



Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

Hillcrest School

2024 - 2025

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
Number of pupils in school	116
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	* 51% (awaiting PP info on new starters – will be higher than this when figures released following last census)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-25
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2025
Statement authorised by	Andrea Mead – Head Teacher
Pupil premium lead	Alison Miller/Debra Thompson
Governor / Trustee lead	Joyce Reid

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FSM ➤ LAC ➤ Post LAC ➤ Service Children ➤ Recovery Premium 	£74,550 £11,960 £5,140 £680 £14,352
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£106,682

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Hillcrest is a specialist school for pupils with complex needs. All of our pupils have Education Health Care Plans and have a wide range of additional needs. This includes ASC, social emotional and mental health, attachment and trauma, communication and interaction. 7% of our population are Cared for Children (CFC). 9% have Early Help involvement and 12% Child in Need/Child Protection. As a school we have developed a number of strategies and interventions to support pupils including:-

- Zones of Regulation
- Learner centred time
- Hillcrest Minimum Expectations
- PACE
- THRIVE - individual and class profiles
- ELSA
- Regulation spaces including:
 - sensory rooms
 - outdoor gym
 - chill room
 - rebound therapy
- Speech and language and Occupational Therapy

For the majority of our pupils to access learning, they have to be able to regulate and be 'good to go'. For the *whole child* to thrive it is imperative that we address non-academic barriers before learning can begin for all of our cohort. Emotional and sensory regulation is central to the pupils' readiness to learn and engage in all of the educational and social opportunities available within school, thus giving them the greatest opportunities for success.

As we have a high percentage of Pupil Premium Pupils (*51%) and data shows that the academic gap between Pupil Premium Pupils and Non-Pupil Premium Pupils is small across both English and Maths, we have taken the decision to apply the funding as whole school strategy to benefit all. By targeting all pupils, this will, in turn be more beneficial for Pupil Premium Pupils. If the whole school community are able to self-regulate the direct result will be calmer classrooms which are more conducive to learning.

Our priority and goal is to remove barriers through a multi-disciplinary approach. Pupil Premium funding will be used over the next academic year to provide funding to continue to integrate specific SaLT and OT interventions so that additional resources can be targeted to best meet with the needs of the pupils in school. This multidisciplinary approach will utilise OT, SaLT, ELSA, THRIVE and trauma informed expertise working closely with class teams to provide goals and strategies to support groups and individuals. Direct impact of regulation and self awareness strategies to support engagement are:-

- Increased window of tolerance

- Increased self confidence and self help skills
- Social skills and opportunities
- Readiness to learn resulting in increased access to learning opportunities
- Aspirations and clear pathways for the future
- Pupils equipped with the functional skills required to be successful adults
- Increased independence and participation in reading and writing

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	All pupils have an EHCP. A high proportion of pupils have complex needs linked with mental health needs, attachment and trauma histories, Autism and speech, language and communication needs. Primary needs:- 34% SEMH 27% ASC 16% SLC
2	Our assessments demonstrate that the majority of pupils access a holistic/academic curriculum 12% holistic 56% holistic and academic 32% academic
3	THRIVE profiles and assessments highlight gaps in development for pupils where interventions are required to support readiness for learning
4	Pupils access a wide range of OT support including sensory spaces, outside gym, rebound therapy, OT based groups. Occupational Therapists work with pupils and class teams to develop support plans and strategies to support regulation.
5	Pupils who have significant attachment and trauma needs can struggle to regulate which, in turn, impacts readiness to learn. Pupils with high sensory needs require a wide range of therapeutic support (both through specific OT and SaLT trained staff and teaching staff who are upskilled by therapists)

6	Our observations and discussions demonstrate that a high proportion of pupils have communication difficulties resulting in increased dysregulation and distress
7	Assessments and observations carried out by our Speech and Language Therapist demonstrate many challenges faced by pupils with regards to their “hidden” communication and interaction needs often resulting in distress and dysregulation
8	Assessments and observations show that, due to their significant learning needs, our pupils generally have greater challenges around attention, concentration and motivation to learn
9	Through regular discussion, we have identified that our families require additional support for their children around anxiety, attachment, sleep, eating, communication and strategies to behaviour
10	A focus across school is to increase independence and functionality to support our pupils to be best prepared for adult life when they leave Hillcrest.
11	A high percentage of pupils in school have difficulties with reading and writing. These arise from a variety of underlying needs including difficulties with visual perception, motor planning & co-ordination, muscle tone & strength, working memory, phonics, developmental language disorder and dyslexia.

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
Achieve and sustain improved well-being for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils	Increased pupil engagement, self-regulation and resilience evidenced through discussion with pupils and families, observations, THRIVE profiles and OT programmes.
Increase in opportunities for pupil regulation through therapeutic engagement and self-soothing strategies	Pupil engagement increased with greater access to teaching and learning opportunities
Increase spaces for pupil regulation and interventions	Increased number of pupils able to access regulation interventions at one time resulting in reduction in distressed behaviours

Staff increased confidence and ability to support regulation that supports readiness to learn	THRIVE practitioners to support teaching staff to develop, implement and embed THRIVE curriculum for individuals and classes. Occupational therapists and Speech and Language therapist to upskill staff in identifying regulatory needs of pupils and develop strategies to support self-regulation.
Pupils can use a range of communication strategies to support understanding and to develop expressive communication skills	SaLT strategies to be disseminated to teaching staff by qualified therapist. Termly Individual Learning Plan targets with SLC focus linked with EHCP long term targets
Pupils will leave Hillcrest with the tools they need to be successful, functional adults.	Functional focus across the Key Stages giving pupils the experiences and opportunities they need to be functional adults
Pupils will have increased independence and participation in reading and writing across a range of settings. Key Stage 4/5 pupils will have increased confidence and independence when completing accreditation.	Specialist software such as Clicker Writer and DocsPlus will provide pupils with reasonable adjustments to support their reading and writing through features such as a document reader, speech feedback, spell checker, word prediction, word grids and word banks.

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.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £11,800

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Leadership Training (Watershed Moments)	Developing senior leaders in coaching and transformational change to continuously drive improvements across the school to benefit students and staff	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
P&I Training	To develop in house trainers who can deliver P&I training to all staff to ensure that a consistent approach towards de-	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

	escalation and physical intervention strategies.	
Rebound Training	To further upskill 2 members of staff in rebound therapy thus increasing the number of sessions that school are able to run which helps students who need this therapy to help them regulate and prepare for learning	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
ELSA	To further upskill a member of the student support team with ELSA techniques that can be used to support the emotional wellbeing of students.	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

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

Budgeted cost: £53,045

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Specialist SaLT provision for specific students to increase communication skills and ability to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEN need 1 – 16% • SEN need 2 – 20% • SEN need 3 – 22% • SEN need 4 – 14% <p>Input from SaLT is through individual, small group and whole class level and through clubs that students are interested in. This has demonstrated that SaLT encourages communication, peer relationships and regulation strategies.</p>	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Specialist OT provision for students to provide advice and interventions to help the student develop and learn skills that will help them during their life	<p>OT based evidence confirms the impact of OT therapeutic support for sensory and physical needs leading to greater functionality in school and beyond. OT strategies and support lead to students being more equipped and able to regulate resulting in more opportunities to learn.</p> <p>Stephen W Porges – The Polyvagal theory</p>	1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9

	<u>The polyvagal theory: neurophysiological foundations of emotions, attachment, communication, and self-regulation -</u>	
Curriculum Support – Clicker/Docs Plus/Ipads	<p>Clicker/DocsPlus is a versatile tool which can also be used in school, college, at home and in the workplace providing pupils with a functional word processor which promotes independence and participation across a range of settings. DocsPlus to be used to support pupils in exams.</p> <p>https://www.cricksoft.com/uk/clicker</p> <p>https://crickmedia2.blob.core.windows.net/files/docs/product-files/clicker-7/rvsd-teacher-use-of-cricksoft-to-support-literacy-2018-final.pdf?sfvrsn=bff-caae0_34</p>	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

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

Budgeted cost: £41,837

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Trauma Informed Counsellor	<p>Sessions with qualified practitioner allowing students to develop trusting relationships and explore emotions/experiences linked with trauma and mental health. Strategies for coping developed and rolled out to student support team for further support in times of need meaning quicker bounce back to ability to learn</p> <p>PACE website link - https://ddpnetwork.org/about-ddp/meant-pace/</p> <p>ACE study actual research - Brown, D.W., Anda, R.F., Tiemeier, H., Felitti, V.J., Croft, J.B., and Giles, W.H. (2009) Adverse Childhood Experiences and the Risk of Premature Mortality. Am J Prev Med, 389 - 396</p>	1, 6, 7, 8, 9

	<p>Impaired attachment Jaak Panksepp, Biven, L. and Siegel, D.J. (2012). <i>The archaeology of mind : neuroevolutionary origins of human emotions</i>. New York: W.W Norton, Cop.</p>	
<p>Student Support Team</p>	<p>Visiting and liaising with families regarding attendance to build relationships between home and school and encourage student to attend where previous poor attendance</p> <p>Peer mentoring to develop students within school to pair with another student acting as a positive role model. This builds relationships outside of normal school contact, build confidence or the mentor whilst demonstrating positive behaviour for the mentee.</p> <p>Regular rebound therapy sessions delivered by student support team to aid regulation, develop communication skills, increase confidence and self esteem and build trusted relationships.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions</p> <p>https://www.reboundtherapy.org/about/benefits</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</p>
<p>Jigsaw Therapy support to play</p>	<p>Structured outdoor play times to engage students and teach them the ability to play by themselves or with others</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p>
<p>Sports Coaching</p>	<p>Coaching in different sports to give students opportunities to try new things and identify what sport they are good at to reinforce positive healthy lifestyles. Aids students regulation due to the coaching that takes place to teach new skills</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/physical-activity</p>	<p>1, 4, 5, 6, 10</p>
<p>Music</p>	<p>Further development of music offering in school as it has been identified that some students have a keen interest in music which we want to foster within school. Music increases confidence, social skills, encourages independence and resilience as well as have a therapeutic impact.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 9, 10</p>

<p>Transition Administrator / Family Support</p>	<p>Builds relationships with students and families before students start at Hillcrest. Enables data to be collected in a sensitive manner so that toolboxes for students can be created and ready from day one to support learning and transition. Person acts as point of contact between feeder schools, families and Hillcrest.</p> <p>Ongoing parental engagement is key so that school and home work in partnership. Through students information sharing, family support is then able to work with the family to help them through signposting to external services. Due to the relationship building at the start of the students journey with Hillcrest this makes this sensitive process more manageable for both school and home.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/leadership-and-planning/supporting-attendance/communicate-effectively-with-families</p>	<p>1, 9</p>
--	--	-------------

Total budgeted cost: £106,682

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Pupils are accessing a wide range of strategies and support plans with the support of the Student Support Team. We have 4 THRIVE practitioners in school who work closely with class teams to develop profiles and resources for individual and class profiles. All pupils are part of a class THRIVE profile and there are 30 pupils who currently have individual profiles.

67 pupils access rebound therapy as part of their weekly plan - this has a massive impact on wellbeing and regulation. As a result, those pupils are able to access a greater amount of academic sessions.

We have increased the amount of sensory spaces available for pupils to access. This also includes space within classrooms and the use of our outside space and Forest School. As well as supporting pupils who may be dysregulated, these spaces are used to help pupils to remain regulated and are often identified as part of their toolbox of strategies.

SaLT strategies have been developed across school including BLANK level questioning profiles, makaton and visuals. Staff are becoming increasingly confident in using resources to support communication. This is supported by our Communication Strategy

A multi-disciplinary approach has ensured joined up thinking to support pupils, working together as a team utilising all skillsets.

Drawing and Talking therapy runs throughout the week and is led by members of the Student Support Team. This has allowed some pupils to discover and communicate their emotions.

Staff are more confident in using the Forest School provision which has ensured that more pupils are able to access this and benefit from this environment.

We have more capacity across school to run rebound and as a result we have an increased number of pupils able to access this to support regulation – currently 67 pupils.

External sports coaching has increased opportunities for pupils to be able to participate in sports, increasing confidence, resilience and social skills.

In house Team Teach training has ensured a consistent approach across school using the same language and strategies. The support of the trainers has ensured plans can be developed and reviewed and staff can feel more confident in the use of de-escalation strategies.

Our school library is a fantastic resource which is used daily. All classes have a library session. In addition, it is used for ELSA and careers sessions. The library space is set up in a way to support learners to access books independently and promotes a love for reading.

The aim is to have 3 x 50 min TiP sessions per week shared across the caseload. The trauma informed practitioner works with individual pupils as well as support teams in debrief and leading trauma informed training sessions. The development of an identified space for sessions is invaluable so that pupils feel safe and comfortable during sessions.

Links with parents/carers are imperative to ensure a smooth transition. This was even more necessary this past year as we had pupils coming from 17 different schools.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<i>For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year</i>
Included in the overall pupil premium funding reported above due to small amount
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
Included in the overall pupil premium funding reported above due to small amount

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.