

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

This Statement details our school's use of Pupil Premium funding for the 2026-2027 academic year, 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.

The DfE has stated the following:

Schools, Headteachers and teachers will decide how to use the Pupil Premium allocation, as they are best placed to assess what additional provision should be made for individual pupils.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Colchester Academy
Number of pupils in school	884
Proportion (%) of Pupil Premium eligible pupils	46%
Academic year/years that our current Pupil Premium Strategy Plan covers	2026/27
Date this statement was published	30/09/2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	07/09/2027
Statement authorised by	J Betts
Pupil Premium Lead	D Meitner-Harvey
Governor / Trustee Lead	P Simmons

Funding overview

Detail	Data
Pupil Premium funding allocation this academic year	£422,893
Recovery Premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil Premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£422,893

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of intent

At Colchester Academy, our core purpose is to be the change for those who need it the most. This Pupil Premium Strategy aims to embody this statement and level up inequality to allow all students to succeed, make excellent academic progress and leave school more rounded individuals with the currency needed for post-16 pathways and beyond.

The focus of our Pupil Premium Strategy is to identify and remove barriers that our disadvantaged students face to ensure our pupils meet their goals.

At the centre of our approach is a focus on quality first teaching and learning, well-planned and targeted interventions and a rounded pastoral support plan that enables each child to flourish.

Our approach is responsive to individual needs rather than treating disadvantaged pupils as a homogeneous group. Academy analysis identifies disadvantaged boys as a particular priority for 2026/27, with a focus on attainment, attendance, engagement and sense of belonging.

We want to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to access all aspects of the wider school curriculum, clubs, trips, enrichment and student leadership as part of their personal development.

Every child has an equal opportunity to thrive, grow and aim high.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1. Achievement	Attainment and achievement remain areas for development. Closing the attainment gap between PP and non-PP pupils remains a priority, with disadvantaged boys identified as a particular focus. Current Year 11 analysis shows lower PP boys' attendance (78.17%) than PP girls (88.79%) and lower English/EBacc prior-attainment bucket measures, although maths is broadly similar. Barriers remain particularly prominent in reading, breadth of vocabulary and numeracy on entry to the Academy.
2. Attendance	Attendance remains a key area for development. PP attendance improved from 80.7% in 2024/25 to 83.8% in 2025/26, but remains below the Academy's ambition. Disadvantaged boys are a particular priority. Regular tutor contact, early identification, family communication, rewards and targeted attendance intervention will be used to sustain improvement.
3. Behaviour and belonging	Disadvantaged pupils remain disproportionately represented within negative behaviour data, exclusions and alternative provision. For 2026/27, the Academy will place additional emphasis on disadvantaged boys' engagement and sense of belonging, evaluated through negative behaviour points, rewards, attendance, pupil voice, participation and academic outcomes.
4. Aspiration	Students entitled to PP funding can have reduced understanding of opportunities in the wider world and world of work, and may be less familiar with pathways to further education, training and university. The Academy will continue to provide high expectations, careers guidance, mentoring and meaningful leadership opportunities.
5. Literacy	On entry to Year 7, standardised reading tests show that disadvantaged students are slightly behind their peers. This can hinder early progress and access to the wider curriculum.
6. Access, enrichment and participation	Disadvantaged pupils do not always have equal access to resources, experiences and cultural capital. Although PP trip participation improved from 29% to 37% in 2025/26, the Academy will continue to close participation gaps in trips, clubs and wider enrichment and sustain proportionate representation across student leadership. Financial barriers to uniform, materials, technology and participation will continue to be identified and removed.

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 attainment among disadvantaged students	- Standardised classroom routines ensure every child experiences consistently high-quality teaching, evidenced through Quality Assurance. - Teachers understand their pupils, including relevant demographic information and pupil passports, and use this knowledge to remove barriers to learning. - PP attainment and progress improve and the PP/non-PP gap reduces over time. - Disadvantaged boys are explicitly monitored as a priority group; gaps in attainment and progress between PP boys and relevant comparison groups reduce. - Assessment and gap analysis are used to identify pupils for Period 6, tuition and other targeted academic support; impact is reviewed and provision adapted where necessary.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils	- PP attendance continues its year-on-year improvement from the 2025/26 baseline of 83.8% and the gap to non-PP attendance reduces. - Disadvantaged boys' attendance improves from identified cohort baselines. - Pupils at risk of persistent absence are identified early and receive timely check-ins, targeted family contact and appropriate intervention. - The enhanced tutor programme provides regular face-to-face contact with a trusted adult, enabling emerging barriers to attendance and engagement to be identified and escalated. - Attendance rewards and recognition are used alongside targeted intervention to reinforce improved and sustained attendance.
To achieve and sustain improved behaviour, attitudes to learning and belonging	- The proportion of suspensions/exclusions and negative behaviour incidents involving disadvantaged pupils reduces over time. - Repeated exclusions reduce through effective pastoral intervention, consistent classroom practice and support for self-regulation. - The gap in ATL/behaviour indicators between disadvantaged pupils and peers reduces. - For disadvantaged boys, negative behaviour points reduce while reward points increase. - Pupil voice demonstrates an improving sense of belonging, trusted-adult relationships and engagement with school.
To achieve and sustain improved levels of ambition	- Disadvantaged students are fully aware of pathways to further education, training and university. - No PP pupil becomes NEET where this is within the Academy's influence. - Careers guidance is targeted to PP pupils through one-to-one and group sessions, particularly in Years 10 and 11. - Disadvantaged pupils achieve the outcomes needed to access appropriate post-16 pathways. - PP pupils are encouraged and supported to take up leadership, academic enrichment and aspiration-building opportunities.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improvement in reading ages for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils	• Explicit vocabulary teaching is embedded across the curriculum. • Reading ages improve year-on-year towards chronological age. • Pupils are guided towards increasingly challenging texts through the Colchester Academy Reading Canon and development of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary. • Parents/carers are informed about reading ages and supported to encourage reading at home. • Intervention impact is monitored and adapted in response to assessment.
Disadvantaged pupils have equitable access to resources, enrichment and the wider life of the Academy	• PP pupils have access to revision books, materials, ingredients, uniform, reading books, technology and essential study equipment where financial barriers exist. • PP trip participation continues to increase from the 2025/26 baseline of 37%, reducing the gap with whole-Academy participation. • PP participation in clubs and wider enrichment increases, with participation gaps routinely monitored. • Disadvantaged pupils are proportionately represented across Student Council, prefect, ambassador and other leadership opportunities. • Financial and practical barriers to participation are identified through pupil/family feedback and removed wherever possible.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our Pupil Premium funding this academic year to address the challenges listed above. The approach reflects the EEF tiered model: high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and wider strategies, with implementation monitored and adapted during the year.

Curriculum (intervention resources and subscriptions) - Budgeted cost: £26,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Curriculum licences and intervention resources (e.g. Accelerated Reader, The Brilliant Club, Reading Fluency)	Curriculum licences and structured resources support literacy, reading fluency, curriculum access and aspiration. The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium (2026) places high-quality teaching at the heart of Pupil Premium strategy and recommends targeted academic support where pupils require additional structured intervention. Assessment information will be used to identify need, with participation and impact reviewed rather than assuming that access alone secures improvement. Resources such as Accelerated Reader and Reading Fluency support regular reading practice, while The Brilliant Club contributes to academic enrichment and high expectations.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6

Staffing - Budgeted cost: £263,613

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Raising Standards and PPG Attendance	Investment in staffing supports the balance of high-quality teaching, targeted support and wider pastoral provision. The EEF identifies high-quality teaching as the top priority for Pupil	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Pastoral support Enhanced tutor check-ins and mentoring	Premium spending and emphasises ongoing professional development, careful implementation and monitoring. Additional pastoral and attendance capacity supports early identification of barriers, positive and personalised communication with families, mentoring and regular check-ins. The enhanced tutor programme provides disadvantaged pupils with regular face-to-face contact with a trusted adult. Raising Standards and Pupil Premium leadership will monitor attainment, attendance, behaviour, rewards, participation and pupil voice, with particular scrutiny of disadvantaged boys, so approaches can be sustained, adapted or stopped in response to evidence.	

Alternative provision, mentoring and tuition - Budgeted cost: £120,780

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional support strategy: • Alternative provision • Mentoring programmes • Targeted academic tuition • Period 6 and intervention	Alternative provision, mentoring and targeted tuition provide additional support where mainstream universal provision alone is insufficient. EEF evidence supports structured one-to-one and small-group tuition when it is closely matched to assessed need and connected to classroom learning. Mentoring is most useful when it is structured, consistent and linked to clear goals. Alternative provision will be carefully monitored for attendance, engagement, learning, wellbeing and destinations. Period 6, tuition and intervention places will be informed by assessment and gap analysis, with impact reviewed at planned points. Where an approach is not producing sufficient benefit, delivery will be adapted or provision reconsidered.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Pupil Support - Budgeted cost: £12,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Pupil support: uniform, revision resources, academic materials, technology, subject resources, trips, clubs and enrichment	Pupil support funding removes financial and practical barriers to curriculum access and participation. This includes uniform, revision guides, academic materials, technology, subject-specific resources, trips, clubs and enrichment. The EEF's 2026 guidance identifies wider barriers to learning and extracurricular/co-curricular participation as legitimate areas for Pupil Premium strategy when they respond to diagnosed need. The Academy will monitor participation rather than simply provision: PP trip participation will build from the 37% 2025/26 baseline, club and enrichment participation will be tracked, and representation in student leadership will be reviewed. Pupil and family feedback will help identify barriers that are not visible through headline data.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost 2026 to 2027: £422,893

Monitoring and evaluation during 2026/27

- PP strategy review points will be built into the academic year rather than relying solely on an end-of-year evaluation.
- Leaders will review a focused set of indicators: attainment/progress, attendance and persistent absence, behaviour and exclusions, reward points, intervention participation, clubs/trips/enrichment, student leadership and pupil voice.
- Disadvantaged boys will be explicitly monitored across attainment, attendance, behaviour, rewards, participation and belonging.
- Implementation will be reviewed alongside outcomes: leaders will check whether agreed approaches are actually being delivered consistently and adapt delivery where evidence indicates this is needed.
- Governors/trust leaders will receive appropriate updates on progress against intended outcomes.

Pupil Premium Review - 2025/26

Context

- Proportion of Pupil Premium students: Approximately 44% of the academy cohort were identified as disadvantaged, remaining significantly above the national average.
- Approximately 20% of the academy cohort were PP boys and 23% were PP girls. Minor differences between these figures and the overall PP percentage reflect rounding.
- The high proportion of disadvantaged pupils continues to shape the Academy's approach to teaching, attendance, inclusion, enrichment and wider personal development.

Outcomes - Attainment

- While outcomes for disadvantaged pupils remain an area for continued improvement, a number of curriculum areas demonstrated clear year-on-year improvements in PP attainment during 2025/26.

Subject Spotlights

- Sport: 35.29% of PP students achieved Level 2 Pass-Level 2 Distinction* in 2024/25, increasing to 66.67% in 2025/26 (+31.38 percentage points).
- Engineering: 33.33% achieved Level 2 Pass-Level 2 Distinction* in 2024/25, increasing to 50% in 2025/26 (+16.67 percentage points).
- Hospitality & Catering: 42.11% achieved Level 2 Pass-Level 2 Distinction* in 2024/25, increasing to 58.33% in 2025/26 (+16.22 percentage points).
- History: 43.59% achieved grades 4-9 in 2024/25, increasing to 53.85% in 2025/26 (+10.26 percentage points).
- These outcomes demonstrate encouraging improvement across several areas. Core attainment and the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils remain priorities for further improvement.

Attendance

- PP attendance improved from 80.7% in 2024/25 to 83.8% in 2025/26: an improvement of 3.1 percentage points.
- The Academy maintained its focus on attendance through monitoring, intervention, communication with families and incentives.
- Despite improvement, PP attendance remains below the Academy's ambition and continues to be a significant priority.

Wider Strategies - Enrichment

- In 2024/25, 29% of PP pupils participated in an Academy trip. In 2025/26 this increased to 37% (+8 percentage points).
- This moved disadvantaged pupils closer to the whole-Academy participation rate and reflects progress in removing financial barriers to trips and wider experiences.

Student Leadership and Participation

- Student Council PP representation was broadly proportionate to the percentage of disadvantaged pupils within the Academy.
- 50% of Junior Prefects were from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 40% of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors were from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Representation across these groups demonstrates that disadvantage was not a significant barrier to accessing prominent student leadership opportunities.

Excellence in the Classroom - Quality First Teaching

- The Academy continued to recognise high-quality teaching as the most important school-based mechanism for improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Professional development and quality assurance continued to focus on consistent classroom practice, high expectations, questioning, retrieval, effective feedback and identification/removal of barriers to learning.
- Year-on-year improvement within several curriculum areas is encouraging; however, variation between subjects and continuing gaps in core attainment require sustained focus.

Overall Evaluation

- During 2025/26, the Academy's Pupil Premium strategy demonstrated positive movement across several important areas.
- There were significant year-on-year improvements in disadvantaged attainment within Sport, Engineering, Hospitality & Catering and History.
- PP attendance increased by 3.1 percentage points, from 80.7% to 83.8%.
- Trip participation increased from 29% to 37%.
- Disadvantaged pupils were well represented within student leadership, including 50% of Junior Prefects and 40% of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.
- Areas requiring continued attention include disadvantaged attendance, gaps in core academic outcomes and disproportionate representation within negative behaviour data.
- The 2026/27 strategy will build on positive movement while maintaining a sharp focus on attendance, core academic attainment, behaviour, participation and the attainment, engagement and belonging of disadvantaged boys.