Pupil premium strategy statement 2026/2027 – New Rush Hall School

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Name of School	New Rush Hall School
Number of pupils in school	Funded for 81 according to the DfE, currently 89 on roll
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	57% - 36/81
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025/26 2026/27
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	Mr Sam Walters
Pupil Premium Lead	Emma Murphy and Ros Dennison
Governor / Trustee Lead	Liesbeth Rubenstein

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£55,610
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years *(enter £0 if not applicable)*	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£55,610

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At NRHS our intent is to close the gap between our disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers.

Overcoming barriers is at the heart of our pupil premium strategy. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that all children receive high-quality first teaching in all lessons. We know this is proven to have the greatest impact on pupil outcomes.
- Implementing an early intervention approach to support any pupils not making expected progress.
- Providing pupils with enriching opportunities enabling them to develop positive learning behaviours and attitudes to make accelerated progress.
- Building solid partnerships with families so that we can effectively address non-academic barriers such as attendance, aspirations, social and emotional skills, self-esteem and wellbeing.
- Work collectively as a school community to take responsibility for the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.

Our strategy is working towards achieving these objectives by ensuring that there are well-planned actions in place across the school to meet these targets. All staff are well informed about Pupil Premium funding and what it is used for and are aware of their role in supporting these children.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	A considerable proportion of pupil premium pupils have reading ages lower than their chronological age. Reading, for some of our pupils, is not common-place and is a barrier to accessing the curriculum.
2	Increasing numbers of pupils of all ages evidencing mental health, welfare and safeguarding concerns. The increased level of need has led to strain on both pastoral and safeguarding systems. This is further exacerbated by a paucity of external support as services are stretched.

3	Attendance rates for some pupil premium pupils are lower than for their non-pupil premium peers, with too many pupil premium pupils experiencing persistent absence, especially in the secondary phase.
4	Low ambition / aspiration for progression to college and 6th form. Our most disadvantaged pupils often come from families with no history of education past KS4. They often need tailored support through KS3- 4 due to their SEMH needs to ensure that they are confident to be successful in their next stage of education.
5	Exposing pupils to a broad range of cultural capital experiences including at least one residential trip during their time at NRHS and to support their wider learning and understanding of the world around them. Given the SEMH/ individual needs of some of our pupils they do not feel comfortable with change and anything out of the normal school day/followed timetable.

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 reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across all year groups.	Reading ages for all pupils will continue to increase to be in line with, or very close to, chronological age. Measured using approved reading tests. There will be a smaller disparity between the scores of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers Narrow the current gap between KS2 reading compared to writing and maths.
Disadvantaged students are emotionally mature and exhibit positive behaviours.	Improved levels of pupil wellbeing from 2026/27 will be demonstrated by qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys, teacher observations, counselling and mentors.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupil	A continued reduction in persistent absence of all pupils and especially pupil premium pupils, so there are no gaps.
Disadvantaged pupils achieve places at the college and 6th forms	Increase in the percentage of disadvantaged pupils who go to college and 6ths forms.
Improved character and personal development of pupils, through exposure to a wide range of enriching activities	An increase in participation in enrichment activities and our cultural capital programme, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. Increase the exposure of pupil premium students to aspirational experiences such as residentials, trips and visits, that enriches their educational journey and enables them to develop the confidence to be successful contributors.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding this academic year to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £20,000 CPD Programme

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Training support staff to become fully qualified teachers (QTS) in core curriculum subjects, increasing capacity for high-quality subject teaching and 1:1 support.	Teacher quality is the single largest in-school factor affecting pupil outcomes (Sutton Trust, 2011). The EEF's Effective Professional Development guidance report finds that strengthening teachers' subject and pedagogical knowledge has a direct, positive effect on pupil attainment.	1
All-staff CPD requirement, tied to whole-school teaching and learning priorities	EEF's Effective Professional Development Guidance Report finds that sustained, structured CPD is one of the most reliable ways to improve teaching quality and pupil outcomes.	3, 4 and 5

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

Budgeted cost: £81,916

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Two additional ALS support staff deliver structured, targeted small-group or 1:1 interventions for pupils not making expected progress	EEF Toolkit: teaching assistants delivering structured, targeted small-group or 1:1 interventions add approximately +4 months' progress on average.	4, 1
School counsellors and mentors	EEF Toolkit: social and emotional learning approaches add approximately +4 months' progress on average, with the strongest evidence for pupils experiencing social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.	2

Funding subject-specific consumables and equipment (e.g. ingredients for food technology/cooking lessons, art materials such as paint and pencils, textbooks and reading books) to remove cost barriers to accessing the curriculum	Child Poverty Action Group's Cost of the School Day research identifies subject-specific costs , such as food technology ingredients, art materials and design technology equipment, as a direct barrier to disadvantaged pupils taking part in lessons, and links these costs to reduced subject uptake (e.g. pupils from lower-income households are significantly less likely to study music or PE, partly due to equipment and material costs). Funding these items removes that barrier and ensures pupils can fully access every lesson, not just the theory.	1,4
Sensory equipment e.g. headphones for auditory sensitivity to ensure pupils can self-regulate in the classroom and focus on their learning tasks	Noise-reducing headphones: small-scale peer-reviewed studies (e.g. Pfeiffer et al., 2019, Frontiers in Integrative Neuroscience) found that noise-attenuating headphones reduced physiological signs of sensory overload and improved auditory attention and classroom listening behaviour in autistic pupils with auditory sensitivity.	2
Subsidised subject-linked trips and enrichment visits, including the residential trip to Devon and the PGL residential trip	EEF Toolkit: arts participation and outdoor adventure learning approaches show consistent, moderate positive impacts.	4,5

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

Budgeted cost: £69,080

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Employed a school funded EWO to support families with complex issues in getting pupils to school	DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance and EEF's Attendance Interventions rapid evidence assessment both identify structured parental engagement and proactive family support as the approaches with the strongest evidence for improving attendance.	3
Every pupil has the opportunity for at least one extended, supervised experience away from home during their time at NRHS. Residential trips including Devon and PGL.	EEF Toolkit: outdoor adventure learning shows a positive impact on wider outcomes such as confidence, resilience and relationships	5
A structured enrichment programme giving disadvantaged pupils regular	EEF Toolkit: arts participation (+3 months) and sport participation (+2 months) show positive but moderate-confidence impacts, mainly on	5

access to cultural capital experiences beyond the classroom	engagement and non-cognitive outcomes rather than direct attainment.	

Total budgeted cost: £170,996

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

The pupil premium strategy continued to have a positive impact across the school during 2025/26. Personal development remained a strength, and quality first teaching was further embedded through curriculum development in all subjects, enabling pupils to revisit and build knowledge securely over time.

A key focus last year was improving reading. The school introduced a whole-school reading programme built around Star Reader and Accelerated Reader, ensuring that disadvantaged pupils had regular opportunities to read, be assessed, and make measurable progress. This has strengthened reading comprehension across both the primary and secondary phases and reduced barriers to accessing the wider curriculum.

Attendance outcomes were particularly strong. Whole-school attendance rose to above 87.29% which is above the national average for special schools and represents the highest level on record at New Rush Hall. Persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils reduced further, supported by robust tracking systems, proactive parental engagement, and consistent follow-up from the school's EWO. Pupils increasingly want to attend, supported by personalised timetables, wellbeing interventions, and strong relationships with staff.

Post-16 destinations were highly positive. Most disadvantaged pupils progressed successfully to their next stage of education, training, or employment. This included placements at mainstream sixth forms, colleges, and apprenticeships, with a small number moving directly into work. Regular careers meetings, work experience, targeted support from the school's Careers Co-ordinators, and exposure to external providers ensured that pupils were guided towards appropriate and aspirational pathways.

The enrichment and cultural capital offer remained a cornerstone of the school's pupil premium strategy. Over 150 trips and experiences took place across the year, including three residentials, theatre visits, museums, cultural centres, adventure activities, and curriculum-linked excursions. Disadvantaged pupils were fully involved in this programme, which significantly enhanced their confidence, self-esteem, and engagement. These opportunities ensured that pupils accessed experiences beyond the classroom that broadened horizons, raised aspirations, and enriched their educational journey.

Overall, the school's pupil premium strategy in 2025/26 ensured that disadvantaged pupils not only achieved improved academic outcomes, particularly in reading, but also benefitted from enhanced attendance, successful transitions, and extensive enrichment opportunities, providing a strong foundation for our 2026/27 strategy which continues to focus on closing gaps in reading, sustaining high attendance, and broadening enrichment opportunities for disadvantaged pupils.