

Unity Academy Pupil Premium Strategy 2024-25

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2024 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School Overview

Detail	Data
School name	Unity Academy
Number of pupils in school	227
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	76.6%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2021/2022 to 2024/2025
Date this statement was published	December 2021
The date on which it will be reviewed	Autumn 2025
Statement authorised by	Phil Willott, Director of Education
Pupil premium lead	Elizabeth Browne, Academy Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Paul Burchett

Funding overview 2023-24

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£129,150.00
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£129,150.00

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Unity Academy provides education for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged key stage 3 and 4 pupils from across the City of Nottingham. Even though over three quarters our pupils receive the Pupil Premium Grant, we know that all are disadvantaged in some way, with the impact of the pandemic magnifying this. All our pupils have been excluded from mainstream education. All require SEN support, with some having identified special educational needs and some as-yet-unidentified. As recognised nationally, we have significantly higher than typical percentages of pupils who are supported by professionals in social care, youth offending services, and child and adolescent mental health services.

All Unity pupils receive their education via alternative providers or independent schools, with some being educated by more than provision. However, the academy aims to support the development of all pupils, including those disadvantaged as defined by the Pupil Premium Grant definitions. We must recognise that pupil progress is contextualised and needs-led and aimed to develop the whole child. This could include:

Progress in reading

The majority of pupils that are educated within alternative provisions typically have reading ages below their chronological age, which impacts their ability to engage in learning across all curriculum areas. Improving the pupils' skills in writing, speaking and listening is also a key priority this year.

Attendance

Attendance is a barrier for pupils at alternative provisions, with pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds displaying higher levels of absence. Attendance will always be a priority of the academy as a child is unable to learn, develop and experience when absent.

NEET

Unity Academy aims to support the pupil into post 16 (education, employment and/or training) and beyond. However, the national picture regarding NEET figures for pupils who were permanently excluded from mainstream education is quite bleak and therefore this remains a priority.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
------------------	---------------------

1	Difficulties related to poor attendance.
2	Difficulties related to pupils' engagement
3	Pupils have low literacy levels.

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategic plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Attendance is above the national average for pupil referral units and alternative provisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance is above national. Individual pupil attendance demonstrates progress from an attendance mainstream baseline.
Pupils are engaged in placements that meet their needs and provide educational opportunities/qualifications that prepare them for future destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of pupils that require transition plans have reduced from KS3 to KS4 Reduction of the number of suspensions Reduction in the number of placement breakdowns NEET reduction
Pupils to make progress in reading (against a baseline).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils improve their reading during their time with the academy. Pupils attend at least one provision that offers a reading strategy

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: **£58,619**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Unity Reading Strategy that includes a range of	EEF research on Phonics: <i>"Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5</i>	3

<p>programmes across the providers. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -RLT Phenomenal Phonics Programme, which is compliant with new DfE guidance -Lexonik vocabulary and LEAP <p>Literacy Trust CPD through the AP Network to introduce projects to develop writing, speaking and listening skills in the settings.</p> <p>Support plans in place for the providers that are currently not offering a reading programme.</p> <p>Review staffing structure to add additional capacity to work with providers to embed reading strategy in their setting.</p> <p>Providers to review what programmes are in place currently and plan further support/interventions.</p> <p>Baselining of reading age and impact measured of intervention</p>	<p><i>months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.”</i></p> <p>Our pupil assessments reveal the majority lack early reading skills and therefore we must consider how phonics can be delivered to key stage 4 pupils discreetly.</p>	
<p>To ensure the most disadvantaged pupils can access the most appropriate educational provisions, including 1:1.</p>	<p>EEF: On average, one to one tuition is very effective at improving pupil outcomes. One to one tuition might be an effective strategy for providing targeted support for pupils that are identified as having low prior attainment or are struggling in particular areas.</p> <p>One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

--	--	--

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

Budgeted cost: £25531.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Dedicated Admissions & Reintegration to prevent placement breakdown</p> <p>Dedicated pastoral team for planning and oversight of wave 2 interventions within the provisions.</p>	<p>Even though this is a very bespoke 1:1 support for pupils on the verge of placement breakdown, the EEF research on one to one tuition does support this activity.</p> <p>EEF: On average, one to one tuition is very effective at improving pupil outcomes. One to one tuition might be an effective strategy for providing targeted support for pupils that are identified as having low prior attainment or are struggling in particular areas.</p> <p>One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p>	<p>1, 2</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £45,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
-----------------	---	--------------------------------------

<p>Trust Attendance & Welfare Team</p>	<p>Over the last 3 years, D&U academies attendance has either been in line with or above national relevant to setting/context. This is was partly due to investment in an attendance team, with clear processes and procedures.</p> <p>In 2021, Raleigh Learning Trust made the strategic decision to expand and grow attendance and welfare support across the trust, intending to support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils and families. The Trust Attendance & Welfare Team is using best practices and learning from the D&U model.</p> <p>High overall absence leads to lower attainment at KS2 and KS4 and those with persistent absence are less likely to stay in education</p> <p>Research; how attendance can impact attainment; Key for School Leaders, 2019</p>	<p>1</p>
--	---	----------

Total budgeted cost: £129,150.00

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in 2022 to 2023 academic year.

Review of 2023-2024

Pupils to make progress in reading (against a baseline)

Raising the profile of reading was a key priority last year. Leaders completed a full audit and quality assurance process in the Spring term, following a series of CPD that was delivered to all providers in the Autumn term. The number of providers that offer a reading intervention has improved last year with 70% of providers that have a reading strategy in place. Leaders are supporting provisions to develop their reading strategy and track the pupil timetables to ensure they have at least one provider that offers a strong programme. Lexonik LEAP is now used by many providers and have responded to the training offer from the Academy.

The focus on reading during the QA visits showed that the Providers now have reading for pleasure opportunities built into the curriculum. This was validated during the Ofsted inspection in Nov 23.

Attendance is above the national average for pupil referral units and alternative provisions.

There was a gap of **5.6%** absence for pupil premium pupils compared to Non-PP in 2020/1. The gap closed in **2021/22 to 1.2%**. There was **no gap** between PP and non-PP for attendance in July 2023. Overall attendance for 23/24, gap increased to 15.7%, due to an increased proportion of PP pupils moving on Unity roll (year 9s) in the Summer term. The TIEB has strengthened the tracking of attendance by looking at the separate provisions and tracking attendance from the start date. The Trust Attendance team was able to add capacity to network meetings, core groups and other safeguarding meetings and offer feedback on the support both pupils and families were receiving, as well as taking an active role in reviewing the interventions being implemented and ensuring that they appropriate for the pupil and any barriers cited. Pupils were identified as a concern and appropriate interventions introduced. There was an increase in home visits undertaken and parent meetings being held informing parents and pupils of any concerns around attendance.

The Unity team has how an Engagement and Placement Officer which promotes engagement from Day 1 from the exclusion to promote good attendance. This role also now supports placement breakdowns to promote engagement to their next setting.

Pupils are engaged in placements that meet their needs and provide educational opportunities/qualifications that prepare them for future destinations

We continue to improve the collaborative work with agencies already involved with the families, for example Children's Social Care, YOT, Targeted Family Support, MST, Police etc. The AP taskforce provides interventions that has improved attendance for key pupils.

To ensure the placements are appropriate for the pupil, the team collate a vast amount of information from the excluded school, the family, pupil to make a decision on a suitable long term placement based upon their needs. The admissions process was reviewed last year to capture more historical information from the mainstream setting to ensure placements and provision meet the needs of the pupils. The number of placement breakdowns has reduced by **30% in 2022/23**. Autumn 23/24 placement breakdowns compared to Autumn 24/25 have reduced by **24%**.

The NEET figures for Year 11 leavers June 23 has improved by **12%** compared to June 22 and the revised figure is **22%** from Futures.