

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement Maidstone Grammar 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	1416
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	5.1% (to be confirmed)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2025
Date this statement was published	September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	School Governors Committee B
Pupil Premium Lead	Miss Johnson (Deputy Head – Students: Inspire to Belong / Mrs Harris (Deputy Head-Students: Inspire to Learn) Mrs Deo – Intervention and PPG Co-ordinator
Governor Lead	Committee B

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£82,600
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£82,600

Part A: Pupil Premium Strategy Plan

Statement of Intent

At Maidstone Grammar School we aim to support all of our students to achieve their potential both academically (Inspire to Learn) and more widely (Inspire to Belong). We aim to:

- Have high aspirations for every student and support every student to meet their own individual academic targets in order that they can progress to their chosen “next steps” in education or beyond.
- Close the gap between disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers within the school.
- Develop an approach which is effective, consistent and sustainable within our school setting and which makes good quality teaching and learning for all a central whole school priority.
- Support an increasing number of students to overcome emotional mental health and wellbeing barriers through additional targeted 1:1 pastoral support.

The current school strategy has evolved as a result of an ongoing process of exploring and identifying the areas where further support and intervention is required; preparing strategies and interventions to address these areas; delivering these interventions; and reflecting upon and evaluating the impact of the strategies and interventions in order to identify an effective and sustainable approach. As far as possible, we have adopted an evidenced based approach drawing upon research based evidence including the EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium and EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Ensuring that all of our students (including disadvantaged) are challenged academically in the classroom and that MGS teachers “Teach to the Top” whilst also using appropriate adaptive teaching approaches (scaffolding down) and interventions to support underperforming students. Ensure we have an appropriate and effective In-House Intervention programme in place.

	Developing the practice and expertise of our teaching staff is an area of ongoing focus at MGS and a key area that we are addressing through our CPD programme / staff training.
2	<p>Increased pastoral support to enable students to overcome barriers in relation to their emotional mental health and wellbeing, attendance and behaviour concerns.</p> <p>These barriers can have a detrimental impact on the wellbeing, progress and attainment of some students in the school, including those from disadvantaged groups. There has been a notable increase in the number and severity of mental health and wellbeing issues over recent years in line with the national picture. With external support services under significant pressure and with lengthy waiting lists it is vital that the school is able to provide a range of additional support “in-house”.</p>
3	<p>Lack of financial resources – PPG students.</p> <p>PPG students do not always have the financial resources to purchase uniform items and access educational resources, curriculum trips and visits, music lessons etc on an equal footing with peers. This situation has been exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.</p>

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
<p>As part of our Inspire to Learn programme, teaching staff will ensure that all students are appropriately challenged by “Teaching to the Top”. Where appropriate they will use adaptive teaching techniques to stretch and challenge the most able and also provide additional support for students who are underperforming. Staff will also develop their practice in order to provide greater student retrieval opportunities, including through assessments.</p> <p>The newly appointed Intervention and PPG Co-Ordinator will work with the Deputy Heads for Students- Inspire to Belong /Inspire to Learn to ensure that there is additional targeted catch up support including for disadvantaged students. This will be delivered through after school sessions led by our in-house English, Maths, Science and Modern</p>	<p>-Evidence from assessment data, lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutinies, Line Management meetings and department reviews, student feedback show progression in line with targets and expectations.</p> <p>-A carefully planned and robust CPD programme with increased time for teaching staff to ensure more specific and rigorous training to reflect new adaptive teaching methods and strategies.</p> <p>-Rigorous tracking and monitoring of all PPG students (including academic progress and attendance) by a core team of staff through the MGS Cause for Concern process up to 6 times / year. Where academic / attendance or other concerns are identified there are agreed action points documented and follow up / support / interventions provided for individual students.</p>

<p>Foreign Languages Tutors, where required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ongoing programme testing reading ages to establish the lowest 20% and a programme of targeted intervention using the 'Bed Rock Learning programme' and including the form reading buddies for each student who is below their reading age. Years 9 and 7 to be tested this year. -Evidence of good quality, regular formative assessment so that students know how to improve and how to identify what went well? / what next? -Subject clinics offered across the majority of subjects (all core) for students.
<p>The school will have greater pastoral capacity and maintain and extend the expertise amongst staff to support students with a range of wider pastoral concerns and issues, including in relation to emotional, mental health and well being issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evidence of referrals to our school counsellor and completed 6 week intervention programmes. -Evidence of referrals to our school 1:1 MIND worker and completed 6 week intervention programmes. -Increased capacity in the Student Services Department and Safeguarding Team in order to respond effectively and promptly to the growing numbers of welfare and safeguarding concerns. -A more robust 'Rewards and Recognition' Policy so staff can give recognition, merits and postcards to reinforce positive contributions across all areas of a student's life.
<p>All PPG students will be able to purchase uniform, access educational resources and participate in curriculum activities and trips on an equal footing with non-disadvantaged peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evidence of take up of MGS PPG bursary funding (£150 /student) made available to provide financial assistance to PPG students for uniform and resources etc. -Staff are proactive in ensuring that all pupils are aware of opportunities that are open to them and work with parents and pupils to remove financial barriers to accessing them, including (from this year) food items for students taking Food Technology at KS3 & 4. -Funding is used effectively to ensure full inclusion in the core curriculum, extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities.

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 – Whole School Level

Budgeted cost for whole school and targeted academic support: £ 30,413

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>An robust and strategic CPD programme designed to promote and embed adaptive teaching methods, including ‘teaching to the top’ whilst scaffolding down for those who need the most support; also retrieval practice. An effective feedback cycle using a ‘graduated approach’ (assess, plan, do, review).</p>	<p>“<i>Good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Using the Pupil Premium to improve teaching quality benefits all students and has a particularly positive effect on children eligible for the Pupil Premium.</i>” THE EEF GUIDE TO THE PUPIL PREMIUM</p> <p>EEF’s Teaching and Learning Toolkit shows that good quality teaching/feedback has an average impact of +6 months based on an extensive evidence base, it is also very cost effective and a sustainable approach.</p> <p>Ofsted’s focus on adaptive teaching, retrieval practice and assessment, as reported in their Research for education inspection framework (publishing.service.gov.uk) has further informed our pedagogical approaches to ensure an inclusive education for all, in particular, those who are disadvantaged and may need enhanced support in the classroom to access the core curriculum.</p>	1
<p>Ongoing refinement of assessment and feedback by subject departments.</p>		1

Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost for whole school and targeted academic support: £ 30,413

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Co-ordinated in- house intervention programme focusing on Core subjects and Modern Foreign Languages at KS4.</p> <p>All interventions take place outside of lesson time so that students are not withdrawn from class.</p>	<p>EEF’s Teaching and Learning Toolkit shows that small group tuition has an average impact of +4 months and is cost effective approach.</p> <p>We have previously used PPG funding to pay for 1:1 tutoring via an external tutoring company. We have also used PPG funding to pay individual subject teachers to deliver 1:1 and small group catch up sessions. Neither of these approaches were fully effective nor have they proved sustainable and this is why we have developed our MGS Intervention Programme for the core subjects, which we expanded in 2024-25 to include MFL.</p>	1
<p>Reading ages of all students have been tested and shared with all teaching staff to adapt teaching methods appropriately. CPD provided on supporting literacy and reading in the classroom.</p> <p>Appointment of a new literacy and reading co-ordinator to oversee the lowest 20% of readers and promote the love of reading.</p>	<p>Ofsted’s research underpinning the current framework focuses on the importance of reading for accessing the curriculum fully. We have used this approach to drive our literacy and reading programme across the school, including the appointment of a new R&L co-ordinator. Research for education inspection framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	1

Wider strategies including ensuring appropriate pastoral capacity to meet the needs of our students and a range of 1:1 approaches we can draw upon to overcome emotional, mental health and well being barriers; support to overcome financial barriers.

Budgeted cost: £52,187

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Maintain and extend the required staffing capacity in our Student Services Department to meet the demands of a growing school and the increasing number of welfare cases referred.</p>	<p>The School's internal data which shows a significant increase in the number of welfare and safeguarding cases referred.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Continue to engage a fully qualified school counsellor to support referred students 1:1 over a course of 6 sessions (per student).</p> <p>Continue to engage a 1:1 MIND worker to support referred students over a course of 6 sessions (per student).</p>	<p>Our own internal evidence shows an ongoing demand for support from in school counselling and MIND services. Exit evaluations indicate that the majority of students feel a positive improvement in their well being. External support services are heavily oversubscribed with very long waiting lists meaning that the ability to refer students to In-House support is essential in many cases.</p> <p>https://www.ucl.ac.uk/brain-sciences/news/2019/feb/study-links-poor-mental-health-educational-outcomes</p> <p>The UCL Department of Brain Sciences website states that over 15,000 Year 7 pupils from England (2019) completed questions about their mental health and wellbeing as part of the HeadStart programme funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. Their responses, combined with information about attainment and absenteeism held in the National Pupil Database showed that the odds of persistent absenteeism were much higher for those with emotional difficulties, behavioural difficulties, and hyperactivity or inattention difficulties.</p> <p>This further links to the DfE Guidance – Working Together to Improve School</p>	<p>2</p>

	Attendance which states: “Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools’ efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium” and at GCSE (nationally): “The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).	
Ensure that all PPG students have full access to the MGS PPG Bursary to support them with the costs of uniform, educational resources, educational and extra curricular activities and curriculum trips.	<p>The EEF entry on uniform states that Pupils from lower socioeconomic households are less likely to be able to afford the cost of school uniforms.</p> <p>We have not identified evidence that providing a pupil bursary improves educational outcomes. However, the school receives increasing requests for financial support from PPG families to meet these costs and we therefore consider it an essential element of our PPG spending and helps to create a more “level playing field” between PPG and their non disadvantaged peers.</p>	3

Total budgeted cost: £ 82,600

Part B: Review of Academic Year 2023-2024

Although there are many contextual issues to be considered, we are pleased that in Summer 2024 at GCSE, our cohort of disadvantaged students performed similarly to our cohort overall, achieving an ALPS of 4. Although this was a small group of students (14), we are fully committed to ensuring that actions are taken swiftly to identify when a student in this group is underperforming, and intervening to put necessary support in place, for example, lunchtime clinics, targeted afterschool and reading intervention. We'll also ensure that funding is carefully directed to provide specific educational materials such as revision guides, textbooks, trips and workshops.

At A-level, our cohort of disadvantaged students performed better than the overall cohort, achieving an ALPS of 5. Although this was a small group of students (5), MGS has been fully supportive and committed to ensuring students can access support where needed and participate in societies, trips, workshops and lectures by various guest speakers etc.

In terms of interventions to tackle non-academic barriers to success in school such as emotional and mental health / wellbeing, welfare issues, attendance etc it is difficult to quantify the impact of these measures. However, we can report that in 2023-2024:

- Our fully qualified school counsellor provided over 288 1:1 counselling sessions to 48 students from across the school and including students from the PPG group.
- Our MIND worker provided 126 1:1 MIND sessions to 21 students from across the school and including students from the PPG group
- PPG funding also continued to support additional staffing capacity in the School's Student Services Department. This provided the MGS Safeguarding Team with additional capacity required to respond to 344 safeguarding concerns in 2023-2024.
- The school provided over £11,000 in MGS PPG bursary payments to approximately 70 students in response to parental claim forms to help disadvantaged students purchase school uniform, educational resources and to take part in activities, music lessons, Duke of Edinburgh Award, trips and visits (compared to £10,000 in 2022-2023 and £5,000 in 2021-2022).