

Pupil premium strategy statement – Merridale Primary School

This statement details our school’s use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	241
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	47.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-26
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	L Towle
Pupil premium lead	L Towle
Governor / Trustee lead	Mr M Rizwan (Chair)

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£156,000
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£156,000

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Merridale, our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers. The percentage of pupils who are disadvantaged at Merridale is well above average (almost double) compared to national figures.

Our PP Strategy is strongly informed by EEF Research and evidence-based practice (as well as professional expertise and knowledge of our school and community context) and has the three-tiered approach of high quality teaching, targeted academic support and wider strategies (which for us focuses very specifically on helping pupils overcome SEMH barriers so that they are in a position to learn and supporting the wider family at its heart).

Our ultimate aim is to narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally and also within internal school data. We believe that, with the right support and timely intervention, all children are able to maximise their potential. By identifying barriers to achievement and establishing a climate of aspiration and engagement, we aim to inspire our pupils and their families to commit themselves to lifelong learning. School staff work tirelessly to develop and maintain strong, nurturing relationships which are rooted in mutual respect to ensure our pupils receive the highest quality support and learning opportunities that are engaging and fun.

We consider the challenges faced by all vulnerable pupils, such as socio-economic factors, low prior attainment, proficiency in English, social care involvement, mental health and well-being when planning high quality teaching and learning opportunities. We carefully monitor progress and use this to plan the next steps in each child's educational journey. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

Merridale Primary School serves and celebrates a diverse community with many children and their families having English as an Additional Language. The school has 17 out of 17 possible ethnic groups. 63% of our disadvantaged children also have English as an Additional Language. Our school intends to develop and sustain a language-rich environment to enable all pupils to be able communicate, understand and express themselves.

39% of our disadvantaged pupils are also identified as having additional needs (SEND)

School is committed to ensuring that pupils have a wide range of outdoor opportunities to enhance learning through real life experiences. Educational visits and enrichment opportunities are carefully planned to ensure that all pupils experience learning and life beyond the classroom. School takes every opportunity to develop children's cultural capital.

The school prioritises the mental health and well-being of all pupils and provides resources, including interventions and specialist staff, to ensure pupils' needs are met effectively.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and, at the same time, will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are supported and challenged in the work that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve

Our local context:

School pupil base and location deprivation is above average with the local area pupils base being well above average.

The school location deprivation indicator is in quintile 4 (more deprived) of all schools. The pupil base is in quintile 5 (most deprived) of all schools in terms of deprivation.

Wolverhampton is the 12th out of the 20 Local Authority districts with the highest proportion of children and older people in income deprivation (27.1% of children living in income deprived households)

[The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/799219/English-Indices-of-Deprivation-2019.pdf)

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	To improve attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils. Our attendance data over the last 3 years indicates that attendance amongst disadvantaged pupils has been between 1.1% and 0.8% lower than all pupils at Merridale. This gap has been closing over the past three years and we would like to continue to close it further. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils at Merridale is higher than disadvantaged pupils nationally. In 2024-25, 26.6% of Merridale disadvantaged pupils have been “persistently absent” compared to 24.4% of disadvantaged pupils nationally during the same period. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils’ progress.
2	Assessment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage shows the majority of our pupils (and especially those who are identified as disadvantaged) have greater difficulties with Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy and Numeracy compared to their non disadvantaged peers. On entry into our EYFS in September 2025 (Nursery and Reception) these gaps ranged from 4% to 47% in these key areas.
3	Phonics attainment in Year 1 for the Phonics Screening Check is lower for disadvantaged pupils compared to their non disadvantaged peers. This is especially true for disadvantaged boys. At the end of Year 1 in 2025, 69% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard for the Phonics Screening Check (PSC), compared to 80% of their non disadvantaged peers. Nationally, 67% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard for the PSC. Attainment in PSC for disadvantaged boys in 2025 was 56%. 100% of disadvantaged girls passed the PSC.
4	To narrow gap between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged pupils in school in core subjects, specifically, reading, writing and maths in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 (and in year 6 but only for maths) where the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils ranges from 5 to 59%
5	Socio-economic factors which affect attendance, learning and achievement: the school serves a community which is amongst one of the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. The school currently has over 47.8% of pupils identified as disadvantaged, nearly double the national average. Significant social, emotional and well-being issues for some disadvantaged pupils. A number of our children have challenges with routines, managing emotions and behaviours, social relationships and independence/self-care skills. Parenting support from the school is centred around meeting basic needs, ensuring safety, emotional support, guidance and boundaries and stability at home.

	Referrals for support from external partners and our own Family Support Worker remain high for disadvantaged pupils and their families. A significant number of our families are currently, or have recently been, supported by social care and/or strengthening families. Our strong collaboration with external services, our Family Support Worker, training for staff, open-door policy for families as well as our support offer to other agencies helps to support our most vulnerable families.
6	Observations and discussions with pupils and families have indicated that many pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding have limited experiences outside of school to develop their wider knowledge and cultural capital.
7	61% of our disadvantaged pupils also have English as an Additional Language. 70% of these pupils have either little/no English or are developing acquisition of language (Proficiency in English Language A to C). This is a barrier to attainment and progress across the curriculum for these pupils and means that they require high levels of support to be able to access the curriculum and learning opportunities.

Intended outcomes

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

Intended outcome	Success criteria
To improve attendance for disadvantaged pupils.	To continue to improve attendance for disadvantaged pupils and narrow the gap between PP and NonPP attendance figures. To reduce the percentage of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent. <u>Whole academic year 2024-25 (IDSR)</u> Whole school (Years 1-6) attendance percentage: 93.9% Disadvantaged (Years 1-6) attendance percentage: 93.1% Percentage of pupils who are Persistent Absentees Years 1-6: 20.1% Percentage of pupils who are Persistent Absentees and also disadvantaged Years 1-6: 26.6%
Improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.	Assessment data and observations will show improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy and Numeracy, closing the gap between them and their non disadvantaged peers.

Improved Phonics Screening Check attainment for disadvantaged pupils, particularly disadvantaged boys.	For PSC outcomes for disadvantaged pupils to be at least in line with disadvantaged pupils nationally, particularly for disadvantaged boys. To narrow the gap between disadvantaged pupil attainment in PSC with their non disadvantaged peers (gap in 2025 was 11%)
To continue to narrow the attainment gap between pupil premium children and their non disadvantaged peers.	To narrow the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non disadvantaged peers in Years 2,3,4 and 5 in reading, writing and maths. To narrow the gap in maths in Year 6. Pupil Premium children's attainment by the end of KS2 is broadly in line with Pupil Premium National Averages in Reading, Writing and Maths.
Continue to reduce the impact of significant socio-economic and social, emotional and well-being issues for some disadvantaged pupils.	Children have the ability to learn, manage their emotions, form and maintain good relationships and to cope with, and manage change. Pupils and families requiring support are identified early and provision/intervention/support is planned and delivered to have an impact on well-being which, in turn, leads to pupils better able to access learning across the curriculum. Number of children and families requiring immediate, priority support from Family Support Worker and Learning Mentor reduced. Learning Mentor and Family Support Worker to have more time to work on pre-emptive support rather than reactive measures. Children with mental health, social and emotional barriers notice how they are feeling and continue to build respectful relationships and are responsible for their choices.
Many pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding have limited experiences outside of school to develop their wider knowledge and cultural capital.	All pupils will be offered a wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities. All PP children wishing to join a club will be encouraged to do so – offered free of charge each term. Pupil voice will influence the range and type of clubs offered – particular attention to be paid to the voice of PP children who do not currently attend a club. School to maintain and increase contributions towards extra-curricular activities, school trips, visitors and memorable experiences in order to enhance cultural capital and increase knowledge to ensure that PP children can access a wide range of opportunities in line with Non PP peers.
An inclusive approach continues to ensure all children	Children with English as an additional language and/or social and emotional barriers, including new arrivals feel safe,

have access to opportunities that enrich learning and improve academic language	nurtured, confident and calm at school. They continue to develop a sense of belonging.
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Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £83,833

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Quality First Teaching CPD/Monitoring Focus on assessment for learning and adaptive teaching and feedback and questioning. Deputy Head to support with coaching and mentoring (Years 1-6) and EYFS lead to provide coaching and mentoring for EYFS staff to develop approaches and share good practice. All teachers to receive coaching and mentoring support each academic year. All teachers/support staff to have access to high quality CPD provided both internally	Evidence informs us that quality first teaching is the most effective way to improve children's outcomes and can narrow the disadvantage gap. Our program of coaching and mentoring, as well as external and internal CPD, builds on existing knowledge and provides instruction and modelling to support development of teaching techniques. Effective Professional Development EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) What makes great teaching? - Sutton Trust Education Policy Institute – high quality CPD leads to raised attainment https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/the-effects-of-high-quality-professional-development-on-teachers-and-students/ High quality assessment for learning, adaptive teaching and questioning	2, 3, 4, 7

and externally. NPQ training and qualifications for teachers as appropriate to develop professional skills and knowledge. School's approach to the teaching of maths, reading, writing & phonics (RWI) continues to be developed and embedded- to be reviewed for consistency – CPD provided and compliance monitored. Targeted 1:1 and small group support provided for high needs pupils enabling class teachers and TAs to provide QFT to all learners and bespoke provision for those with highest need.	approaches deployed by teachers to ensure highest quality, targeted learning and support across the school. Assessment and feedback EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) EEF Blog: Assess, adjust, adapt – what does adaptive teaching... EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Reading fluency approach based on Herts Grid for Learning used in Year 2 and throughout Key Stage 2.	Poor reading stamina, fluency and accuracy affects reading attainment for all pupils. This approach addresses these barriers resulting in increased enjoyment, confidence, engagement and attainment. ks2_reading_fluency_project_2017-18_research_article(1).pdf	4, 7
Grammarsaurus (Place Value of Punctuation) CPD and support given by Deputy Head and cascaded to all staff to improve vocabulary across the school. Continue to develop and embed this approach.	Training/approach is a structured whole school approach to promote the development of writing (sentence level) development of all children. Focussed on whole class learning, the resource is of particular value for those who start at a disadvantage – including children with Developmental Language Disorder, Special Educational Needs and those who speak English as an additional language, but it will extend the writing	4, 7

	development and progress of all students. This approach is now being embedded in Years 1-6 CPD with Grammarsaurus - Grammarsaurus	
Support network provided by partnership working with TWP leaders alongside LA CLL Team (subject leader networks) to develop reading, writing and maths teaching and learning across the school alongside PIXL assessments, QLA and CPD	Education Policy Institute – high quality CPD leads to raised attainment https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/the-effects-of-high-quality-professional-development-on-teachers-and-students/	3, 4, 7
Phonic Development Strategies for targeted phonics for learners across all year groups to close the gap with the expected standard and to meet the needs of all pupils but especially those who are disadvantaged. Small group phonics teaching and on-going assessment and targeted intervention including booster groups.	EEF Phonics Phonics EEF	3, 4
RWI Phonics training and CPD/coaching and mentoring for all staff, monitoring of provision and modelling/observing good practice	Phonics has a positive impact overall with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.	3, 4

	Phonics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) The reading framework - teaching the foundations of literacy (publishing.service.gov.uk) Read Write Inc. Phonics and Fresh Start EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) ruth_miskin_literacy_inc - _read_write_inc_research_and_evidence-1-1.pdf (ruthmiskin.com)	
Early Years/KS1 1:1 and small group support provided for high needs pupils enabling class teachers and TAs to provide QFT to all learners and bespoke provision for those with highest need. The Hive nurture provision to provide appropriate provision for pupils with complex additional needs.	Significant number of SEND pupils with complex needs impacting the wider cohort in Reception and KS1 Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Early Years CPD developing quality interactions between staff and pupils and pupils and their peers	Research suggests that the quality of adult interactions with children during their continuous provision and play has the biggest impact on improving children's communications and interactions. Historically, our children (due to high levels of EAL) come in and leave EYFS significantly below national. Our aim is to improve interactions and vocabulary across EYFS to help close this gap. Development of a range of approaches and staff CPD to encourage quality interactions during play	2, 6, 7

	The OFSTED definition of teaching in EYFS states that it includes adult “interactions with children during planned and child initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language; showing, explaining demonstrating, exploring ideas; encouraging, questioning recalling; providing a narrative for what they are doing; facilitating and setting challenges.” EEF blog: The ShREC approach – 4 evidence-informed strategies... EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Communication and language approaches EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Early literacy approaches EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Early Years Continue to use the language diagnostic/intervention strategy WellCom and give time to EYFS Leader to ensure that all EYFS staff are implementing this correctly and accurately to ensure maximum impact on early language acquisition.	Delayed language skills lead to underperformance in later life. This approach helps to identify children with speech and language issues early and address through targeted support and strategies. There is a strong evidence base that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high-quality classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading. WellComm - GL Assessment (gl-assessment.co.uk) Oral language interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2

	Communication and language approaches EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
English and maths- smaller classes in Year 6. Increase teacher to pupil ratio for intensive support for pupils and deliver focussed lessons, responding to individual pupils' needs and gaps in learning.	Reducing class sizes by at least 10 allows teachers to teach more flexibly and adapt their teaching styles to best meet the needs of all pupils Reducing class size EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	4, 5, 7
Continued training and CPD for EYFS teachers on EYFS framework through Partnership Network and LA network meetings and SIA support.	The evidence points to a number of positive consequences of inter-school collaboration in relation to impacts upon students, teachers, school improvement and organisational efficiency. Effective school partnerships and collaboration for school improvement: a review of the evidence (publishing.service.gov.uk)	2
Implementation of Jigsaw RHE/PSHE scheme to improve RHE and develop pupil well-being and mental health	School recognises the importance of addressing children's emotional, social and behavioural needs. With the right support, children learn to articulate and manage their emotions, deal with conflict, solve problems, understand things from another person's perspective, and communicate in appropriate ways. These 'social and emotional skills' are essential for children's development, support effective learning, and are linked to positive outcomes in later life. Through Jigsaw's comprehensive, spiral progressive scheme of work, students will learn about themselves, others, and the world around them. They'll learn about various subjects, such as developing and maintaining relationships with friends and family. And they'll acquire the skills they need to better prepare themselves for the	5

	challenges that await them in adulthood. Our statutory PSHE programme is fully planned out and delivered in a way that makes it super-easy for schools to implement. EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) PSHE Curriculum KS2 Primary PSHE Lessons Jigsaw PSHE	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 46,683

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Specific Interventions Targeted deployment of Teachers/TAs/HLTAs to lead interventions based on: A baseline of developing – need to make accelerated progress to be on track. PP pupils with ability/potential to maintain or move to GD. Number Stacks Maths intervention Kinetic letter handwriting intervention EAL support	Diagnostic assessments and analysis shows a gap between PP and non PP at ARE in a selection of classes and also with the number of pupils achieving GD Research shows short, regular (within a time frame) sessions have the best impact. Also, impact is at its best when linked with normal teaching. Interventions are monitored and evaluated for impact and effectiveness. Evidence shows the best use of TAs, providing greater impact for pupils is in providing structures interventions compared with general class support. Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3, 4, 5, 7

Toe by Toe interventions Pre-teaching activities Reading fluency intervention		
Class teachers provide one hour's booster tuition each week (after school) for targeted pupils in identified subject areas to raise attainment and achievement.	Small group tuition is most likely to be effective if it is targeted at pupils' specific needs. Diagnostic assessment can be used to assess the best way to target support. Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Extending school time EEF	3, 4, 5, 7
Teaching Assistant provides small group tuition each week after school for 3 x 30 minutes for identified pupils in phonics.	Small group tuition is most likely to be effective if it is targeted at pupils' specific needs. Diagnostic assessment can be used to assess the best way to target support. Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Small group tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Phonics EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) The reading framework - teaching the foundations of literacy (publishing.service.gov.uk) Extending school time EEF	3, 4, 7
Teaching Assistant provides small group tuition each week after school for 3 x 30	Small group, targeted tuition is most likely to be effective if it is targeted at pupils' specific needs. Diagnostic assessment can be used to assess the best way to target support.	4

minutes for identified pupils in handwriting.	Intervention for handwriting and transcription will increase transcription skills and develop confidence in writing How 'The Simple View of Writing' can help you develop your... EEF Speed and fluency as important as accuracy for good writing EEF Extending school time EEF	
English and maths – Y2-6 diagnostic assessment analysis. Forensic analytical monitoring of pupil progress, gap analysis and a review of provisions with a focus on identifying pupils at risk of not achieving (Key Marginals) and ensuring targeted interventions to address underachievement and misconceptions. Make use of PiXL therapies to deliver targeted interventions.	Partners in Excellence (PIXL) The PiXL Club - About Us	4, 5, 7
Teaching Assistant to provide individualised learning programme support for targeted pupils who do not have the resources for this at home Each class (Year 1-6) to provide parent/carers Doodle workshop to maximise support and engagement at home.	Doodle platform, with its curriculum-aligned content for Year 1 to Year 6, boosts ability by challenging and supporting all learners. This platform is engaging and adaptive, providing opportunities for children to learn and succeed and be rewarded for this. Children work in short bursts and teachers can measure the impact and engagement. For primary schools DoodleLearning	4, 5, 7

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

Budgeted cost: £ 56,346

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Emotional and mental health and well being ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) intervention and supported for identified pupils.	The ELSA programme is nationally recognised and evidence-based, designed to equip schools with the necessary tools and resources to address the emotional needs of their pupils effectively. Wolverhampton Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) Training and Support	1, 5
Calm Brain approach for all children – subscription available to all classes for use throughout the day as appropriate.	CalmBrain® Approach by Dr. Sarah Taylor Central to CalmBrain are the scientifically researched Movements, which are designed to assist with healthy brain functioning and emotional wellbeing.	5
The school employs the services of an Educational Welfare Officer to monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address absence. Our EWO create action plans in partnership with families and follow local authority codes of conduct, policies and procedures and make referrals for statutory intervention when interventions have not resulted in improved attendance and relevant triggers / thresholds are met.	By working closely with the School administrator and senior leaders, the EWO has a positive impact on the attendance of pupils and those at risk of becoming persistent absentees. Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Using the Pupil Premium to boost attendance - Attendance Matters Magazine (attendancemattersmagonline.co.uk)	1, 5

Termly meetings with LA Attendance Advisor to identify strengths and strategies.		
School recognises and rewards good and improved attendance and punctuality through positive relationships, class teachers and leader address attendance issues directly with families. Attendance data is published on the website and celebrated in whole school assemblies (weekly and termly). Attendance policy is in place and applied consistently.	The school delivers clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new pupils and families through newsletters and prospectus Senior leaders use physical presence to reinforce routines and expectations on arrival and departure. Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Using the Pupil Premium to boost attendance - Attendance Matters Magazine (attendancemattersmagonline.co.uk)	1, 5
The school provides daily sensory circuit/Cool Kids activities for identified children. Wherever possible, school staff also provide opportunities for sensory circuit (sensory snacks) for children that benefit from these throughout the day as necessary	Sensory circuits are short, sensory-motor skills programmes that can help support children in getting ready for the day. Children can participate in 10-15 minute sessions designed to provide sensory input. Sensory circuits are a circuit of activities that allow children to practice different motor skills in short snappy bursts and get them ready for the day ahead of them. The circuits help children to reach a level of alertness that will help them to concentrate throughout the day. Sensory Circuits - Childrens Choice Therapy	1, 5
The school ensure all children can take part in off-site visits throughout the school year as well as a	The study, conducted by education think-tank LKMco, revealed that only one in five of secondary and primary pupils go on residential trips each year – and that youngsters in disadvantaged areas have	1, 5, 6

residential visit in Year 6. These visits are subsidised for disadvantaged pupils to ensure all are able to take part.	the fewest opportunities to take part. This is partly due to cost and partly due to the fact that they are more likely to live in areas where fewer residential trips are available. Pupils in disadvantaged areas (areas where a large proportion of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals) have fewer opportunities to participate in residential visits than their peers in more advantaged areas. Impact - Learning Away (PDF) Learning Away - The state of school residential visits in England 2017 (researchgate.net)	
Disadvantaged children are provided with a wide range of books and resources to use inside and outside of school e.g. Book Fair vouchers, books at Christmas and throughout the year, revision books, phonics packs	Disadvantaged children are more likely to live in overcrowded and noisy homes and often without the same access to the internet, technology, books and other resources. Their parents are also often less able to support learning at home due to lack of time, skills, and confidence. Supporting disadvantaged children in the early years Croner-i (croneri.co.uk)	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Workshops and resources provided for parents and carers to help them support their children with their learning at home (ESafety, Phonics, Times tables, KS2 assessments) Each class provides several parental engagement activities each year including storytime sessions, learning showcases and music performances.	One of the main influences on a child's early development is what happens in the home. However, disadvantaged children are less likely to experience a home environment that can best support their development, particularly in relation to early language. Research suggests that children achieve better social and educational outcomes when early years providers encourage parents' engagement in their children's learning. Good practice includes sharing educational aims with parents and supporting children's learning at home with suggested activities that complement their experiences in the provision. Parental engagement EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2, 3, 4, 5

	Parental Engagement - Evidence from Research and Practice.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net) Supporting disadvantaged children in the early years Croner-i (croneri.co.uk)	
The school provides regular opportunities to develop the cultural capital of children at Merridale, particularly those children who are disadvantaged through trips, visits, experiences and extra curricular activities. This includes whole class music tuition and specialist peripatetic teaching as well as music, dance and curriculum-linked workshops “Merridale Memories” ensures this approach is embedded across the school	Through use of school funds to ensure all children but particularly those who are disadvantaged, can access a wide range of experiences and opportunities, we believe we can help children achieve goals, become successful, and rise up the social ladder without necessarily having wealth or financial capital. Effects of economic, social and cultural capital at home and in the neighbourhood on young people's educational attainment (PDF) Cultural Capital and Educational Attainment (researchgate.net)	5, 6
The school employs a Family Support Worker to support children and families to overcome barriers and signpost appropriate support.	The role of the Family Support Worker is to improve children’s well-being and achievement through support of the family. By working closely with the Education Welfare Officer and Learning Mentor, they can help families overcome attendance issues as well as leading on Early Support Plan, Family Help Plans, safeguarding and child protection interventions and meetings Parental engagement EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 5, 6

	Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Primary welfare officer purpose, objectives and outcomes (education.vic.gov.au)	
The school employs a Learning Mentor to support children and families with their learning and well-being	The role of the Learning Mentor is to improve children's well-being and achievement through support of the child and family. By working closely with the Family Support Worker and other school staff, the Learning Mentor can resolve issues and support children with welfare and learning whilst also liaising with families, staff and outside agencies. Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Improving Behaviour in Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Wayback Machine (archive.org)	1, 5, 6
The school has a trained Forest School Leader and provides regular sessions of Forest school for EYFS throughout the year. All classes are also encouraged to utilise outdoor learning approaches as much as possible through the support and advice of the Forest School Leader.	Research shows that children and young people are stimulated by the outdoors and typically experience, over time, an increase in their self belief, confidence, learning capacity, enthusiasm, communication and problem-solving skills and emotional well-being. The Benefits of Forest School (forestschoolltraining.co.uk) Outdoor learning: closing the attainment gap in primary schoolchildren in Scotland (forestresearch.gov.uk) WS-Outdoor-Education-Attainment-Outcomes-in-Primary-Schools-2017.pdf (wilderness-schooling.co.uk)	1, 2, 5, 6, 7
School to provide bagels for all	Before the coronavirus pandemic, as many as 1.7 million children in the UK	1, 5

children who want them at the start of every day through National Schools Breakfast programme.	were living with food insecurity, at risk of hunger in the morning, according to government figures. A hungry child cannot concentrate. At Merridale, staff noticed that many children came to school each day having not had anything to eat. In addition to bagels, we also provide cereal and toast where we know this is a significant issue. Poverty creates barriers which prevent children from accessing education. Many children at Merridale experience hunger as result of poverty. This leads to poor concentration and fatigue. Demonstrating our Impact - Family Action (family-action.org.uk)	
School provide food support and sign-post food support for families as required. Community larder. Food vouchers and link with local food banks as well as LA HAF support.	Poverty creates barriers which prevent children from accessing education. Many children at Merridale experience hunger as result of poverty. This leads to poor concentration and fatigue. Child poverty - the facts NEU	5
School employs two Parent Ambassadors to support all parents and pupils but particularly those with EAL and those who are newly arrived to the school and/or country.	Over half of Merridale’s disadvantaged pupils have English as an Additional Language. The Parent Ambassadors programme supports families and young people in Wolverhampton schools, especially those for whom English is not their first language. The programme trains parents at the school in mentoring and supporting families and young people in the community. These parents are known as Parent Ambassadors, and are employed part-time by schools to work alongside teachers and other school staff as key members of the school workforce. Our Parent Ambassadors run regular coffee afternoon/drop in sessions and deliver the “Making it REAL” project to	1, 2, 5, 6, 7

	targeted families. They also work alongside Adult Education to provide family learning opportunities for our families to access at school. Making it REAL Wolverhampton Parent Ambassadors. - YouTube	
The school engages the NHS Reflexions service and CaMHs/Inspire to support targeted pupils with mental health and well-being issues. CBT support provides emotional support and coaching to build resilience and develop confidence. Reflexions is a Mental Health Support Team (MHST), - a service to help increase access to mental health support for children and young people in schools.	Some children benefit from talking to a professional, someone who has the training to help with their particular concern and someone who is unbiased. By creating a safe space to talk through their concerns, child CBT can help children understand their emotions better, develop coping skills and build emotional resilience, something that will serve them well into adulthood. Reflexions Service Wolverhampton Information Network Overview - Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) - NHS Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) bacp-research-on-counselling-psychotherapy-with-children-young-people-systematic-review-2013.pdf	1, 5
The school uses the services of external mentors to provide targeted support to pupils to support in SEMH needs as well as behavioural issues.	The role of the Mentor is to improve children's well-being and achievement through support of the child and family to develop social, emotional and mental health resilience. Social and emotional learning EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Improving Behaviour in Schools EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 5

To continue to remove factors that could make disadvantaged pupils feel different or excluded and find it more difficult to participate fully in school life e.g. providing clean, appropriate clothing and footwear, PE kit and resources as appropriate.	Evidence and research shows that poverty affects attendance, engagement and stigma. Appropriate clothing and resources can become an emotional and social barrier to attending and participating fully in school life, including extra curricular activities.	5, 6
The school works with external advisors and partners to provide physical, emotional and mental health well being	Engagement with external partners to develop approaches to support learners through an inclusive approach e.g. School nurse, SEND school nursing team, Educational Psychologist, Outreach, Social Care, NHS, Strengthening Families. Staff receive CPD and training to develop their practice to ensure a whole school inclusive approach.	1, 5, 7

Total budgeted cost: £ 186,862

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Outcomes 2024-25

Phonics Screening Check

At Merridale, at the end of Year 1 in 2025, 69% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard for the Phonics Screening Check (PSC), compared to 80% of their non disadvantaged peers. Nationally, 68.1% and in Wolverhampton 73% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard for the PSC.

Disadvantaged attainment for PSC rises to 82% for disadvantaged pupils at Merridale when two children with EHCPs (who are also disadvantaged) are removed.

Attainment in PSC at Merridale for disadvantaged boys in 2025 was 56%. 100% of disadvantaged girls passed the PSC. Attainment for disadvantaged boys rises to 71% when two boys with EHCPs (who are also disadvantaged) are removed.

End of Key Stage 2 outcomes 24-25

	Merridale EXS + Disadvantaged	National EXS+ Disadvantaged
Reading	100%	63%
Writing	64%	59%
Maths	86%	61%
R/W/M Combined	57%	47%
EGPS	79%	60%

3 year (23/24/25)

	Merridale EXS + Disadvantaged	National EXS+ Disadvantaged
Reading	100%	62%

Writing	68%	59%
Maths	81%	60%
R/W/M Combined	62%	46%
EGPS	84%	59%

At the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in 2025 and for the past 3 years, Merridale disadvantaged pupils outperformed the national average for disadvantaged pupils.

In reading for the past 3 years, Merridale disadvantaged pupils have outperformed national averages for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

In maths for the past 2 years, Merridale disadvantaged pupils have outperformed national averages for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Attendance

Our attendance data over the last 3 years indicates that attendance amongst disadvantaged pupils has been between 1.1% and 0.8% lower than all pupils at Merridale.

Attendance for disadvantaged pupils at Merridale is higher than disadvantaged pupils nationally (in 2024-25, attendance for disadvantaged pupils was 93.1% whilst nationally, attendance for this group was 92.6%)

In 2024-25, 26.6% of Merridale disadvantaged pupils have been “persistently absent” compared to 24.4% of disadvantaged pupils nationally during the same period. 20.1% of all Merridale pupils have been persistently absent in 24/25.

Suspensions and exclusions for disadvantaged pupils is below national.

EYFS Attainment and progress

Improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by the end of EYFS.

Outcomes of WellCom end of reception assessments show improved word acquisition and language comprehension for disadvantaged pupils and this is broadly in line with non disadvantaged pupils.

Nursery	CL Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	CL Endline July 25 EXS
PP	10% (1/10 pupils)	30% (3/10 pupils)	10% (1/10 pupils)
NonPP	20% (3/15 pupils)		47% (7/15 pupils)

Nursery	PSED Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	PSED Endline July 25 EXS
PP	10% (1/10 pupils)	30% (3/10 pupils)	30% (3/10 pupils)
NonPP	33% (5/15 pupils)		47% (7/15 pupils)

Nursery	Literacy Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	Literacy Endline July 25 EXS
PP	0% (0/10 pupils)	20% (2/10 pupils)	0% (0/10 pupils)
NonPP	27% (4/15 pupils)		47% (7/15 pupils)

Nursery	Maths Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	Maths Endline July 25 EXS
PP	0% (0/10 pupils)	20% (2/10 pupils)	10% (1/10 pupils)
NonPP	33% (5/15 pupils)		67% (10/15 pupils)

Reception	CL Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	CL Endline July 25 EXS
PP	57% (8/14 pupils)	50% (7/14 pupils)	71% (10/14 pupils)
NonPP	43% (6/14 pupils)		53% (8/15 pupils)

Reception	PSED Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	PSED Endline July 25 EXS
PP	36% (5/14 pupils)	50% (7/14 pupils)	57% (8/14 pupils)
NonPP	50% (7/14 pupils)		80% (12/15 pupils)

Reception	Literacy Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	Literacy Endline July 25 EXS
PP	29% (4/14 pupils)	43% (6/14 pupils)	50% (7/14 pupils)
NonPP	43% (6/14 pupils)		53% (8/15 pupils)

Reception	Maths Baseline Sept 24 EXS	Aspirational Target July 25 EXS	Maths Endline July 25 EXS
PP	36% (5/14 pupils)	50% (7/14 pupils)	64% (9/14 pupils)
NonPP	43% (6/14 pupils)		60% (9/15 pupils)

Social, Emotional and Well-being impact on pupil mental health, relationships and learning, including pupils with English as an Additional Language.

Early intervention and support – Family Support Worker and Learning Mentor have targeted pupils and families requiring early intervention and support throughout 24/25 through Early Support Plans and ELSA/targeted work.

In 24/25, 8 families were identified and offered Early Support. 7 families engaged with this support with 3 remaining open to Early Help or Family Help currently.

Targeted work from within school as well as in partnership with external partners has provided intensive social emotional support for vulnerable disadvantaged pupils and has resulted in an increased stability in pupil's mental health and sustained emotional well-being so that these vulnerable pupils were able to continue to access full time mainstream education.

Through support of a range of professionals (Family Support Worker, Learning Mentor, external Mentor, Reflexions, CaMHs, Inspire, Outreach and Educational Psychologist)

children with mental health, social and emotional barriers notice how they are feeling and continue to build respectful relationships and are responsible for their choices. Children with English as an additional language and/or social and emotional barriers, including new arrivals feel safe, nurtured, confident and calm at school. They continue to develop a sense of belonging. This is accomplished through targeted support and a safe and inclusive environment, including support for families.

At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2025, 12 children were identified as disadvantaged also with EAL. In reading, 100% of these children reached the expected standard. 67% of these children reached the expected standard in writing and 92% in maths.

Whole cohort attainment:

96% EXS in reading

75% EXS in writing

93% EXS in maths

This shows that those pupils who are EAL and disadvantaged achieve mostly in line with the whole cohort.

Many pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding have limited experiences outside of school to develop their wider knowledge and cultural capital.

After school clubs are provided free of charge to pupils in receipt of PPG. A total of 19 clubs were offered last academic year. 64% of places (1171/268 places available) in after school clubs were attended by PP children (who made up 54.3% of our school community).

All children accessed a wide range of opportunities (including trips and visits plus Year 6 residential) throughout the year with financial support for PP families as appropriate.

Pupil/Parent/Carer voice indicates that barrier to attending after school clubs were not financial.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
Times Table Rockstars	Maths Circle Ltd
Doodle	Doodle Learning
Seesaw	Seesaw
Read, Write Inc CPD	Ruth Muskin Literacy/Oxford Owl

Kinetic Letters CPD	Kinetic Letters
ELSA CPD/training	Wolverhampton Educational Psychology Service
Reflexions	Black Country NHS service
Counselling support	CaMHs, Base 25, Inspire
PiXL	Pixl.org.uk
White Rose Maths resources	White Rose Maths