

The Castle School Pupil premium strategy statement 2025-2026

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	The Castle School
Number of pupils in school	226
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	37%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-2027
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Jon Hewitt
Pupil premium lead	James Whybra
Governor / Trustee lead	Helen Cabell

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£78,625
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£7,149
Total budget for this academic year	£85,774

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

The Castle School is dedicated to fostering a caring, nurturing, and outstanding educational community for all pupils. Our fundamental objective is to educate, motivate, and inspire every child with additional needs, providing a celebratory and high-quality educational experience that promotes equality. This includes cultivating individual self-worth, maximizing potential, and upholding learner rights, with an unwavering commitment to ensuring full access and engagement for all, regardless of socioeconomic background.

The Castle School's Development Plan identifies the following themes as priority for this academic year:

Curriculum

Castle @ Newbury

- To create documentation for all areas of the curriculum and ensure that they are easily accessible, clear and concise. Focus for this year will be ongoing topic cycle three and four and Post 16 documentation.
- To embed the Life Skills Passport document across all pathways.
- To develop the core curriculum offer that sits across all pathways.
- To launch subject specialist planning document as part of the core curriculum package.
- To monitor the termly overviews to look at curriculum spread and use of documents and planning

Castle @ Theale

- To design and implement a tailored Key Stage 4 curriculum that provides clear academic and vocational progression pathways aligned with individual learner needs, incorporating Functional Skills English and Maths up to Level 1, Level 1 BTEC Applied Science, and a diverse range of Level 1 BTEC option subjects.
- Embedding Skills Builder Framework into learning for all pupils.

Training

Castle @ Newbury

- Build and deliver the Castle 'Foundations' suite of training staff

Castle @ Theale

- PACEful Pedagogy Deepen and strengthen culture of PACEFUL Practice throughout Castle @ Theale Pupils are supported to feel a deep sense of safety

and connection in all interactions in order that they connect with their emotional brains to be ready for connection with thinking brains.

Pupil Progress

Castle @ Newbury

- Establishing a clear system where outcomes of EHCP objectives are used to measure progress

Castle @ Theale

- To review, refine and embed assessment and tracking practices within Earwig to ensure they generate meaningful data that informs individual learning plans, enhances Pupil Progress Reviews, and aligns with Key Stage 4 curriculum pathways and expected outcomes.

We recognise the significant impact that increasing financial instability has on both our families and, consequently, our learners. Our strategic plan prioritises ensuring that socioeconomic challenges do not impede access to learning. We are committed to creating an environment that meets the diverse needs of all learners, regardless of social, communication, or learning requirements, and to equipping families with robust support systems to effectively aid their children's education.

- Support the quality of teaching, through staff professional development
- Support families to support their children
- Ensure feedback to learning and next step is fully impactful through effective communication
- To identify areas of focus for individual pupils based upon assessed progress with EHCP targets.
- To reduce attainment gaps caused by social and emotional barriers to learning

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Communication and interaction barriers including EAL pupils
2	Staff development. Development of skills and knowledge of evidence-based approaches and interventions gap
3	Supporting development of identity and community connections
4	Anxieties around friendships, futures, socialising, and school.

5	Development and sustainability of learning behaviours that lead to reduction in concentration and engagement
6	Increased parental stresses, particularly around financial pressures and financial uncertainties.
7	Opportunities to learn outside the classroom - our pupils are less likely to have opportunities to access outdoor learning. One of the greatest barriers to success, as per assessment and EHCP annual review data, is pupils being unable to generalise skills in wider contexts.
8	Lack of access to quality reading materials and low motivation to read.

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
To secure improved outcomes for our PPG-eligible pupils, we will offer their parents greater access to school and training. This will ensure families have the skills and knowledge to effectively support their children's learning, personal growth, and social development. To ensure full engagement with other support services in order to meet the needs of these pupils. To work within a wider support network for families to receive targeted early help. To work alongside teaching teams to support pupils within school to achieve personalised engagement programmes, leading to greater self-awareness, self-confidence and resilience and positive learning outcomes. To support the development and implementation of Therapeutic Plans as part of the Therapeutic Thinking Approach.	Upon review of Pastoral support and engagement, all families whose child/children are eligible for PPG have had contact with Pastoral Team members. Pastoral Team members are attending review meetings as appropriate Therapeutic Plans for pupils engage with all settings including school, home and the wider community Pupil progress will show that all pupils are making expected progress or more towards their EHCP outcomes and progress in their core curriculum frameworks. (Pupil Progress meetings will monitor this). A multi-agency support plan will be successfully implemented for all pupils with comprehensive needs, as evidenced by case files.
To enable pupils eligible for PPG to have support to empower them in their learning	Pupil progress will show that all pupils are making expected progress or more towards their EHCP outcomes and

and to improve their resilience, improving their learning outcomes.	progress in their core curriculum frameworks. (Pupil Progress meetings will monitor this). To offer targeted ELSA support To offer daily ELSA based social engagement groups 'Boost' for targeted pupils.
Development of teaching and learning practice	Evidence of practice enhancement through annual appraisal, learning walks, pupil progress reviews and work looks.
Pupils will be supported, as appropriate, with their emotional wellbeing, behavioural and mental health needs through accessing activities in the community. Pupils are supported in their physical development and acquire community safety skills by engaging in experiences that involve calculated risks and opportunities for learning from those experiences. Through a range of experiences, pupils learn how to effectively communicate with different members of the community, whether to complete a task or to ask for help.	Behaviour for learning will be seen across The Castle School in preparation for, and during, educational visits. Increase in number of offsite educational visits and opportunities to generalise skills in different contexts. Evidence of curricular opportunities to build towards pupils being able to transition off school site. Evidence of EHCP targets being met as a result of educational visits.

Activity in this academic year

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

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

Budgeted cost: £5315

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Animal Therapy – Range of animal led therapeutic interventions, targeted at pupils' needs. PAWS – Animal Assisted Talking Therapies Smelly Wellies – Therapeutic Animal Sanctuary These programmes are for targeted pupils whose needs for intervention are identified through their Therapeutic Plans and Team Around The Pupil.	EEF – Intervention guidance Therapeutic Thinking Approach Emotional Health Academy Educational Psychology Service	1,3,4, 5,7

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

Budgeted cost: £66019

NB: Figures expected to change – relating to salary increases to be confirmed

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continue to employ the Pastoral Manager and Family Liaison Officers to support and implement programmes for families of pupils eligible for PPG Support includes: • Parental Engagement, support with accessing community resources, liaising with other agencies, parenting advice and development of Therapeutic Plans across settings, support of familial resilience, supporting communication with school teams. • Termly parent groups co-facilitated with Respite provision • Providing connection and working collaboratively with Therapeutic Thinking Teams to plan, deliver and review person centred approach to promote prosocial behaviour, implement Therapeutic Plans and bespoke timetables.	EEF – Intervention guidance Therapeutic Thinking Approach Trauma and Attachment Informed Practice – The Mulberry Bush	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
Train two further ELSAs to provide targeted ELSA intervention to specific pupils across the school. 1:1 targeted ELSA support BOOST Group - ELSA based social skills group – daily programme for targeted pupils. Pupils are referred having been	EEF – Intervention guidance Therapeutic Thinking Approach EEF – Tiered approach supporting families	1,2,3,4,5,6

identified as in need of additional nurture and social development intervention by the class teams, the Pastoral Team assess and target the needs, planning a bespoke programme of daily support, using ELSA based approaches and nurture through Breakfast. This group is planned and delivered by Pastoral Manager and ELSA trained staff. £2000 Pupil Premium Support Fund Accessible through the Pastoral Team to access support for school related costs such as uniform, shoes, equipment and materials.		
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Budgeted Cost – £14,440

Outdoor spaces will be developed, and opportunities for adventurous outdoor activities provided for pupils We will utilise local providers such as: • Swings and smiles • Youlbury • Development of outside places • Adventure dolphin • Thames Valley adventure playground – Safe • Earth Trust • Virtue Gymnastics • Raw Mentoring • Thurtover • Calshot	Council for Learning Outside the Classroom Evidence and Research - Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (lotc.org.uk)	1,3,4,5,7,8
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Total budgeted cost: £ 85,774

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

The data below shows progress of all PPG pupils against non-PPG pupils in the school. All data shows that PPG eligible pupils are making excellent progress in all areas of Maths, English, Communication and Language and Health and Wellbeing.

The Castle School



GROUP ASSESSMENT PROFILE WHOLE SCHOOL

CASTLE SCHOOL: CORE
DATE: 08/10/2025

Pupil Premium compared with Whole Group	AVERAGE			NO GRADE 1ST DECILE 2ND DECILE 3RD DECILE 4TH DECILE 5TH DECILE 6TH DECILE 7TH DECILE 8TH DECILE 9TH DECILE 10TH DECILE	TOTAL PUPILS
	GROUP	Pupil Premium	Whole Group		
ENGLISH	36%	36%	36%	Pupil Premium 31%	70
				Whole Group 32%	
MATHEMATICS	37%	37%	37%	Pupil Premium 31%	70
				Whole Group 34%	
COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE	46%	46%	46%	Pupil Premium 30%	70
				Whole Group 31%	
HEALTH AND WELLBEING	42%	41%	42%	Pupil Premium 31%	70
				Whole Group 32%	

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
n/a	

Service pupil premium funding Not Received in this school year

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?	
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	