is difficult to measure, but internal data relating to behaviour and engagement showed positive outcomes. Students in Year 11 who were eligible for Service Student Premium went on to the next stage of their education, employment or training.