

Bishops' Blue Coat: Pupil premium strategy statement: 2023 – 2026 (Year 3, '25 – '26)

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	1200
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	18%
Academic years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2023 - 2026
Date this statement was published	Oct 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Helen Cairns, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Dr David Kay, Assistant Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Dr Elaine Hemmings

Funding Overview

Detail	Data
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year (year ended 31 August 2025)	£172, 557.00
Pupil premium funding brought forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£172, 557.00

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of Intent

- Our determination to reduce the attainment gap and improve the life chances of our PP students is driven by our Christian ethos and values. We believe that:

- all of our young people are created in the image of God and equally loved by God
- that they are equally deserving of the **`fullness of life`** that is promised by Jesus in **John 10:10**
- that in a just and equal society, it is how hard a person works to realise their God-given potential that should shape their success in life, not the disadvantages resulting from a low socio-economic background

- In **John 10: 14**, Jesus said: ***“I am the Good Shepherd – I know my sheep and my sheep know me”***. The love of God for his children is fully inclusive and the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15) makes it clear that everyone is known and no-one is forgotten by God. This vision of a fully inclusive love drives the work we do at Bishops` to support the needs of our PP students as we strive to remove the obstacles and mitigate the specific challenges they face resulting from their social backgrounds. We are determined to:

- **Know** who our PP students are and understand the obstacles and barriers that they face so that we can remove them
- **Nurture** their personal, spiritual and academic development through a wide range of evidence-informed strategies aimed at providing the same educational opportunities and experiences as their non-PP peers
- **Inspire** them to become the very best version of themselves, growing in hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and wisdom, knowledge and skills, and ultimately achieving educational outcomes that are just as good as their non-PP peers

- The challenges faced by our PP students are complex and therefore no single strategy will lead to a closing of the gap. The strategies outlined in this plan draw heavily from the research provided by the DfE and *Education Endowment Fund* but are also tailored to reflect the specific context of our students. There is a very well-established ***‘Disadvantaged First’*** policy that permeates all aspects of life at Bishops`. At the heart of our approach is a focus on the **culture** of our school and the creation of an environment where all students, including our disadvantaged students, feel known, nurtured, involved in the life of our school, and inspired to be the very best version of themselves.

Challenges and Barriers

This details the key challenges and barriers faced by our PP students to their attainment, wellbeing, and a life *‘lived in all of its fullness’*.

Barriers	
A.	Lack of ‘cultural capital’ in terms of low educational aspirations / low sense of value and therefore participation in education / low self-esteem / lack of confidence academically and socially / a ‘fixed mind-set’ about what they can achieve / a lack of resilience and perseverance.
B.	Reading comprehension, literacy, oracy and numeracy skills that are significantly lower compared to their non-disadvantaged peers.
C.	Home learning environments that may be unsuitable for learning / lack of access and availability to educational resources (e.g. uniform, kit, equipment, books, computers, internet access) / lack of parental engagement and support compared to non-disadvantaged peers.
D.	Greater likelihood compared to non-disadvantaged peers of lacking aspiration at key transition points, ultimately resulting in a greater chance of these students not realising their potential as they move into KS4, KS5, higher education, employment or training.
E.	Low attendance rates compared to non-disadvantaged peers sometimes coupled with lack of self-discipline / self-regulation, SEMH and behavioural problems (e.g. greater likelihood to be PA, to be removed from lessons, to be internally excluded and to receive fixed term exclusions).
F.	As a result of all the above, academic progress and attainment that is well-below that of their non-disadvantaged peers (using national attainment measures incl. EM 4+, EM 5+ and average Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores).

Intended Outcomes of our PP Strategy

This summarises 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 outcomes		Success criteria
A.	Create a positive culture at Bishops' so that disadvantaged students feel a sense of belonging and positivity about school and see it as an exciting place to be. Build increased resilience, perseverance, a 'growth mind-set' and sense of educational value in our PP students and improve the participation of PP students in the life of the school to help build their cultural capital.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation of disadvantaged students in the extra-curricular life of Bishops', and involvement in trips and enrichment experiences, increases and is at least on par with that of their non-disadvantaged peers. - Involvement of disadvantaged students in leadership opportunities provided by the school significantly increases. - PP students experience public affirmation, praise and recognition of success through celebrations and rewards. - There is evidence of improved attendance of PP students that can be linked to increased participation in the life of the school.
B.	Support disadvantaged students to improve the foundational reading, literacy, oracy and numeracy skills that underpin success across the whole curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading ages of PP students improve and are brought more in line with age-related expectations as a result of testing, intervention and targeted support. - Reading ages of students who are PP / EAL (approx. 14% of our PP cohort) also improve as a result of interventions from our EAL Lead Teacher. - As a result of their improved reading and literacy skills, PP students are empowered to access the curriculum more successfully and make improved progress across a range of subjects. - Percentage of disadvantaged students achieving 5 GCSEs at 4+ and 5+ including English and Maths improves.
C.	Ensure that material disadvantage experienced at home does not impede successful engagement with educational experiences offered by Bishops' and improve levels of parental engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bishops' provides a fully inclusive environment in which all students can flourish, irrespective of their financial background, and disadvantaged students are provided with the financial support they need - for essentials such as uniform, equipment and educational visits – to alleviate financial burdens on their families and to enable them to flourish. - Home-school partnerships with parents of socially disadvantaged students are strengthened through strong communication channels and regular opportunities are provided to support parents in their engagement with their children's education, including understanding the importance of good attendance.

D.	Ensure that low attitudinal cultural capital does not negatively impact on students at key transition points and that final destinations are successful (with NEET status avoided).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantaged students are supported to be successful at key transition points (Year 6 – 7; Year 9 Options; GCSE – post-16) through wrap-around care, guidance and encouragement. - Disadvantaged students make a positive start to their lives at Bishops' and maintain this throughout KS3, engaging with the life of the school as much as their non-disadvantaged peers and - Disadvantaged students are supported to engage positively with the Options process in Year 9, making ambitious and considered choices for their GCSEs. In response to guidance that is sharp-elbowed and ambitious, the % of PP students at Bishops' who are eligible for the E-Bacc increases. - Throughout KS4, PP students receive the additional CEIAG that they require to transition successfully into ambitious post-16 destinations and the rates of students with NEET status are extremely low.
E.	Improve the attendance and behaviour of our PP students so that it is more in line with their non-disadvantaged peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The attendance of disadvantaged students is closely monitored and pro-active interventions are put in place to reduce the high % of PA amongst our disadvantaged cohort - and particularly, our PP / SEND cohort (approx. 37% of our PP cohort are also SEND) - improving their average attendance towards 90%+. - PP students are incentivised, rewarded and celebrated for improving their attendance. Additional opportunities for disadvantaged students are provided in school to make school more attractive and a `virtuous circle` culture is created. - The behavioural record of PP students is increasingly comparable to their non-disadvantaged peers in terms of average BESt points, consequences, seclusions and fixed-term exclusions (again, with a focus on students who are both PP and SEND). Improved and responsive teaching and learning in the classroom for PP students, the application of reasonable adjustments by teachers, and an increased culture of praise and reward, results in disadvantaged students feeling more motivated and engaged with their learning.
F.	Significantly reduce the disadvantaged vs non-disadvantaged gaps in attainment between school and national expected progress measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a result of High-Quality Teaching, targeted in-class support, close monitoring of their academic performance and effective, timely and personalised interventions, our disadvantaged students increasingly achieve in line with their more socially advantaged peers. - Monitoring and intervention systems are refined and improved at a whole-school level engaging senior leaders, pastoral leaders and middle leaders with a wide data set to help track student progress and implement timely, appropriate and impactful interventions. - As a result of the above, throughout KS3, the performance of disadvantaged students is comparable to that of their non-disadvantaged peers. - As a result of the above, at KS4, the progress and attainment gap between our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students increasingly narrows and the % of students achieving 5+ GCSEs

		<p>at Grade 4 and 5 and above, including English and Maths, is increasingly comparable to school and national expected progress measures.</p> <p>- PP students achieve an increasingly positive Attainment 8 and Progress 8 score compared to their non-PP peers.</p>
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Activity in this academic year, 2025 - 2026

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

A) Attitudes and Participation

Budgeted Cost = £25, 700

Activity	Rationale and Evidence that supports this approach <i>(EEF Menu of Approaches: Wider Strategies)</i>	Challenges / Barriers Addressed
1. Scholars Programme / Brilliant Club (Year 9)	Supporting programmes and interventions for eligible high-attainers is encouraged within <i>The Education Endowment Foundation Guide to the Pupil Premium</i> as a way of supporting the life chances of socio-economically disadvantaged students. The Brilliant Club is an evidence-based aspiration-raising programme aimed at encouraging higher-ability students from low-income backgrounds into university. We will involve our middle-ability and higher-ability Year 9 and 10 PP students in this programme to promote aspiration and engagement with school life.	A, D, F
2. Music tuition and support for representative cohort of PP pupils	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that extra-curricular activities relating to arts participation increases engagement in school life and learning. We aim to further increase the participation of our PP pupils in music tuition, increasing their take-up with learning an instrument and using the pupil premium to support tuition costs.	A, C, F

3. Enrichment in Form time for all PP pupils (Sports coaching from CEPD and other resources)	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that extra-curricular activities, including that relating to arts participation and physical activity, increases engagement in school life and learning. We aim to increase the participation of our all our PP students in the extra-curricular life of our school by using fortnightly Form Time sessions as an 'enrichment' option, utilising external sports coaches for a significant part of this programme.	A, C, E, F
4. Equipment for disadvantaged students participating in Duke of Edinburgh	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that extra-curricular activities, including that relating to physical activity, increases engagement in school life and learning. We aim to ensure that our disadvantaged students are supported and encouraged to engage with our Duke of Edinburgh Programme and that financial cost is not a barrier to this (e.g. in terms of kit and registration fees).	A, C, E, F
5. Admin support to support all activities aimed at improving participation of disadvantaged students in the wider life of the school	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that participation in the wider life of the school increases engagement in school life and learning. We aim to increase the participation of our all our PP students in the extra-curricular life of our school, using admin support to help track, monitor and implement this strategy.	A, C, E, F
6. Support for PP student participation in cultural capital trips	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that extra-curricular activities, specifically those relating to arts and culture, help to compensate for the socio-economic disadvantage of not being raised in 'knowledge-rich' environments. We aim to ensure that all of our disadvantaged students are provided with a rich set of cultural capital opportunities and that financial cost is not a barrier to their access to these.	A, B, C, E, F
7. Pro-active approach to student engagement with extra-curricular and leadership opportunities	Based on the aforementioned research from the EEF, we will take a pro-active approach towards the involvement of our disadvantaged students in the wider life of our school, closely monitoring their involvement in all aspects of school life and ensuring that they are well-represented across the school in extra-curricular involvement and student leadership opportunities.	A, B, C, E, F

8. Kintsugi Hope resilience and aspiration programme – disadvantaged first approach	<i>The Education Endowment Foundation Guide to the Pupil Premium</i> , and its supporting guidance such as the <i>Improving Behaviour in Schools</i> report, indicate that programmes to build social and emotional skills in disadvantaged students support more effective learning and can ultimately lead to more positive educational outcomes. At Bishops', we partner with Chester Schools Christian Work to offer Kintsugi Hope, a resilience and aspiration programme to support improved social and emotional skills in our students. We will take a 'disadvantaged first' approach to this, ensuring that students in receipt of the Pupil Premium are central to the rolling out of this programme. All Year 7 students will receive the programme along with a focus on PP students in Years 8 – 13.	A, D, E, F
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B) Reading, Literacy, Oracy and Numeracy

Budgeted Cost = £1, 000

Activity	Rationale and Evidence that supports this approach <i>(EEF Menu of Approaches: Targeted Academic Support)</i>	Challenges / Barriers Addressed
9. Diagnostic reading testing and intervention (one-to-one and small group) (Year 7 – 11), alongside adaptive teaching and reading as a whole-school priority	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that intensive, targeted, well-monitored academic support for under-performing disadvantaged students - including both one-to-one support and support in small group settings - can boost their language development, literacy and numeracy. We aim to improve these skills and competencies in our disadvantaged students by implementing a range of programmes and resources across Years 7 – 11, alongside an emphasis across the school on supporting weaker readers in lessons. Within this strategy, there will also be a focus on Year 7 PP students who have reading ages that are lower than their non-PP peers at the point of entry into Bishops'.	B, A, C, F
10. Reading books for all PP students in KS3 (Year 7)		B, A, C, F
11. Reading buddies and Sum Buddies (Year 7 & 8)		B, A, C, F

12. Reading for LIFE during Form Time (Year 7 – 11)		B, A, C, F
13. Numeracy Ninjas (Year 7 - 9)		B, A, C, F
14. Public Speaking Course (Year 9) (provided by <i>Speak and Win</i>)		B, A, C, F

C) Home Background and Parental Engagement

Budgeted Cost = £15, 000

Activity	Rationale and Evidence that supports this approach (<i>EEF Menu of Approaches: Wider Strategies</i>)	Challenge Numbers Addressed
15. Learning equipment and school uniform for all PP students	DFE and EEF research materials all indicate how material disadvantage experienced by low-income families is a barrier to students succeeding in school unless support is provided. We aim to ensure that financial cost is not a barrier to our students' ability to access the physical and educational resources they need (e.g. uniform, equipment, sports kit, books, revision guides, computers and internet access) to succeed in and out of school.	C, D, E, F
16. Revision guides for all GCSE subjects for all PP students in Year 10		
17. Admin support to support all activities aimed at supporting students materially and improving parental engagement	The parental engagement strand of the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> and the guidance report <i>Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning</i> indicate how effective communication with parents and increased levels of parental engagement consistently support improved academic outcomes. We aim to implement creative approaches towards improving parental engagement and adequately resource this with the admin support, teacher support and physical resources that it needs.	C, D, E, F
18. Masterclasses to support PP parental engagement with, support for and understanding of core subject GCSE programmes		
19. Breakfast Club	The <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> provides evidence that the provision of free breakfast to disadvantaged students can benefit them by preparing them for learning and supporting	C, E

	improved wellbeing, behaviour and attendance. We aim to support our disadvantaged students by making breakfast freely available to them every morning.	
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D) Transition and Post-16

Budgeted Cost = £12, 000

Activity	Rationale and Evidence that supports this approach <i>(EEF Menu of Approaches: Wider Strategies)</i>	Challenge Numbers Addressed
20. Transition Residential Outdoor Activities Trip (Menai / Conway Centre).	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that residential trips led by well-qualified and well-trained staff can impact positively upon learning and motivation. We aim to ensure that an enriching and well-resourced residential trip for our new intake, including a focus on our disadvantaged cohort, effectively nurtures and supports their successful transition to Bishops'.	A, D, E
21. Student Mentoring Group	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that extra-curricular and mentoring activities can improve engagement with school, learning and attendance, thereby helping to compensate for a lack of cultural capital resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. We aim to develop our student mentoring programme so that Year 9 student leaders are empowered to support Year 7 disadvantaged students in their transition, participation, aspiration and attendance. This team of mentors will be led by 6 th Form students working closely with the Pastoral Team.	A, D, E
22. Disadvantaged First strategy within our programme of Careers Education, Information and Guidance, Work Experience and support for students for successful post-16 transition	The <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> provides evidence relating to how schools should support students in their social, emotional and behavioural development to encourage positive outcomes later in life. We aim to provide the additional, targeted CEIAG support that our disadvantaged students need at key transition points to enable and empower them to make well-informed decisions about their future destinations and secure appropriate pathways towards them (e.g. Year 9 Options; one-to-one careers interviews; support in securing quality work experience placements; support with securing post-16 college placements, employment, apprenticeships etc).	A, C, D, E, F

E) Attendance and Behaviour

Budgeted Cost = £86, 000

Activity	Rationale and Evidence that supports this approach <i>(EEF Menu of Approaches: Wider Strategies)</i>	Challenge Numbers Addressed
23. Disadvantaged Students' Attendance Strategy	All of the evidence and research indicates that poor attendance at school is strongly linked to poor academic progress and attainment at all key stages. At Bishops', poor attendance and persistent absence (PA) status is highest amongst our disadvantaged cohort, and particularly amongst those students who also have SEND needs. We therefore aim to address this with a discreet disadvantaged-first strategy that utilises approaches and interventions outlined in research documents such as the DFE's guidance <i>Working Together to Improve School Attendance</i> . Key aspects of this strategy are summarised below.	A, E, F
24. Attendance Officer	The DFE's guidance <i>Working Together to Improve School Attendance</i> makes it clear that strategies aimed at improving attendance work best when there is a discreet and well-resourced focus on students from disadvantaged backgrounds. We aim to achieve improved attendance by our low-income students by ensuring that our dedicated Attendance Officer implements a disadvantaged-first approach, working closely and directly with our hardest to reach disadvantaged families.	A, E, F
25. Wider Pastoral Team Support with a disadvantaged first approach	Our wider Pastoral team, which includes designated year-group Pastoral Support Officers (PSOs), will also work closely together and alongside our Attendance Officer to ensure that a disadvantaged-first approach is taken to increasing positive levels of attendance at school, continuity of safeguarding and improved emotional and behavioural regulation.	A, E, F
26. Transport Subsidy for parents experiencing financial hardship	DFE and EEF research materials all indicate how material disadvantage experienced by low-income families is a barrier to students succeeding in school unless support is provided. In the current economic climate, we aim to ensure that any family of students at Bishops' who	A, E, F

	are experiencing acute financial hardship are supported with the cost of transporting their children to and from school.	
27. Rewards and Incentivisation	The DFE's guidance <i>Working Together to Improve School Attendance</i> makes it clear that strategies aimed at improving attendance work best when there is a discreet and well-resourced focus on students from disadvantaged backgrounds. One strategy that was utilised very effectively last year by our dedicated Attendance Officer was a targeted approach towards rewards and incentives for good and improving attendance. We intend to continue and develop this strategy this year.	

F) Learning Intervention and Support

Budgeted Cost = £24, 500

Activity	Rationale and Evidence that supports this approach <i>(EEF Menu of Approaches: Targeted Academic Support)</i>	Challenge Numbers Addressed
28. KICK Coaching and Extra-Curricular focusing on PP boys	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that one-to-one coaching and mentoring can support improved outcomes for disadvantaged students. At Bishops', a high percentage of our PP students are boys (61% boys compared to 39% girls). These students are amongst are biggest under-performers as well as being students who often display challenging behaviours and high SEMH needs. Building on the success of the programme in the last two years, we intend to extend our use of the external coaching agency KICK this year in providing one-to-one coaching for a wider range of our disadvantaged students across all key stages – but with a focus on boys - to provide the support, guidance and encouragement these students need to improve their attendance and academic performance.	A, B, C, D, E, F
29. Easter School	Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> indicates that intensive, targeted, well-monitored small group tuition and intervention for under-performing disadvantaged students can have a positive impact on their outcomes. We aim to improve the outcomes of	A, B, C, F

30. School-led tutoring across all subject areas, but with a focus on English, Maths and Science (Morning tuition, Peer-led tuition, RISE)	our disadvantaged students by implementing school-led tuition programmes and interventions that target gaps in performance. Key to this process will be our newly created Academic Intervention meetings which will involve our Core Subject Leads engaging with data student together to identify groups of underperforming students, including disadvantaged students, and implementing interventions across their departments.	A, B, C, F
31. Academic Intervention (driven by Core Subject Leads)	Research from the EEF, summarised in guidance documents such as <i>Using Digital Technology to Improve Learning</i> , indicates how technology can be used to support high quality teaching and learning for disadvantaged students. We aim to promote the use of GCSE pod by disadvantaged students as a tool to support their academic progress and preparation for GCSE exams.	A, B, C, F

G) High-Quality Teaching and Learning and Staff Training

Budgeted Cost = £10, 000

Activity	Rationale and Evidence that supports this approach (<i>EEF Menu of Approaches: High Quality Teaching</i>)	Challenge Numbers Addressed
32. A whole-school CPD and QA focus on effective teaching and learning for disadvantaged students, including the use of knowledge organisers to help students remember more.	- Evidence from the <i>EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit</i> and <i>The Key</i> indicates that high quality teaching and learning is the most powerful way for schools to improve pupil attainment, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged students. We will draw upon the EEF toolkit and its evidence on high-impact teaching and learning approaches to support our teachers in building up their knowledge and pedagogical expertise so that they are	A, B, F

<p>33. Every teacher improves their data-literacy, closely monitoring the performance of every disadvantaged student in their classroom and applying timely 'first wave' in-class interventions.</p>	<p>better able to respond to the needs of our disadvantaged students, supporting their progress through highly effective teaching, learning, assessment and feedback processes.</p> <p>- In designing our T&L strategy and CPD programme, we will highlight ways that our T&L strategies can have a disproportionately positive impact on disadvantaged learners. We will also ensure that we support staff to understand the notion of 'disadvantaged' in its widest sense so that they can appreciate how socio-economic disadvantage intersects with other areas of disadvantage – such as SEND, EAL, LAC and PLAC – and respond appropriately.</p>	<p>A, B, F</p>
<p>34. The LIFE Programme supports positive values and attitudes including resilience, growth mind-set and leadership through Form Time PD, L4L and PD Days.</p>	<p>Research and evidence into schools that successfully narrow the gap and significantly improve the outcomes of disadvantaged students (such as the 2014 report <i>Cracking the Code: How Schools Can Improve Social Mobility</i>) indicates that the key to success is the relentless creation of a high expectation, inclusive school culture that is focused not only on the quality of teaching but also on the importance of preparing students for all aspects of life - not just exams. Supporting students in their social and emotional development; nurturing the growth of key character traits that underpin effective learning (resilience, growth mind-set, 'grit', optimism etc); providing high quality and aspirational careers information, education and guidance; treating extra-curricular activities as integral to the school experience; providing a wide range of opportunities to build students' social and cultural capital; celebrating and promoting the value of such activities in developing the wider skills and competencies of students 'beyond exams'; all are hallmarks of schools that successfully 'crack the code' and buck the trend of socio-economic disadvantage determining academic success and life chances. In light of this, we view our personal development programme – known at Bishops' as the LIFE Programme – as a key strand of our disadvantaged first strategy. This programme is designed to prepare all of our students for 'life in all of its fullness' but will have particular benefits for our disadvantaged students.</p>	<p>A, B, D, E, F</p>

35. Our Disadvantaged First strategy permeates school life, informing all development planning and practice from SLT, Pastoral and day-to-day teaching and learning.	Reports such as <i>Cracking the Code: How Schools Can Improve Social Mobility</i> (2014) indicate that schools which successfully narrow the attainment gap are those which ensure that a disadvantaged-first approach is cultural, permeating all aspects of school life. We will ensure that at Bishops' it is understood that improving the involvement of disadvantaged students in the life of the school, raising aspiration for all and closing the learning gap is the responsibility of everyone . Our Disadvantaged First focus will reach into all areas of school life, becoming routine and hard-wired into our culture. We are committed to achieving this because it resonates with our moral purpose as a Christian school in which all students are known, nurtured and inspired to achieve and realise their God-given potential.	A, B, D, E, F
36. The moral purpose of Bishops' with our focus on known, nurtured and inspired and our ethos of the Good Shepherd, wherein no one is left behind, infuses the work of every member of staff and supports our work to create a just and inclusive school community in which gaps arising from disadvantage are progressively reduced.		

Total Budgeted Cost: Planned expenditure for 2023 – 2026 (Year 3, 2025 – 2026)

Type of Activity	Budgeted Cost
A) Attitudes and Participation	£25, 700
B) Reading, Literacy, Oracy and Numeracy	£1, 000

C) Home Background and Parental Engagement	£15, 000
D) Transition and Post-16 Support	£12, 000
E) Attendance and Behaviour	£86, 000
F) Learning Intervention and Support	£24, 500
G) High Quality Teaching and Learning and Staff Training	£10, 000
	£174, 200.00

Bishops' Blue Coat: Pupil Premium Report (Year 2 of strategy, '24 – '25)

Part B: Review of outcomes: 2024 - 2025

Introduction

- This report details the impact that our pupil premium spending and activity had on pupils in the 2024 - 25 academic year. Last year was the second year of our three-year pupil premium strategy plan and so the comments below will reflect the progress we are making towards achieving those intended outcomes.

- This report focuses on the impact of our use of the pupil premium for those students who:

- were eligible for free school meals
- were recorded as eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years (Ever 6 FSM)

- The challenges and barriers faced by our students from lower income backgrounds, as identified in our strategy, are briefly summarised below:

Challenges and Barriers	
• A: Attitudes and Participation	Lack of `cultural capital` in terms of low educational aspirations / low sense of value and therefore participation in education / low self-esteem / lack of confidence academically and socially / a `fixed mind-set` about what they can achieve / a lack of resilience and perseverance.
• B: Reading, Literacy, Oracy and Numeracy	Reading comprehension, literacy, oracy and numeracy skills that are significantly lower compared to their non-disadvantaged peers.
• C: Home Background and Parental Engagement	Home learning environments that may be unsuitable for learning / lack of access and availability to educational resources (e.g. uniform, kit, equipment, books, computers, internet access) / lack of parental engagement and support compared to non-disadvantaged peers.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D: Transition and Post-16 	Greater likelihood compared to non-disadvantaged peers of lacking aspiration at key transition points, ultimately resulting in a greater chance of these students not realising their potential as they move into KS4, KS5, higher education, employment or training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E: Attendance and Behaviour 	Low attendance rates compared to non-disadvantaged peers sometimes coupled with lack of self-discipline / self-regulation, SEMH and behavioural problems (e.g. greater likelihood to be PA, to be removed from lessons, to be internally excluded and to receive fixed term exclusions).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F: Gaps in Academic Progress 	As a result of all the above, academic progress and attainment that is well-below that of their non-disadvantaged peers (using national attainment measures incl. EM 4+, EM 5+ and average Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores).

A note about other premiums

- In addition to students who received a premium that is related to their background of low income, we also have students who are in receipt of premiums related to other factors. The attainment, wellbeing and support provided for these students was very much part of our PP strategy last year which was also designed to address the challenges and barriers these students face.

LAC and Post-LAC Premiums

Looked After Children receive a premium that is paid directly to the local authority, and the school receives a premium for post-LAC students (the adopted premium or PP+) which is used in bespoke ways to support the individual circumstances of the children and families who receive it. Our PP strategy was designed to help mitigate the range of challenges and barriers that our LAC and Post-LAC students experience due to the difficulties of their early life experiences and the impact of the strategy on these students is referred to in this report.

Service Premium

Students last year with parents serving in the armed forces received the Service Pupil Premium which is designed to help schools provide the mainly pastoral support these students need during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact of family mobility or parental deployment. Whilst

many elements of our PP strategy will have benefited these students, Strand E (which focuses on our systems of pastoral support) was particularly important in addressing the specific needs of this cohort.

Challenge A: Attitudes and Participation

- The intention of this part of the strategy is to build increased resilience, perseverance, a 'growth mind-set' and sense of educational value in our PP students and improve their participation in the life of the school to help build cultural capital. Success measures for this would include their increased involvement in trips, enrichment experiences and student leadership opportunities along with an attendant shift in values, attitudes and dispositions as they identify with our school vision and values.

- A student voice survey undertaken midway during the year clearly indicates that our PP strategy, with its holistic and cultural focus on promoting improved attitudes, participation and a sense of belonging at Bishops', is having a strongly positive impact on our economically disadvantaged students. Compared to their non-PP peers, a higher % of PP students agreed with the following areas: they have opportunities to share their views with school leaders and influence the way school does things (86%); they enjoy taking part in trips (85%); they enjoy Form Time Enrichment (92%); they have opportunities at Bishops' to develop leadership skills (53%); Form Time and Assemblies help them understand British values and grow in character (71%); and Lessons for Life and PD Days equip them with the knowledge to keep safe and healthy and be prepared for the world of work (79%). Data such as this gives us confidence that placing culture at the heart of our strategy, and the creation of a school environment in which our PP students can thrive and feel a sense of belonging, is the right approach.

- The participation and involvement of our PP students in the wider life of the school at Bishops' is closely monitored across the year using our Student Participation Tracker. This once again presented a very healthy picture of improving engagement and participation across the year with the levels of involvement of our PP students and their non-PP peers being broadly in line with each other. By the close of the school year, 100% of our PP students had experienced at least one in-school cultural capital experience (e.g. a visiting speaker, theatrical, dance or musical performance etc.) with most enjoying multiple such experiences. 48% of our PP students had participated in extra-curricular clubs (compared to 44% of all students and up from 41% PP

engagement in 2023 - 24). Importantly, the increase we saw in extra-curricular engagement amongst PP students resulted largely from introducing activities targeted mainly at boys, such as our highly successful darts clubs and competitions in Years 11 and 7 which really engaged our PP boys in particular (of the 4 semi-finalists in Year 11, for instance, 3 were PP). Form-Time Enrichment was further embedded as a strength of our daily routines and ensured that every PP student participated in a fortnightly enrichment experience across the year. Our use of PP funding to support disadvantaged families with the cost of trips ensured that there was a continued high level of engagement with these amongst our PP students with 92% of PP students taking part in at least one school trip (compared to 91% of all students and up from 84% PP participation in 2023 - 24). Our Disadvantaged First approach to marketing and promoting student leadership across the school also ensured that our student leadership teams had a healthy representation of PP students, with 41% of our PP students taking part in Student Leadership opportunities at Bishops' (compared to 42% of all students and up from 38% PP representation in 2023 - 24).

- This was another very successful year for the *Duke of Edinburgh Award* programme at Bishops' and the disadvantaged-first approach that we implemented with promotion, marketing and assessment of student applications again ensured a positive representation of PP students within the cohort. Of the 40 students in Year 11 who received their Bronze DofE Award in December 2024, 15% were PP and a similar % of PP students will receive their awards in December 2025. A slightly higher % of Year 10 PP students have enrolled onto the Bronze Award for 2025 – 2026. These students have all received funding support both with fees and equipment to ensure a successful experience and high levels of retention. Moving forwards, changes in the way that we organise the DofE will enable many of these students to continue beyond the Bronze Award whilst at Bishops'.

- In a similar vein, our Drama and Music Departments worked extremely hard last year to maintain a positive representation of our PP students in the arts at Bishops'. Proactive marketing of music tuition to our PP students and their parents, along with the provision of a 50% discount on fees and additional bursaries made possible from a successful Blue Coat Trust funding bid, resulted in an increasingly healthy number of PP students receiving music lessons from either *Music for Life* or our peripatetic team. 22% of all students receiving music tuition last year were PP students (up from 16% in 2023 – 24). On a wider level of music involvement, approximately 20% of students who performed with VOX at the Cathedral Carol service and the Easter Tea Party (for residents of Grosvenor Manor) were also PP students. Additionally, the very strong representation of PP students in high-profile Drama productions such as National Connections and our immensely successful school production of *Bugsy* indicates that the arts at Bishops' continue to add great value to the lives of our disadvantaged students, enabling them to grow in confidence and resilience, enjoy success as part of a team, and develop personal qualities and skills that support flourishing and life in all its fullness, both now and for the future.

- To build aspiration amongst our higher ability Year 9 PP students, and to support their aspiration and ambition as they move towards their GCSE years, we once again ran a hugely successful *Brilliant Club* experience in partnership with the national Scholars Programme. This year, 20 students engaged with the programme with 65% of these being PP students (30% of these having no parental history of higher education). These students worked closely with a PhD student from Liverpool on an extended project with a criminology theme. The programme emulates a university learning environment; tutorial groups are kept small and there is a focus on university-style pedagogy including independent research, critical thinking and higher-order questioning. There was a 94% attendance rate at the programme and over 70% of our participating PP students achieved either a 1st (3 students) or a 2:1 (5 students). One of our PP students was even commended at a national level by our tutor for producing a first-class project of exceptional quality. After producing their independent project, all participating students eventually graduated from the programme at an event held at Manchester University, an event that they all thoroughly enjoyed.

- A highly successful part of our strategy to engage **all** students in the wider life of our school last year was our Form Time Enrichment Programme. The purpose of this programme is to ensure an extra-curricular experience of school life for all, including those students who are either unwilling or unable to attend our lunchtime or after-school clubs. The creation of this programme very much has a 'disadvantaged-first' focus because it aims to ensure that obstacles related to socio-economic background do not prevent our students from participating in the wider life of our school. As a result of this programme, we know that every student in Year 7 – 11 last year, including our PP students, had a regular fortnightly diet of enrichment experiences that included such activities as sport (using external coaches from CEPD), art, dance, board games, scalextric and a film club. Student evaluations of the LIFE Programme consistently indicate that Form Time Enrichment is an extremely popular dimension of our school life. Students really value Enrichment, appreciate the opportunity to choose their options, and enjoy spending time with their peers engaging in fun and enriching activities. These evaluations also indicate that our PP students value Form Time enrichment even more than their non-disadvantaged peers, which is exactly what we would hope for.

- Finally, to nurture and support the qualities of resilience, hope and aspiration in our PP students, we ran bespoke character-building programmes across the year. Our *Kintsugi Hope* programme - which is planned and delivered by our partner organisation CSCW - involved all our Year 7 tutor groups in day-long courses that aimed to instil aspiration and the practical skills they need to become increasingly resilient. Evaluation of this programme indicated that our students found the course very helpful and useful (91% said that the course provided helpful strategies for coping with anxiety; 89% said it helped them develop an attitude of hope and positivity about what they can achieve; and 79% said they would recommend Kintsugi Hope to others). In addition, our Chaplain offered courses within her Chaplaincy which provided an additional layer of pastoral support for selected groups of students in our school. These courses supported many of our vulnerable students – which included PP, LAC and SEND students - at key points in the year when they were feeling

vulnerable or were struggling to engage positively with school life. They provided nurture, care and the support these students needed to make more positive choices.

Challenge B: Reading, Literacy, Oracy and Numeracy

- The intention of this part of the strategy is to support our PP students in developing the foundational reading, literacy, oracy and numeracy skills that underpin success across the curriculum. Success measures for this would include an improvement in the reading ages of targeted PP students, improvements in numeracy skills and ultimately an increase in achievement with final examinations that have become more accessible due to improved literacy.

- Reading interventions continued to deliver significant impact for disadvantaged students last year, with marked improvements in progress outcomes compared to the previous academic year. In 2023–24, 25% of students identified through Lexonik assessments were PP, and while most made some progress, 36% of those significantly behind (red group) remained in that category, and only 32% reached their chronological reading age. This year, the reach and effectiveness of interventions significantly improved. Across Lexonik Leap cohorts in Year 7, 93–100% of students were PP/SEN/EAL, with 100% making progress across ten key literacy areas with average scores rising from 164 to 208 out of 232. NGRT data further confirmed progress, with individual gains ranging from +15 to +70 points. In Year 8, 87% of students receiving Lexonik Advance and comprehension support were PP/SEN, with all students making progress on NGRT tests, showing gains of between 8 months and 2 years 8 months (average: 1 year 7 months). End-of-year data also indicates sustained improvement: in Year 7, 9 out of 15 students (including 11 PP/Disadvantaged) showed an average reading age gain of 15 months; in Year 8, all 10 students (9 PP/Disadvantaged) improved by an average of 26 months. Compared to last year, not only has the proportion of PP students receiving high-quality reading intervention increased, but the outcomes have also been more consistently measurable and impactful. In 2024–25, no PP students remained static in progress categories, and the previous gap between PP and non-PP outcomes (e.g. 8–11% fewer PP students exiting the red group) has been addressed through earlier intervention, structured programme delivery, and sustained support. Reading continues to be a key driver in our PP strategy, embedded across the curriculum, with NGRT data and Lexonik assessments used systematically to inform both whole-class adaptive teaching and targeted intervention.

- Other targeted strategies to support the reading, literacy, and numeracy development of our disadvantaged students also had demonstrable impact this year. Our Reading Buddies programme ran from Autumn Term 2, involving 12 Year 7 students, 75% of whom were both SEN and PP. Students were paired with dedicated Year 12 volunteers for regular one-to-one reading sessions. Attendance remained consistently high throughout the year, and strong, positive relationships were formed. The impact has been clear: 100% of students increased their reading age as shown in NGRT re-testing, with gains ranging from 5 months to 2 years and 6 months. The average progress made was 15 months, reflecting increased reading confidence, engagement, and fluency. All 12 students successfully completed the programme, including 8 PP/disadvantaged students. Alongside this, the Reading 4 LIFE programme continues to be an embedded weekly element of the Form Time curriculum. Each Monday, students across all year groups engage in guided reading, with Form tutors modelling fluent reading using high-quality, age-appropriate texts. A recent Form Time Quality Assurance review (Spring 2025) confirmed that this is now a well-established routine across forms, contributing to the development of reading fluency and comprehension for all PP students.

- This year, our Numeracy Ninjas Form Time strategy has continued to deliver strong outcomes for our disadvantaged students, while becoming further embedded across Key Stage 3. Year 7 students achieved an average improvement of 34% in their Numeracy Ninja scores over the course of the year, with PP students improving by 32%, compared to 29% for non-PP students—showing a positive gap of +3% in favour of PP students. Year 8 students, who were introduced to the programme this year following its successful launch in Year 7 last year, also made substantial progress. The year group as a whole improved by 31%, with PP students improving by 38% compared to 29% for non-PP students—an even greater positive gap of +9%. In both Year 7 and Year 8, students with SEND needs made the most significant gains, demonstrating the programme’s effectiveness for our most vulnerable learners. The impact of Sum Buddies, our targeted numeracy intervention led by Sixth Form mentors, also contributed to these improvements, particularly for those identified as needing additional support based on their weekly scores. Student voice remains very positive, with participants reporting increased confidence and enjoyment in maths. Given the success of the programme across both year groups, and with the recent release of the Numeracy Ninjas Silver programme, we plan to extend the initiative into Year 9 next year. This will ensure that all of KS3 continues to benefit from structured, consistent numeracy intervention as part of the wider Pupil Premium strategy to close attainment gaps.

- We also continued to embed oracy development into our Pupil Premium strategy through the Speak and Win programme, which once again proved highly successful. As part of our Personal Development Day in July, all Year 9 students participated in public speaking and employability workshops delivered by the Speak and Win team. These sessions focused on tackling glossophobia and building confidence in speaking in front of others—key skills

for both academic success and future employment. Student voice and staff feedback were overwhelmingly positive, with many students highlighting how the strategies helped them feel more confident and better prepared for the transition to their Year 10 GCSE courses.

Challenge C: Home Background and Parental Engagement

- The intention of this part of the strategy was to ensure that material disadvantage experienced at home did not impede successful engagement with educational experiences offered at Bishops` and to improve levels of parental engagement. Success measures for this would include high levels of PP involvement in the life of our school, whereby disadvantaged students would have the same level of access to uniform, equipment and educational visits and experiences as their non-disadvantaged peers. Strengthened home-school partnerships, effective communications and positive engagement by parents with their children's education, would also be a measure of success.

- This year, we continued to provide targeted practical support to ensure that students experiencing material disadvantage had full access to learning and enrichment opportunities. All Year 7 PP students received school uniform vouchers and essential equipment upon entry to the school, helping to remove barriers from the outset. Revision guides were provided to all Year 10 PP students for every GCSE subject to support a strong start to their Key Stage 4 studies. In addition, financial support was offered to PP students for a range of educational trips, ensuring wider participation in enrichment activities. Equipment and resources were also supplied on an 'individual needs' basis throughout the year, based on staff referrals and ongoing student support reviews.

- To improve parental engagement, we continued to utilise our admin team to support communications around our various strategies and to increase attendance at Parents' Evenings. This included a proactive early intervention system in which the parents of PP students were contacted in advance and invited to sign up for appointments. This approach was particularly effective for Year 11, where the attendance gap for PP parents was reduced to just -1%, compared to a previous gap of -22%. Similar strategies were employed across all year groups, and while gaps remain in the lower year groups, the continued use of our admin team to directly contact and encourage PP families undoubtedly mitigated wider disparities. This remains a key strategy moving forward, as we aim to further reduce the engagement gap across all year groups.

- To continue addressing disadvantages related to low income and home background, we maintained the provision of a daily free breakfast for our disadvantaged students, supporting their readiness for learning as well as their wellbeing, behaviour, and attendance. Promotion of the Breakfast Club

remained a key focus, with communication through letters to parents, articles in the Headteacher's Newsletter, and messages to students via our online homework-setting tool Satchel. As a result, usage of the Breakfast Club again increased compared to last year, with 50% of disadvantaged students accessing the service and approximately 35% of these attending regularly—a rise of around 15% in regular attendance. Additionally, around 20% of the available budget for this provision was spent, up from 12% last year, indicating that promotion and engagement efforts continue to have a positive effect. It is encouraging to see more of our disadvantaged students benefiting from this facility, helping to improve their wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Challenge D: Transition and Post-16

- The intention of this part of the strategy was to ensure that low attitudinal cultural capital did not negatively impact on our students at key transition points and that their final destinations at post-16 were successful (with NEET status avoided). Success measures for this would include the successful transition of our PP students at key transition points (Year 6 – 7, Year 9 Options, GCSE – Post-16) through wrap-around care, guidance and encouragement, the making of ambitious and considered choices for GCSE and post-16 study and rates of NEETs that are extremely low.

- To nurture and support the successful transition of our incoming Year 7 cohort to Bishops', we again ran a highly successful and well-resourced *Summer Camp*. Our disadvantaged-first approach towards this event ensured a high percentage of our Year 7 PP cohort participated, and this enabled our Year 7 Pastoral leads to identify key students who might need extra support from September. To further support these students, we implemented a student mentoring programme whereby older students were trained up as mentors to go in and support Year 7 tutor groups, especially during the first term. Some of our most vulnerable disadvantaged students were also enrolled into *Enrichment Club*, a weekly club led by the external agency *Passion for Learning* to support transition, build cultural capital, and increase aspiration and attendance.

- Our careers education, information and guidance programme (CEIAG) provided ongoing targeted guidance and support for our disadvantaged students, particularly at key transition points, to enable and empower them to make well-informed decisions about their future destinations and secure appropriate pathways towards them. Year 9 students, for example, were supported through the Options process by Form Tutors taking a disadvantaged-first approach, as well as experiencing a university visit in the summer term and the public speaking course from *Speak and Win* on PD Day 3. Extra STEM-based trips were arranged for PP students from Years 8 and 9 who we anticipate may have problems accessing the workplace in future, preparing them for their work

experience in Year 10 and the work force beyond. PP students in Year 10 last year were targeted to receive quality work placements and some students also received transportation and teacher support for the first day. Form Tutors provided support throughout work experience by contacting students and employers, again with a disadvantaged-first lens. In Year 11, careers interviews took a disadvantaged-first approach with PP students receiving their interviews first and in a one-to-one (as opposed to the more usual group) format. PP students were also given extra appointments and support with post-16 applications for college placements and apprenticeships as and when this was needed to ensure their successful progression onto their chosen destinations. We had a positive uptake of PP students into our 6th Form - approximately 20% of the PP cohort - and additional support was extended to students after the summer to secure post-16 success and reduce the chances of students falling into NEET status.

- Our NEET data over time provides an indication of the success of our CEIAG programme at Bishops' and the support we provide for all students, including our PP students, both during and after their time with us. Data provided by our local authority Cheshire West and Cheshire (the annual activity survey) shows that 98% of our Year 11 cohort from 2021 / 22, 97% from 2022 / 23 and 98% from 2023 / 24 successfully transitioned into their post-16 destinations in education, employment or training. The % of Bishops' students who go on to become NEET is below average both locally and nationally (as per data collected and represented on the NEET and Participation LA Scorecard on Gov.UK) and this is testimony to the strong CEIAG that we provide for all our students, but especially for our disadvantaged students.

Challenge E: Attendance and Behaviour

- The intention of this part of the strategy was to improve the attendance and behaviour of our PP students so that it was more in line with their non-PP peers. Success measures for this would be the implementation of systems and procedures that improved the average attendance of PP students towards the 90%+ mark whilst also reducing the % of persistent absence (PA) amongst our PP cohort. An improved behaviour profile of our PP cohort so that it was more comparable with that of their non-disadvantaged peers in terms of consequences, seclusions and fixed-term exclusions would also indicate success with our strategy, as would an increased culture of praise and reward across the school that resulted in our disadvantaged students feeling more motivated and engaged with learning and school generally.

	2018 / 19	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25
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Absence	8.3% (National = 8.2%)	14.2% (National = 13.2%)	12.8% (National = 14.0%)	12.64% (National = 13.3%)	8.32% (National = 10.6%)
Gap with Non-PP at Bishops'	-3.5%	-7.2%	-6.5%	-6%	-2.47%
Persistent Absence	49.6% (National = 24.7%)	48.9% (National = 43.6%)	48.6% (National = 43.8%)	43% (National 39.8%)	34.48%
Gap with Non-PP at Bishops'	-19.8%	-29.1%	-31.5%	-27.5%	-23.64%
PEX	0 (National = 0.51%)	1.75% (National = 0.42%)	1.18% (National = 0.58%)	0.45% (National = 0.64%)	0%
Gap with Non-PP at Bishops'	-0.55%	-1.62%	-1.18%	0%	0.60%
Suspension	7.33% (National = 26.69%)	12.28% (National = 32.64%)	29.41% (National = 46.58%)	26.8% (National = 55.56%)	10.34%
Gap with Non-PP at Bishops'	-20.04%	-6.45%	-20.82%	-20%	-5.52%

- Whilst challenges remain, we saw some important improvements in the attendance and behaviour of our PP students last year. The absence rate for PP students in 2024 / 25 reduced to 8.32%, narrowing the gap with non-PP students at Bishops' to -2.47%, a significant improvement compared to previous years when the gap was consistently over 6%. Similarly, persistent absence among PP students fell to 34.48%, further closing the gap with non-PP students (now at -23.64%) and reflecting positive movement in relation to the national average of 39.8%. Despite this progress, persistent absence remains a key area for ongoing focus to ensure more PP students maintain regular attendance.

- In terms of behaviour, our strategies are yielding encouraging results. The permanent exclusion (PEX) rate for PP students has improved to 0%, which, represents a marked improvement from 0.45% in 2023–24. Suspension rates have also fallen to 10.34% for PP students, well below the national average of 55.56%, and the gap with non-PP students at Bishops' has also reduced significantly compared to recent years. These improvements reflect the impact of key initiatives implemented over the last year.

- New strategies have contributed to these positive trends. We have developed a more structured approach to Form Tutor attendance monitoring, supported by accessible satchel data and regular pastoral briefings, helping tutors take greater accountability for their students' attendance. A new budget for PP rewards has been introduced, with initiatives such as attendance gift bags and hot chocolate vouchers frequently presented in public forums and celebration assemblies. These rewards have helped sustain improvements in attendance by fostering a culture of recognition and encouragement. Furthermore, enhanced visibility of PP data via an inclusion spreadsheet on the main staff dashboard has improved awareness across the school, ensuring that all staff are informed and able to support disadvantaged students effectively.

- The pastoral team continues to work collaboratively and proactively. Newly created spreadsheets for Form Tutors promote accountability in communication with families, with positive early indicators: although more students are currently on attendance processes compared to last year, fewer have progressed to stage two interventions. Weekly Social Inclusion (SI) meetings focused through a disadvantaged-first lens enable Pastoral Support Officers (PSOs) to receive clear actions and review the effectiveness of interventions promptly.

- Looking ahead, the next steps include creating a process to prioritise students who meet multiple criteria, further enhancing targeted support. We will continue to build on our trauma-informed behaviour approaches and extend early intervention strategies, with particular attention to persistent absence and behaviour-related exclusions, especially for PP students with SEND needs. Our ongoing commitment to creatively deploying PP funding will aim to close remaining gaps and ensure all PP students receive the support and encouragement necessary to thrive at Bishops'.

Challenge F: Gaps in Academic Progress

- Our goal is that the activities outlined in our PP strategy, coupled with our commitment to timely learning interventions and our focus as a school on high-quality teaching and staff professional development, will all impact positively upon the progress and attainment of our PP students and ultimately result in a narrowing of gaps between them and their non-PP peers in their external examination courses.

- A summary of our progress and achievement outcomes over the last 5 years of comparable data can be tabulated as follows:

Progress 8		2018 / 19	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25
Bishops' PP v National	Progress 8 Bishops' PP	-0.19	-0.52	-0.11	-0.40	n/a
	Progress 8 National PP	-0.45	-0.55	-0.57	-0.57	n/a
	Gap	+0.26	+0.03	+0.46	+0.17	n/a
	Progress 8 Bishops' non-PP	-0.19	-0.52	-0.11	-0.40	n/a
	Progress 8 National non-PP	+0.13	+0.15	+0.17	+0.16	n/a
	Gap	-0.32	-0.67	-0.28	-0.56	n/a
Bishops' PP v Bishops' non-PP	Progress 8 Bishops' PP	-0.19	-0.52	-0.11	-0.40	n/a
	Progress 8 Bishops' non-PP	-0.02	+0.12	+0.53	0.36	n/a
	Gap	-0.17	-0.64	-0.64	-0.76	n/a

Attainment 8		2018 / 19	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25
Bishops' National PP v	Attainment 8 Bishops' PP	41.57	38.7	44.87	41.97	41.13
	Attainment 8 National PP	36.68	37.61	34.99	34.55	
	Gap	+4.89	+0.86	+9.88	+7.42	
	Attainment 8 Bishops' non-PP	41.57	38.7	44.87	41.97	56.18
	Attainment 8 National non-PP	50.30	53.03	50.30	50.00	
	Gap	-8.73	-14.29	-5.43	-8.03	
Bishops' PP v Bishops' non-PP	Attainment 8 Bishops' PP	41.57	38.47	44.87	41.97	41.13
	Attainment 8 Bishops' non-PP	50.97	52.80	53.24	50.17	56.18
	Gap	-9.4	-14.33	-8.37	-8.20	-15.05

5+ Including E + M (5+)		2018 / 19	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25
Bishops' National	PP v 5+ Including E + M (5+) Bishops' PP	37%	21%	28%	37%	32%
	5+ Including E + M (5+) National PP	25%	30%	25%	26%	
	Gap	+12%	-9%	+3%	+11%	

		5+ Including E + M (5+) Bishops' non-PP	37%	21%	28%	37%	62.96%
		5+ Including E + M (5+) National non-PP	50%	57%	52%	53%	
		Gap	-13%	-36%	-24%	-16%	
Bishops' PP Bishops' non PP	v	5+ Including E + M (5+) Bishops' PP	37%	21%	28%	37%	32%
		5+ Including E + M (5+) Bishops' non-PP	48%	55%	52%	48%	62%
		Gap	-11%	-34%	-24%	-11%	-30%

5+ Including E + M (4+)		2018 / 19	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25
Bishops' PP v National	5+ Including E + M (4+) Bishops' PP	57%	44%	59%	54%	58%
	5+ Including E + M (4+) National PP	45%	48%	43%	43%	
	Gap	+12%	-4%	+16%	+11%	
	5+ Including E + M (4+) Bishops' non-PP	57%	44%	59%	54%	77.78%
	5+ Including E + M (4+) National non-PP	72%	76%	73%	73%	
	Gap	-15%	-32%	-14%	-19%	
Bishops' PP v Bishops' non PP	5+ Including E + M (4+) Bishops' PP	57%	44%	59%	54%	58%

	5+ Including E + M (4+) Bishops' non-PP	72%	80%	81%	76%	78%
	Gap	-15%	-36%	-22%	-22%	-20%

- For contextual purposes, it is important to note that nationally, the attainment gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students (the 'disadvantage gap index') has been widening in recent years and now stands at its highest level since 2011. This is considered to reflect the difficult circumstances that disproportionately impacted disadvantaged pupils in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. periods of lockdowns), resulting in restricted attendance to schools and extended periods of home learning.

- Our Year 11 students from the latest summer series were significantly impacted by COVID-19, experiencing lengthy periods of lockdown when they were in both Year 6 and Year 7. Overall, it is the case both nationally and at Bishops' that the performance of PP students compared to their more advantaged peers has not yet bounced back to pre-COVID levels. Having said that, the 'green shoots' that were evident in the last two year's cohorts can be seen again in our students' performance in the latest summer exam series, and there is evidence that the strategies we have been implementing to mitigate against under-performance are continuing to have impact.

- Overall, our attainment figures from the 2024–2025 examination series compare favourably when considered against our results from last year, the wider national picture, and similar schools in our local area. (Note: there is no Progress 8 data this year due to the cohort having no prior attainment data from KS2.) In particular, our Attainment 8 score for PP students (41.13) continues to place us among the top-performing schools in the locality for disadvantaged outcomes. Local intelligence suggests that our PP students consistently outperform those in neighbouring schools on core attainment benchmarks, especially in English and Maths. While some schools in the area have seen a drop in disadvantaged attainment this year, Bishops' has maintained a stable and positive trajectory — further evidencing the impact of our whole-school strategy, which includes adaptive teaching, targeted intervention, and a commitment to high expectations for all.

- Attainment 8 outcomes for our PP students have remained consistent this year, with a score of 41.13. This continues the strong trend of our disadvantaged pupils performing well above national PP averages — in recent years, this gap has ranged between +5 to +10 points in our favour, and although national data for 2024/25 is not yet available, it is highly likely that our PP cohort continues to outperform significantly on this measure. However,

it is important to note that the gap between our PP and non-PP students widened in this year's results to -15.05, the largest in the five-year dataset. This was driven by a significant increase in the performance of our non-PP students, who achieved an Attainment 8 score of 56.18, up from 50.17 in 2023/24. While the attainment of PP students remains stable, this divergence reinforces the need to sustain momentum and ensure disadvantaged students continue to make gains in line with their peers.

- In terms of students gaining 5+ GCSEs at a strong pass (Grade 5+) including strong passes in English and Maths, 32% of our PP students achieved this benchmark — a decrease from last year's 37%, but still above the most recently available national PP figure of 26% (2023/24). Compared to other local schools, our performance remains relatively strong, although our in-school PP/non-PP gap widened considerably this year to -30% (from -11% last year). While this represents a notable increase, it remains broadly in line with or slightly better than many comparator schools within the local authority, where gaps typically range from -32% to -46%. This means Bishops' continues to perform above national averages for PP students, even amid a widening internal gap.

- When considering students gaining 5+ GCSEs at a standard pass (Grade 4+) including standard passes in English and Maths, 58% of our PP students attained this benchmark — an improvement from 54% last year, and well above the most recently published national average of 43% for PP students. Notably, our internal gap here narrowed slightly to -20% (from -22% last year), and continues to compare favourably to the local authority average of around -35%. Very few local schools outperformed us on this measure, with comparator schools recording gaps between -24% and -41%. This improvement reflects the ongoing impact of our school-wide focus on adaptive teaching and targeted support, particularly for students in the middle-ability band.

- In terms of EBacc entry, Bishops' remains below the local authority average of 27%, with only 11% of our PP students entered this year. While this is an area for future growth, our in-school gaps for EBacc performance remain comparatively healthy. This year, the gap for achieving a standard pass in the EBacc subjects stands at -5% (a marked improvement from -12% last year), and -11% for strong passes (slightly down from -8% last year). These figures compare favourably to other local schools, where gaps typically range from -13% to -37%. While entry remains low, outcomes for those entered suggest that our current approach is ensuring parity of achievement.

- On a more detailed level, this year's Year 11 PP cohort performance reveals several important patterns that require focused attention as we continue to develop support strategies for our current Years 10 and 11 students. Overall, the cohort of 31 PP students achieved an average Attainment 8 score of

41.13, indicating solid overall performance relative to their KS2 baseline of 102.3. However, performance varied significantly across different subgroups. PP girls performed particularly strongly, with an average Attainment 8 score of 50.0, and 86% achieving 5+ grades at 9-4 in both English and Maths. In contrast, PP boys had a lower average Attainment 8 score of 38.3, with only 50% achieving 5+ grades including English and Maths, highlighting a persistent gender gap that we need to continue addressing through targeted interventions.

- The cohort includes a sizeable proportion of PP students with SEND needs (9 students), who performed below the cohort average with an Attainment 8 score of 29.8; only 33% achieved 5+ grades including English and Maths. Conversely, PP students who are SEND Aware (4 students) performed closer to the cohort average with an Attainment 8 of 42.3 and 50% achieving 5+ including English and Maths. Non-SEND PP students (18 students) performed well above average with an Attainment 8 of 46.2, with 72% achieving 5+ including English and Maths.

- Looking at ability bands, performance within the middle ability group was notably mixed, highlighting the need for further refinement in how we differentiate support within this large cohort. Our MA+ students (14 pupils with KS2 scores above 100) performed exceptionally well, achieving an average Attainment 8 score of 52.4. Impressively, 100% of this group achieved 9-4 grades in both English and Maths, and 71% achieved 9-5, making this subgroup one of the highest-performing within the PP cohort. In contrast, the MA- group (10 pupils with KS2 scores just below the national average) achieved a much lower average Attainment 8 of 35.1, with only 20% achieving 9-4 in English and Maths, and just 10% reaching 9-5. This stark contrast within the same overall ability band suggests that the blanket label of 'middle ability' masks significant variation, and further differentiation — both in planning and in intervention — is essential to ensure that the needs of lower-mid prior attainers are not overlooked.

- Overall, the performance of our PP students in the 2024–2025 summer examinations continues to reflect strong delivery against our core priority of closing the disadvantage gap. Our disadvantaged students performed significantly above national averages on key measures, particularly in Attainment 8 and in achieving standard and strong passes in English and Maths. The sustained performance of this group since the pandemic is a testament to the impact of our whole-school strategies, including adaptive teaching, targeted intervention, and a commitment to high expectations for all. However, the internal attainment gap between our PP and non-PP students widened this year — not due to a drop in PP performance, which remained stable, but because of a sharp rise in outcomes for non-PP students. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity: while it reflects the school's rising academic standards, it also underlines the need for even more precise and responsive support for disadvantaged learners to ensure they progress at a comparable rate. This year's cohort data also highlights important internal variation. PP girls significantly outperformed boys across all measures, and middle ability students (particularly those in the MA+ band) achieved excellent results, while MA- and lower ability students struggled to secure key thresholds. The

performance of PP students with SEND also remained a concern, with clear underperformance relative to peers. These findings reaffirm the importance of teachers knowing their students well and being confident in using assessment data to adapt teaching appropriately. Going forward, sharper differentiation within ability bands, continued focus on stretch and challenge for high prior attainers, and more responsive support for underachieving subgroups will be critical to ensuring we narrow attainment gaps and maximise outcomes for all disadvantaged learners.

- In light of this year's outcomes and the detailed analysis of subgroup performance, our priorities for the year ahead will centre on refining and deepening the impact of our existing strategies while addressing emerging gaps with greater precision. These include providing targeted support for PP boys and SEND students and carefully considering our approaches within the middle-ability band to ensure that lower-mid attainers are not left behind, while MA+ students continue to be stretched and challenged. By maintaining a sharp focus on these priority areas, we aim to ensure that all PP students—regardless of gender, ability, or additional needs—are supported to achieve outcomes that reflect their full potential, within a school culture that maintains high expectations for all.

- We also need to remember that there were many success stories amongst our outgoing Year 11 cohort of PP students and that success is not measured purely in terms of final academic outcomes. Many of the students in this cohort were dealing with significant challenges and obstacles, including family instability (domestic abuse, substance abuse, relatives in prison, bereavement), mental health issues and, in the case of our Ukrainian students, the extreme challenge of joining our community from a country impacted by war. All of these students received the pastoral, academic and material support that they needed to attend school regularly, engage with their learning, develop personally, academically and spiritually, and ultimately progress onto their desired post-16 destinations (including approximately 20% of the cohort staying on at Bishops' to pursue A-Level courses). We are currently continuing to support these students and their families through offering ongoing support and guidance to ensure that their transition onto their post-16 courses remains sustained and successful.

- Our very well-established 'Disadvantaged First' culture at Bishops' has been key to lessening the gaps in performance between our PP and non-PP students, and this was recognised by a QA visit in the autumn term from leaders of Queens Park High School. Quality First Teaching has been at the heart of this approach, with regular reminders of our 'Disadvantaged First' approach being shared with staff through CPD (e.g. the importance of relational practice, literacy, parent partnerships and cultural capital) as well as visual reminders (such as our Disadvantaged First Bookmarks and daily 'pop-ups' which prompt staff about teaching and learning techniques). The key strands of our whole-school teaching and learning strategy all have particular resonance for supporting PP learners because they directly address key learning challenges (e.g. cognitive overload in lessons) that result from lower

overall levels of literacy and cultural capital. Our extensive work on classroom routines - with a focus on Meet and Greet, 'Do Now' starter tasks, Exit Routines, Cold Calling and Transitions - has also disproportionately benefited our PP students by creating rapport, supporting cognitive load, and ensuring higher levels of student accountability with learning. Our continued use of 'Know Your Class' sheets and Satchel seating plans - with a specific PP emphasis within our 'Take 5' strategy - have continued to support teachers and middle leaders in their data literacy and their adaptive teaching for underperforming PP students.

- In addition to our focus on high-level teaching and learning, last year we planned and implemented a range of learning interventions to provide targeted academic support for our PP students. One of these was the KICK mentoring programme. This provided one-to-one coaching for 11 Year 11 PP boys, mainly from middle or low prior attainment groups, some with SEND needs, who faced barriers to engagement and motivation. Delivered by an external coach from KICK, a Christian youth mentoring organisation, sessions focused on building self-belief, resilience, and consistent effort ahead of GCSEs. Feedback from students and staff highlighted increased motivation, improved emotional regulation, and better classroom engagement. Academically, outcomes were mixed but included strong successes: four students (36%) achieved grade 4 or higher in both English and Maths, with two securing strong passes (5+), and all higher prior attainment students met the basic pass benchmark. Student voice was unanimously positive, with many valuing the supportive relationship with the coach and some Sixth Form students requesting ongoing mentoring. Based on these results, we plan to expand KICK into Key Stage 3 and continue to use it to support post-16, while exploring closer links with subject interventions to enhance academic progress. The KICK programme remains a vital part of our strategy, helping disadvantaged boys overcome barriers, build resilience, and gain confidence to succeed.

- Other successful interventions last year included Easter School, Peer-Led Tuition, Core Subject Intervention in Tutor Time, Structured Study, and our introduction of the RISE Programme. Interventions such as these enabled more of our PP students to achieve their target grades and progress onto their desired post-16 pathways both at Bishops' and elsewhere. In addition, 100% of our PP students engaged in our programme of structured study, participating in 'walking talking mocks' and streamlined revision throughout the external examination season. This approach to structured revision has been a deliberate strategy aimed at keeping our PP students in school, experiencing purposeful and structured revision opportunities with their teachers, right up to the start of their exams. This approach proved particularly effective in maintaining focus, routine, and confidence among our PP students during a potentially destabilising period. Teachers reported stronger engagement and increased resilience in lessons, while students fed back that they valued the clarity, consistency, and support these sessions provided. The peer-led tuition and tutor-time interventions also contributed to targeted reinforcement in English, Maths, and Science, helping students to consolidate key knowledge and skills in a focused, low-pressure environment. As a

result, a number of students who had been working below target throughout Year 11 were able to secure the grades needed for their next steps, including entry to sixth form, college courses, and apprenticeships. Collectively, these interventions ensured that our PP students remained supported, motivated, and academically focused throughout the final stages of their GCSE journey.

- The RISE programme saw particularly strong attendance and engagement, with 100% of targeted students fully participating in the 10 sessions delivered over five weeks. Subjects included Science, English, Maths, Geography, PE, and Study Skills, reflecting the expertise available within the Year 11 tutor team. Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 64% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the sessions increased their confidence in the subject, and 58% valuing the programme overall. Students suggested starting the sessions earlier in the year, allowing more choice in subjects, and increasing focus on exam questions and techniques—valuable insights that will shape the programme’s development going forward. Staff feedback echoed this positivity, with 100% reporting strong student engagement and agreement that the session length and frequency were appropriate. Teachers also unanimously agreed that the sessions built student confidence, highlighting the intervention’s clear impact on readiness for exams. Plans are in place to enhance the RISE programme with earlier implementation and refined staffing based on recent PPE outcomes.

- Peer-led tuition in Biology, Chemistry, and Design Technology ran successfully from January to April, with 100% of participating students reporting increased confidence in their subjects. All students recommended the sessions to future Year 11 cohorts, praising the knowledgeable sixth form tutors who delivered well-structured, supportive revision activities that included opportunities for meaningful feedback.

- Easter School provision was expanded to cover a broad range of subjects including Spanish, English, and the sciences, with a focus on disadvantaged students to boost attendance and targeted intervention. Exceptional outcomes achieved by students across these subject areas indicates that this intervention was very successful in preparing the participating students for their exams.

- Tutor-time interventions in Maths and English had varied attendance levels but were positively received by students who attended. Maths sessions concentrated on exam practice and interleaving topics to build fluency, while English sessions focused on exam techniques and paper practice, both contributing to increased student confidence and preparedness for examinations.

- Overall, these layered interventions demonstrated strong impact in raising the confidence, engagement, and attainment of our PP students throughout Year 11. The programme’s success in combining structured study, peer support, and targeted tuition has laid a solid foundation for continuous improvement and will inform the scaling and refinement of support in future academic years.

- Finally, research and evidence into schools that successfully narrow the gap and significantly improve the outcomes of PP indicate that the key to success is the relentless creation of a high expectation, inclusive school culture that is focused not only on the quality of teaching but also on the importance of preparing students for **all** aspects of life - not just exams. In light of this, we view our personal development programme – known at Bishops’ as the LIFE Programme – as a key strand of our PP strategy. This programme is designed to prepare all of our students for ‘life in all of its fullness’ but it has particular benefits for our PP students. Form Time PD and Collective Worship focus on character and spiritual development, supporting our PP students in their holistic growth, and PD Days and L4L lessons are well-resourced, rich and varied. There are ample opportunities for students to adopt leadership roles and many of our students, including our PP students, are making a meaningful difference both within our own community and beyond as courageous advocates of change. There have been numerous opportunities for our students to grow in cultural capital across the year and get involved in school life and all of our PP students have benefited from our extra-curricular Enrichment Programme. Bespoke programmes have been implemented to provide nurture, resilience training, mental health support and support for behavioural issues, and all of these disproportionately benefit our PP cohort. Student consultation has enabled us to review our approach towards rewards and celebrations and we are now building a more positive, praise-focused school culture which we believe will incentivise our PP students more and provide them with the hope and aspiration they need to flourish both at Bishops’ and beyond.