

# Pupil premium strategy statement – UTC South Durham

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	120
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	28%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year</b> )	2023 – 2026
Date this statement was published	31.12.25
Date on which it will be reviewed	01.09.26
Statement authorised by	Tom Dower
Pupil premium lead	Steve Bennett
Governor / Trustee lead	Jo Bailey

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£101,656
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	NIL
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years ( <i>enter £0 if not applicable</i> )	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> <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>	£101,656

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

Our intent for all students at UTC SD is to make them career and life ready. We do this using the vehicle of the Student Leaver Profile (SLP). The SLP has been developed by the UTC community. It was created by a network of industry partners, students, parents, community leaders, staff and Trustees. It describes the skills, knowledge and experiences which our students leave the UTC with and therefore is a clear statement of our Curriculum Intent.

The SLP ensures that our students are ready for their careers and it cements our commitment to a balanced education which goes well beyond that delivered by most schools. It drives everything we do for our students.

We are ambitious for our students and offer high quality student support, recognising that many have had a disadvantaged previous education. The aftermath of the COVID pandemic is still apparent in terms of gaps in students' learning and our focus has shifted to establishing academic and technical progress for our learners.

At UTC SD our intent is to establish an outstanding academic and technical education for all of our students, regardless of their backgrounds or the challenges they face.

We aim to Improve academic and technical outcomes so that all students and all subjects achieve value added from starting points, which we access when the students join us in Year 10. The core focus of our approach is to give the students access to high quality teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>The progress of disadvantaged pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 is generally lower than that of their peers. Of the cohort taking exams in 2025, many had come from schools rated RI or Inadequate. For these students, a poor KS3 which was also contending with the aftermath of the COVID pandemic provided a very large challenge for them in approaching their GCSEs.</p>
2	<p>A significant number of students join UTC in Year 10 with reading and spelling ages that are below their chronological age. If students cannot read, spell or comprehend text to a level expected by their chronological age then they will find it more difficult to access lesson content and exam papers, leading to a subsequent drop in progress and attainment. In the workplace, access to training documents, Health and Safety guidelines etc require a competent level of literacy, as does the expectation to produce written reports.</p>
3	<p>Attendance of disadvantaged students is lower than that of non-disadvantaged peers. Attendance is probably the biggest negative factor in student attainment. Being in school is important to student achievement, wellbeing, and wider development. Evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results.</p> <p>DFE research has found that pupils who performed better both at the end of primary and secondary school missed fewer days than those who didn't perform as well.</p> <p>DFE data also shows secondary school pupils who didn't achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths missed on 10 more days on average over the key stage than those who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and maths.</p>

4	Ensuring that all Disadvantaged students have positive attitudes to their learning. A poor attitude to learning prevents sustained progress for that student, and can have an impact on the attainment of all students.
5	Students join the UTC having opted for the specialist STEM Curriculum we provide. We intend to ensure that our students have ambitious, realistic, career aspirations and that they are supported by a strong careers education that is supported by business and industry links
6	Our observations and discussions with students and families have identified social and emotional issues remain for some students, such as anxiety. This has a wide range of subsequent impacts for our students, many of which can be barriers to progress.

## 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
All students access high quality teaching and learning across all areas of their curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and retention of high-quality specialist teachers across all areas of the curriculum.</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning continually monitors the quality of teaching and learning and support s staff with areas of development.</li> <li>• Teaching and learning CPD is of a high quality and its implementation is evident in lessons.</li> <li>• Support and coaching is available for teachers and pastoral / support staff.</li> <li>• Staff are able to access external CPD as relevant.</li> </ul>
Students that are below their chronological age in reading and spelling improve their literacy and oracy skills to age appropriate levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are identified having literacy difficulties, and then the English department implement appropriate interventions - often this involves targeted work with our English HLTA either through a smaller, supported class, through lesson withdrawal for intervention or through in lessons support.</li> <li>• Students receive targeted interventions to support their language development and literacy.</li> <li>• HLTA intervention enables students to close the gap quickly and regular testing of the identified students shows significant progress is made in reading, comprehension skills.</li> <li>• Students continue testing and interventions until they achieve age appropriate scores.</li> </ul>
Attendance of disadvantaged students is as good as that of non-disadvantaged and is higher than national and LA data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance of disadvantaged pupils is as high as that on their non-disadvantaged peers.</li> <li>• Attendance is regularly monitored and intervention is put in place to support attendance rewards.</li> <li>• Issues that may be regarded as a barrier to attendance such as Mental Health and LGBTQ+ are identified and students are supported.</li> </ul>

<p>All Disadvantaged students have positive attitudes to their learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Capture data and classcharts data consistently shows that behaviour is good or better.</li> <li>• Rewards for positive attitude are put in place to encourage and support students</li> <li>• Parental contact, meeting and report cards are used support students to where behaviour standards are not good enough.</li> <li>• Restorative conversations are facilitated between staff and students where C3 behaviour has occurred.</li> <li>• Learning contracts are used in sixth form for students where there are concerns</li> </ul>
<p>Student attainment is good and the students make progress from their GL baselines/most likely grades in all subjects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students receive aspirational targets based on GL testing (KS4) or APS (KS5). Students are involved in the target setting process and are given subject specific guidance on how to reach target grades.</li> <li>• Underperformance is supported by relevant subject interventions and academic / pastoral mentoring.</li> <li>• parents are contacted and supported with the subject interventions that are implemented.</li> </ul>
<p>Students receive high quality pastoral support,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students feel happy and safe at the UTC.</li> <li>• All Student become a member of a CREW and CREW leaders make regular contact with parents.</li> <li>• Students engage with week-long induction timetable focused on team building a building relationships when they join the UTC in Y10.</li> <li>• Students that are struggling with anxiety and other mental health issues are identified and offered relevant support via student services.</li> </ul>
<p>No students are excluded from educational or rewards trips or left short of revision resources for financial reasons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have their requests for individual student support for resources, educational visits, uniform, toiletries etc considered and actioned when appropriate.</li> <li>• Transport to and from UTC is subsidised for eligible students.</li> </ul>

## 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: £ 35K

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Recruitment and retention of class teachers in all curriculum areas, including shortage areas of Engineering and the STEM subjects, who are specialists in their field and who have an excellent track record of facilitating learning for their students.</p>	<p><i>“The effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds: over a school year, these pupils gain 1.5 years’ worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers. In other words, for poor pupils the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher is a whole year’s learning.”</i></p> <p><a href="https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/improving-impact-teachers-pupil-achievement-uk-interim-findings/">https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/improving-impact-teachers-pupil-achievement-uk-interim-findings/</a></p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>
<p>Funding for teachers to benefit from CPD targeted to meet individual need for development, to meet the whole school T and L priorities and to stay up to date with the latest developments in their area. This will also include funding cover for teachers to complete peer observations.</p>	<p><i>“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></p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Pupil_Premium_Guidance.pdf">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Pupil_Premium_Guidance.pdf</a></p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 5, 6</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £ 31K

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Funding for the staffing of an English HTLA who work with students in small classes and small group sessions. And the planning of Crew time so that interventions to improve literacy and oracy skill in our students are most effectively delivered.</p>	<p><i>Disadvantaged children are 2.3 times more likely to be identified as having speech, language and communication needs than those in more affluent areas</i> (The Communication Trust)</p> <p><i>Children from socially disadvantaged families are more than twice as likely to be identified with a SLCN (Speech, Language and Communication need). Due to social clustering, more than 50% of children living in areas of high social deprivation may start school with SLCN</i>  <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/931310/BSSLC_Guidance.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/931310/BSSLC_Guidance.pdf</a></p> <p><i>Reading comprehension activities are deemed to have a high impact for low cost impact for students</i>  <a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/teaching-learning-toolkit/">Teaching and Learning Toolkit   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/improving-literacy-in-secondary-schools/">Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a></p>	<p>1, 2</p>
<p>Purchase of standardised online testing packages for identification of areas for development in individual's literacy, which are subsequently used to inform intervention.</p>	<p><i>EEF meta-research suggests that oral language, and reading comprehension, intervention have a high impact to cost ratio, based on extensive research.</i>  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit</a></p>	<p>1, 2</p>

Purchase of SISRA Analytics to allow identification of underachievement and patterns within that data.	<i>There is much evidence available online and from teacher's own experiences to support the use of targeted intervention during the GCSE grades to raise attainment.</i> <a href="http://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/cfl/assets/documents/CaseStudies/Camborne%20(Coaching).pdf">http://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/cfl/assets/documents/CaseStudies/Camborne%20(Coaching).pdf</a>	1, 2
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## Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £ 35K

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>The employment of our Business Engagement lead and Careers lead are part funded using the Pupil Premium budget.</p> <p>The lease of the UTC minibuses and drivers are subsidised through PP, allowing our students the ability to attend UTC and to attend educational visits</p>	<p><i>Students' involvement with business partners through projects, work experience and internships results in high levels of confidence and excellent communication skills. Students are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain. Students benefit from exemplary careers guidance and support because of the UTC's strong links with business partners. Business partners report that students are 'work ready', not only in terms of qualifications but of personal skills. Students participate in work experience that is relevant to their interests and future careers, and many win valuable apprenticeship placements with business partners.</i> <a href="http://www.utcreading.co.uk/site/data/files/ofsted/980DA074897910744E7476E89A0758AF.pdf">http://www.utcreading.co.uk/site/data/files/ofsted/980DA074897910744E7476E89A0758AF.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/review-of-evidence-on-employers-in-education/">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/review-of-evidence-on-employers-in-education/</a></p>	1, 5

<p>PP funding supports the employment of members of the student support team and SEND team responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitating a smooth transition to UTC South Durham,</li> <li>• recognising anxieties and mental health issues,</li> <li>• monitoring attendance and intervening when students are absent</li> <li>• identifying students and areas where attitude to learning is poor</li> <li>• dealing with safeguarding issues.</li> </ul> <p>In all of the above, the time needed to work with students, parents, external agencies etc, and to deliver interventions eg emotional literacy sessions, in order to bring about a successful outcome.</p> <p>Purchase of CPOMs to record and review safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Purchase of ClassCharts to record and monitor incidents of concern and record praise.</p>	<p><i>EEF suggests that self-regulation, social and emotional learning have a high impact to cost ratio and is backed by evidence.</i></p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit</a></p> <p><i>Mental health difficulties during adolescence can have lifelong effects, impacting on a range of adult outcomes including employment, the ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships, and general health and wellbeing. Schools are in a unique position to deliver mental health support to all children and young people without some of the common barriers that affect similar interventions offered outside of schools.</i></p> <p><a href="#">Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions   Early Intervention Foundation (eif.org.uk)</a></p> <p><i>....in general the higher the percentage of sessions missed across the key stage, the lower the likely level of attainment at the end of KS4. Specifically, pupils with no absence are 1.5 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*-C or equivalent and 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*-C or equivalent including English and mathematics than pupils missing 15-20 per cent of KS4 lessons.</i></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/412638/The_link_between_absence_and_attainment_at_KS2_and_KS4.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/412638/The_link_between_absence_and_attainment_at_KS2_and_KS4.pdf</a></p> <p><i>...one in 10 young people aged five to 16 has a diagnosable mental health</i></p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 6</p>
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<p>PP funding is used to fund the staffing of the 'East Room'.</p> <p>PP funding is used to provide the staff time for 1 to 1 academic mentoring for those PP students who are at most risk of underachieving.</p>	<p><i>disorder, while 50 per cent of all adult mental health problems present by the age of 14. And while schools are not fighting the mental health battle alone... it is at school where many of these children will present.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.sec-ed.co.uk/news/mental-health-pupil-premium-character-education-student-voice-lgbt-and-more-feature-at-ssat-national-conference/">http://www.sec-ed.co.uk/news/mental-health-pupil-premium-character-education-student-voice-lgbt-and-more-feature-at-ssat-national-conference/</a></p> <p><i>School tracking systems readily show pupils with low attendance do not achieve to their expected levels.</i></p> <p><i>EEF suggests that behaviour intervention has a high impact to moderate ratio and is rooted in evidence.</i></p> <p><u><i>EEF suggest that mentoring has a positive impact</i></u></p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit</a></p>	
<p>The pupil premium funding is used to purchase items of uniform, hygiene products, revision resources, equipment when it is considered suitable and on request from parents, students or teaching staff. PP funding is also used to support transport for eligible students.</p>		<p>1, 2, 6</p>

**Total budgeted cost: £ 115K**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments.

The data demonstrated that our disadvantaged students did not make as much progress and non-disadvantaged in several subjects.

To help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils we compared their results to those for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at other UTCs using Redborne analysis of our student progress from starting points. While UTC SD has a gap in progress of -0.32, we outperformed the group national mean for disadvantaged learners whose starting points were measured in the same way (-0.57).

We have also drawn on school data and observations to assess wider issues impacting disadvantaged pupils' performance, including attendance, behaviour and wellbeing.

#### **Attendance**

For our 2025 Y11 cohort Pupil Premium attendance increased from the end of year Y9 (when the pupils were at other schools) to the end of year 10 (91.1% to 92.1%).

Attendance remained steady throughout Y11 and was 92.1% when the students began their summer examinations. The figure for non-Pupil Premium was 93.0%.

The improvement from Year 9 to Year 10 when students join the UTC is against the backdrop of a decline across the national data as students move into KS4.

For the current academic year UTC attendance was 93.6% compared to the median attendance of 91.5% in similar schools.

In the same time period the attendance of students with FSM 90.6% was compared to 87.7% for students in similar schools.

#### **Case Study A**

Student A joined the UTC having experienced an extremely turbulent life involving extensive social services input (which is ongoing) surrounding mental health and siblings being displaced. This student was supported throughout Key Stage 4 with 1:1 support via student support, 1:1 support via the SEN team, TAF meetings and Harbour meetings amongst other strategies. This student's attendance improved at the UTC (Attendance Y9

80.58% - Y10 92.62% and Y11 (Easter 95.18%)). On the completion of Key Stage 4 this student enrolled on our Pre-apprenticeship course and is doing well.

### **Behaviour**

At the UTC we treat students as young professionals and expect them to rise to the challenge. We focus on 'attitude' and positive relationships rather than 'behaviour'. This approach means that students learn the skills and attitudes which they need as young professionals and for their adult life. Support systems are strong and the UTC is generally a calm and productive place in which to learn and work.

96% of parents say that their child is happy and feels safe at the UTC, with 76% strongly agreeing. The Student Support Team and Crew leaders build good relationships with students and parents so they feel comfortable in coming forward with concerns.

Behaviour at UTC is good and there is no significant difference between the behaviour of disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers. Class charts is used to record incidences of negative behaviour and the data generated is frequently shared with faculty directors who use it to identify where extra support is needed. "intelligent events" are monitored by classcharts so that the behaviour team can offer additional support where there are behaviour issues across multiple subjects. The students support team employ a variety of methods to improve behaviour including; restorative conversations with staff, parental meetings, report cards, use of the internal isolation room and, rarely, exclusions.

### **Case Study B**

Student B joined us with a poor behavioural record. Although this student made a positive start, he later became involved in some complex situations outside of school, which included police involvement and issues related to drugs.

In response, we quickly put a range of support measures in place, including work on emotional resilience and placement on a behaviour report. This was not used as a punishment, but rather as a supportive tool to closely monitor and guide his behaviour. Alongside this, strong and consistent communication was maintained with parent.

As a result of this targeted support and the positive relationships built, this student made a complete turnaround in his behaviour and engagement. This student has chosen to remain with us for Sixth Form and is currently completing the Pre-apprenticeship course, which reflects the significant progress he has made.