

Context

At Watergate School we have the very highest aspirations and expectations for **all** our pupils and recognise that they deserve very best provision. Our Governing Board share our belief that every pupil should have equal opportunities to achieve the best possible life chances, and where no child gets left behind.

At Watergate we make every effort to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive the outstanding support they deserve and that they make outstanding progress as a result of outstanding teaching and provision.

The Department for Education (DfE) provides additional Pupil Premium Funding (PPF) to all schools based on the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and the number of children who are looked-after (CLA) and the aim of PPF is to support schools in raising the achievement of the most disadvantaged pupils.

At Watergate we acknowledge that it is not the Pupil Premium funding itself that will improve achievement and attainment, but how it is used to support our most disadvantaged pupils. We achieve this through robust and effective planning, assessment and management; governors ensure the efficient management of PPF and this leads to the effective deployment of staff and resources to the benefit of all individuals and groups of pupils.

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement – Watergate School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding for 25/26 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 Watergate School.

School Overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils on roll	186
Proportion (%) of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium	42.47%
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	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Linda Matthews Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Linda Matthews
Governor / Trustee lead	Simon Whittaker

Funding Overview	
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£119,285
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£119,285

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of Intent

At Watergate we recognise that socio-economic disadvantage is not always the primary challenge that our pupils face. Our most disadvantaged pupils may have complex learning and physical needs along with significant communication, social interaction and sensory needs, which also have a major impact on their learning and outcomes.

We are committed to ensure that our Pupil Premium funding enables disadvantaged pupils to make outstanding progress and sustain positive outcomes for their future lives. However, as all of our pupils have a range of complex learning needs we will use our Pupil Premium to support all pupils at Watergate School.

Our key focus is improving their communication and interaction, thinking and problem solving, independence and positive physical and emotional wellbeing, which is a fundamental part of our ethos and curriculum. We strive to ensure that all pupils have effective communication, giving them a voice not only in school and home, but in the wider community. Physical development is also a key focus at Watergate, along with healthy lifestyles and self-care, all of which are skills for lifelong learning and achievement.

Our 'I Can, You Can, Together We Will' approach, through high quality teaching and effective environments are embedded all aspects of our holistic curriculum. We provide bespoke and targeted learning opportunities which are assessed formally and informally, to provide the best possible outcomes for each individual pupil at Watergate give them the best preparation for the next stage in their education and future adulthood.

Challenges

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

Challenge Number	Detail of Challenge
1	Assessments have shown that the disadvantaged pupils starting Watergate, particularly a cohort of children who have not received specialist education from Reception, require high level targeted support strategies to support learning, increase engagement and receive a smooth transition from other settings.
2	Assessments and discussions with families indicate that their children have less access to activities to support their health and wellbeing in the wider community. As a result, this may have a negative impact on the mental and physical wellbeing. A number of pupils have physical disabilities which affect their ability to effectively and independently access learning and a number of pupils have sensory processing and self-regulation difficulties, resulting in them not being able to access community facilities. These barriers have been exacerbated by the lack of access to essential services and the cost of living crisis.

3	Assessments, observations and discussions with families show that some pupils, including some disadvantaged pupils may, show that disadvantaged pupils generally have greater challenges around communicating and expressing their needs than their peers, including non-verbal, limited language and social interaction difficulties.
4	A small group of pupils have highly complex needs which affect their ability to develop the early physical skills. This fundamentally impacts on their ability to interact effectively with the world around them.
5	Observations and discussions with families show that some they face challenges in supporting the physical and emotional well-being of their child(ren), this has an impact on their ability to feel confident and able to meet their children's complex needs and have difficulty in accessing the support and guidance that may be available. Family circumstances can impact on pupil attendance, readiness to learn and well-being.
6	Many children face health vulnerabilities which impact on school attendance, well-being and safety. This has a negative impact on families. These barriers have been exacerbated by the decline of support organisations.
7	Our assessment show that a number of pupils require a varied approach to support them to actively engage in learning and understand the world around them, due to a number of factors, including poor interaction and initiation skills, physical disabilities which limit independent movement, experienced trauma - all of which were exacerbated by the current economic climate.
8	Many children have limited access to their local community due to health and/or behavioural needs. This means that they lack opportunities to explore their environment, community facilities and engage in wider cultural capital.

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
1	Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils starting Watergate through highly skilled interventions. New and in year starters will make effective progress from their starting points.	Through achievement of improved performance, as demonstrated by our end of year assessments on EfL 2025/26. This will result in increased numbers of pupils making better than expected progress across the curriculum.
2	Enhanced equipment to support pupils physical and emotional wellbeing and extra-curricular activities will be delivered by specialists throughout the year focused on building upon resilience and determination, independence, confidence, teamwork and creativity.	Pupils will have increased self-awareness, build communication skills, independence and fitness, outside of the classroom. Pupils will have enhanced interaction skills from the opportunity to explore equipment within school and community facilities with their peers and form positive relationships.
3	Pupils can use a range of communication systems to aid their understanding and to develop expressive communication skills.	Through progress, assessment findings in Evidence for Learning, termly outcomes from IEP targets and EHC Annual Reviews.

4	Improved physical outcomes for pupils at Watergate enabling them greater access to the whole of Watergate's Curriculum and access to community facilities.	Children who have limited levels of physical development will have personalised programmes covered by the MOVE programme, which will include targeted interventions and specialised assessments in order that they are able to develop these early physical skills in the most effective way.
5	All families feel supported and able to meet their children's complex needs. Families are engaged with the school, participate in workshops to gain greater knowledge and understanding of their children's needs.	Targeted support for families enables them to cope with restrictions and changes as a result of the current cost of living crisis and to continue to meet the needs of their children. This in turn impacts positively on families and children's wellbeing and attendance.
6	All families feel supported, enabling them to access the relevant services and agencies within the local community to minimise the risk of health vulnerabilities which impact on school attendance, well-being and safety.	Support from Watergate's family support worker will enhance and empower the lives of families, giving them greater access to support services to improve physical and mental wellbeing for their children and families.
7	Children who require a varied and therapeutic approach to support their learning and well-being, will be able to actively engage in learning and begin to understand the world around them.	Targeted therapeutic interventions and bespoke learning opportunities will enable children access to learning and understand the world around them. Staff will be skilled in supporting children who have experienced trauma and use strategies to support their mental well-being.
8	Children will have access to a range of community facilities to enhance cultural capital opportunities.	Children experience a range of high-quality experiences and events related to the curriculum areas, both from the local community and from professionals in the specialist disciplines. This will help to provide them with the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budget Cost: £19,285

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Specialist training for supporting pupils with ASD and positive behaviour support and awareness for all staff in Watergate's behaviour principles approach for a low arousal and non-restraint approach.	<p>The government paper on reducing the need for restraint and restrictive interventions outlines the right for every child and young person to be treated with respect and dignity. All children and young people deserve to have their needs recognised and be given the right support.</p> <p>A low arousal approach to behaviour has a positive impact for the whole school on improving the lives of</p>	1,2

	<p>the young people, who can have many challenges in life.</p> <p>Investing in professional development for teaching assistants to implement structured interventions can be a cost-effective approach to improving learner outcomes due to the large difference in efficacy between the different deployments of teaching assistants.</p>	
<p>Specialist support and training to staff and families in communication and interaction, thinking and problem solving and independence strategies from middle leaders and therapists areas of the curriculum.</p> <p>Workshops for families in positive behaviour support to assist pupils with self-regulation, self-awareness and well-being.</p>	<p>Investing in professional development for teaching staff to support the different areas of the curriculum embeds a whole school approach to improving learner outcomes.</p> <p>The potential impact of self-regulation approaches is high. With explicit teaching and feedback, pupils are more likely to use self-regulation strategies independently and habitually, enabling them to manage their own learning and overcome challenges themselves in the future.</p> <p>Parental engagement has a positive impact on pupil progress and fosters positive relationships within families to enhance wellbeing. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps.</p>	<p>1,2,3,7</p> <p>1,4,5,7</p>
<p>Apprenticeship Opportunities for support staff.</p>	<p>Apprenticeship opportunities will provide support staff with the skills and experience needed to progress in their chosen career and gain qualifications. The outcome of these improved skills will further enhance the provision offered to pupils at Watergate,</p>	<p>1,5</p>

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

Budget Cost: £50,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge numbers addressed
<p>Increase in Music Therapy to provide 5 days a week of individualised targeted therapeutic support to</p>	<p>Explicit therapeutical interventions reduce stress and anxiety, improve mood and mental alertness, recovery from trauma and assists with the ability for pupils to regulate their emotions and feelings more</p>	<p>1,2,3,7</p>

improve well-being and behaviour	effectively. Improve wellbeing and regulation enables pupils to be ready for learning.	
Specialist support children to develop 'next step' physical skills under the direction of the school's MOVE programme, delivered by the Lead for MOVE and Physical Disabilities (Centre of Excellence)	<u>MOVE</u> Children who are at stages of physical development before or after those covered the Move Programme benefit from a targeted and structured approach to aid the development of physical skills including head control and independent mobility when walking	1,2,3,4,7
A dedicated lead practitioner to facilitate a whole school approach for all classes in supporting communication for pupils with ASD	Creating an inclusive environment through staff training, peer education, sensory adjustments, consistent routines, and strong home-school partnerships focusing on individual strengths will foster a sense belonging, reduce stress, celebrate neurodiversity and enhance learning opportunities for autistic students.	
Communication aids and specialist apps to support communication and self-regulation	Evidence based approach as advised by the speech and language team. Pupils will be supported both in school and at home to consolidate and generalise communication skills.	3

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

Budget Cost: £50,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge numbers addressed
Improved outdoor learning resources in the school's adventure playground and sensory garden/forest school area to encourage physical activity, engagement and social interaction	<p>Collaborative learning approaches have a positive impact, on average are a cost-effective approach for raising attainment.</p> <p>An enhanced outdoor provision enables greater learning outside of the classroom and supports pupils accessing outdoor community provisions.</p>	3,4,8
Workshops and coffee mornings led by the Family Support Worker, to engage families and build community support.	Parental engagement has a positive impact on progress. It provides a wider network of support for families, which has a positive impact on the outcomes of pupils. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps	4,5,6
Access for identified pupils to participate in external specialist activities outside of the classroom.	<p>It is crucial to ensure that pupils access to high quality physical activity for the other benefits and opportunities it provides.</p> <p>These activities will increase self-awareness, build communication skills, develop an understanding for identified children who are, or are at risk of losing their skills of independence and those that benefit from additional access to physical exercise.</p> <p>Pupils with additional needs require bespoke and targeted physical activities to support their understanding the importance of being healthy, both physically and mentally to improve outcomes.</p>	2,3,4,8

Total budgeted cost: £119,285

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Pupil Premium Strategy Outcomes		
Below is a review of Watergate's pupil premium activities and the impact this had on pupils in the 2024/25 academic year.		
	Outcome	Outcome Review
1	Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils starting Watergate through highly skilled interventions. New and in year starters will make effective progress from their starting points.	<p>Collaborative working with speech and language/occupational therapists who have successfully worked alongside class teams throughout the whole school to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Existing and new pupils have made at least good progress against their baselines and achieved their IEP targets.</p> <p>Middle leaders worked with therapists to provide ongoing training for all staff in supporting communication, self-regulation, emotional regulation and autism strategies. This aided the smooth transition for new and existing pupils.</p>
2	Enhanced equipment to support pupils physical and emotional wellbeing and extra-curricular activities will be delivered by specialists throughout the year focused on building upon resilience and determination, independence, confidence, teamwork and creativity.	The refurbishment of the sensory rooms provided new and innovative technology to support learners including those with visual impairment, has enhanced the pupils learning and has had a positive impact on their independence and physical and emotional wellbeing
3	Pupils can use a range of communication systems to aid their understanding and to develop expressive communication skills.	<p>Whole school training sessions on communication, including Makaton, have been undertaken throughout the year led by a Makaton trainer, middle leaders and S&L therapists.</p> <p>Observations have shown an increase of individual communication skills, which has led to greater independence, self-regulation and emotional wellbeing.</p>
4	Improved physical outcomes for pupils at Watergate enabling them greater access to the whole of Watergate's Curriculum and access to community facilities.	<p>Weekly access to bespoke physical activities has enabled greater access to the curriculum and community facilities.</p> <p>Children starting Watergate in Reception with physical needs received high quality interventions from the PD/MOVE Lead and class staff to enable them to develop their early physical skills.</p>

		<p>PD/MOVE Lead provided training to class staff to implement PD programmes for individuals throughout the school.</p> <p>Liaison with physio therapists provided bespoke hydrotherapy sessions to improve the mobility and flexibility of pupils.</p> <p>Watergate continues to work closely with Access Sports and Dynamic coaching to develop a number of bespoke physical programmes</p>
5	<p>All families feel supported and able to meet their children's complex needs. Families are engaged with the school, participate in workshops to gain greater knowledge and understanding of their children's needs.</p>	<p>Family events have been undertaken throughout the year have established an inclusive culture, which fosters a sense of belonging where families feel accepted, respected, and more connected to the school community.</p> <p>Coffee mornings and other events throughout the year, continue to increase the number of families contacting and attending school throughout the year.</p> <p>School have responded to family's requests on themed events where were subsequently added to the school calendar.</p> <p>Positive relationships and networks continue to grow, with families working together to support each other. New parents are feeling part of the school community as result of open afternoons, accessing coffee mornings and meeting with established families.</p>
6	<p>All families feel supported, enabling them to access the relevant services and agencies within the local community to minimise the risk of health vulnerabilities which impact on school attendance, well-being and safety.</p>	<p>Watergate's family support worker and senior leaders have worked relentlessly to support an increasing number of families, particularly with issues around housing, DLA, cost of living needs and obtaining Blue Badges.</p> <p>Families are more confident to come into school to meet the family support worker and this work continues to be invaluable in the current economic climate. Improved wellbeing and relationships between school and families resulted in higher engagement and attendance</p>
7	<p>Children who require a varied and therapeutic approach to support their learning and well-being, will be able to actively engage in learning and begin to understand the world around them.</p>	<p>Music therapy sessions demonstrate how individual children's learning and wellbeing has improved as a result of this intervention.</p> <p>Input from OT and S&L therapists have had a positive impact on the children's learning, including communication and independence, leading to increased self-regulation and mental and physical wellbeing.</p>

8	<p>Children will have access to a range of community facilities to enhance cultural capital opportunities.</p>	<p>Links with the local community, networking with other schools continues to increase.</p> <p>Links have been established with a number of schools, which has resulted in some pupils attending weekly sessions at main stream schools.</p> <p>Watergate have made a number of links with other special schools and mainstream schools in Lewisham, creating an inclusive opportunities and experiences for Watergate pupils. This has helped remove barriers to their learning and/or well-being. Leaders have rigorously monitored the progress of pupils to ensure that any barriers to learning are rapidly removed.</p> <p>These links are having a positive impact of pupil wellbeing, confidence and independence.</p>
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