

Pupil premium strategy statement – [Great Academy Ashton]

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	1283
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	621 (48.4%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-26 to 2027-2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Matthew Little - Principal
Pupil premium lead	Mike Holly - Assistant Principal
Governor / Trustee lead	Umesh Patel

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£683,305
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>	£683,305

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

In alignment with the Department for Education's rationale for the Pupil Premium Grant and in acknowledgment of the challenges our pupils encounter, Great Academy Ashton (GAA) is committed to assisting our disadvantaged pupils. This commitment is manifested through the execution of high-calibre, quality first teaching, focused interventions, and inclusive school-wide programs designed to enhance academic proficiency particularly in literacy, pastoral care, attendance, and overall welfare strategies.,

At GAA, we are dedicated to helping each pupil reach their full potential. We achieve this by offering an ambitious curriculum taught through outstanding daily classroom instruction. Our rigorous quality-assurance systems across all areas of provision are carefully used to pinpoint and overcome any obstacles to learning.

We firmly hold the conviction that our pupil premium strategy is finely tailored to cater to the specific needs of our pupils and the broader school community. This strategy has been developed on the foundation of well-informed research and best practices.

Moreover, our strategy is fortified by our unwavering dedication to four overarching whole school priorities:

- To ensure consistent teaching practices across all curriculum areas through shared expectations and robust quality assurance and highly responsive coaching.
- To drive long term improvement in progress, attainment, and student readiness for the next stage of education or employment.
- Empower middle and senior leaders to lead improvement confidently and sustainably.
- Re-engage students, particularly those with high absence rates, so they can access their full learning.

GAA serves a highly diverse range of communities, with our catchment area encompassing a wide spectrum of deprivation levels. We cater to both some of the poorest areas in the UK, as evidenced by national data, and areas with minimal deprivation. The distribution of pupil premium across the year groups is as follows; Year 7 57.0%, Year 8 54% Year 9 53%, Year 10 45%, Year 11 50%. It is imperative to acknowledge that the Pupil Premium cohort at GAA constitutes almost 50% of our pupil body, therefore, addressing the challenges identified not only benefits our disadvantaged pupils but also enhances the overall educational experience for all pupils at GAA.

Furthermore, we firmly believe that our strategy will facilitate the promotion of cultural capital, encourage high participation rates, and create an inclusive and celebratory atmosphere for all pupils. It is worth noting that some of our most capable and high achieving pupils are part of the pupil premium cohort.

Our strategies are grounded in evidence and are aligned with the key principles outlined in the "Effective Guide to the Pupil Premium" from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<u>Overall Attainment and Progress.</u> Pupil premium pupils nationally achieve a lower level of attainment and make less progress than non-pupil premium pupils. This is also currently the case at GAA. Pupil premium pupils in 2024/25 attainment measures indicate that pupil premium pupils on average achieved half a grade per subject less progress than non-pupil premium pupils.
2	<u>Reading and Disciplinary Literacy.</u> Nationally low reading scores are recognised as one of the biggest challenges facing pupil premium pupil academic achievements. This national picture is mirrored at Great Academy Ashton, on entry pupil premium pupils in Year 7 cohort in 2025 have a reading standardised age score (NGRT) of 5.9 below non-pupil premium pupils, closing this gap is a key priority for the school. In line with national trends a significant proportion of pupil premium pupils struggle to articulate their learning (subject specific) and explain the world around them (vocabulary gap). Pupil voice indicates that a significant proportion of pupil premium pupils do not have access to books at home and therefore do not independently engage with reading across a variety of texts and purposes. Our range of whole school strategies are intended to address this gap.
3	<u>Culture and Connectivity to Education.</u> Most disadvantaged pupils do participate in enrichment and leadership opportunities at GAA, but participation rates remain lower than peers in some clubs and cultural capital experiences. The range of student leadership opportunities available within the academy is strong; however, some disadvantaged pupils lack the confidence to self-advocate or take on leadership roles without additional scaffolding and mentoring. A continued focus on developing resilience, pupil voice and aspiration is required.

	The academy's careers programme is fully compliant with all Gatsby Benchmarks. Nevertheless, deeper employer engagement and work-related experiences are required to ensure disadvantaged pupils access aspirational pathways and have a strong understanding of labour market information.
4	<p><u>Mental Health and Wellbeing.</u></p> <p>Nationally, post pandemic, there has been an increase in mental health and wellbeing need. Great Academy Ashton is continuing to mirror this trend with a rise in referrals for mental health, well-being concerns and Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) cases. As part of our pupil wellbeing strategy, we have now expanded our capacity to support pupils internally, meaning that needs are now identified and addressed proactively at a lower tier of need. Despite this, a number of our pupil premium cohort continue to require bespoke support – for example those with social and emotional challenges are overrepresented within the cohort.</p>
5	<p><u>Behaviour</u></p> <p>The national suspension rate for FSM eligible pupils is 21.70% compared to 5.47% for non-PP pupils. As a result of our Behaviour Engagement strategy, GAA's pupil premium suspension rate has now reduced to below national figures (12.61%) - but an in-school PP/ non-PP gap remains. The highest rate for suspensions was age 13 and permanent exclusions age 14, before drops for both in higher ages. Our objective is to continue to reduce suspensions and reduce the remaining gap between PP and non-PP students.</p>
6	<p><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>attendance for both pupil premium and non-premium pupils at GAA is below national average and our challenge is to be in line. Pupil premium pupils have lower attendance compared to their non-pupil premium peers – contributing to lower overall attainment for this cohort. The gap needs to be closed and so in 2025/2026 continued targeted support will take place to reduce the PP non-PP gap.</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
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<p>By Summer 2028 ensure that the attainment and progress for disadvantaged pupils will be in line with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.</p>	<p>Pupil Premium KS4 progress scores are in line with non-pupil premium pupils both at the Academy, and local and national data.</p> <p>Pupil premium KS4 outcomes are in line with non-premium pupils, both at the Academy, and local and national data.</p> <p>The number of PP pupils at above/expected mirrors their non-PP counterparts at Key Stage 3.</p> <p>2025/26 Year 11 cohort specific targets for ALL pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A8 = 48.29 • P8 = NA • PPP8 = NA • En4+ = 94.7% • Ma4+ = 69.5% • En5+ = 66.9% • Ma5+ = 47.7% • Basics 4+ = 67.7% • Basics 5+ = 44% • EBACC APS > 4.29 • Attendance = +0.2% (>NA) • NEET = 0% • PA = -3 (<NA)
<p>Pupil reading NGRT scores will increase as a result of our waves of intervention linked to our reading strategy.</p>	<p>Analysis from teacher assessments, Lexonik Advanced and Reading Plus will show an increase in NGRT scores for pupil premium pupils across all year groups. We aim to at least maintain the PP non-PP gap -6 (currently narrower than the national gap -8). In time, to further narrow the PP non-PP gap by 2 points on the SAS NGRT.</p>
<p>For pupils to engage with and read a broad and enriching range of fiction and non-fiction texts both for knowledge and pleasure, which align with our school context, reading ability and interest level.</p>	<p>There will be a visible, positive culture of reading within classrooms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reg and Read GAA Literary Canon. • Curriculum planning for disciplinary reading. • Word of the Week. • Reading Plus. • Library- Reading for pleasure. • Transition book year 7.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet for every Year 8 student, 'literature in the home'. • Positive engagement with Right to Succeed reading project Tameside LA project as part of PEIA. • Subject specific vocabulary that is referred to by staff in their lessons. • There will be an increased number of book loans to be evident amongst our most disadvantaged pupils.
Reduction in the number of suspension/exclusions for pupil premium pupils, without the lowering of expectations on acceptable behaviour within the Academy. This will be supported by the behaviour for learning strategy as it embeds with pupils and staff.	<p>Number of behaviour points and sanctions for PP in line with non-PP, and showing an overall decline compared to previous academic years.</p> <p>Suspensions reduced for PP and in line with non-PP, and show an overall decline compared to previous academic years.</p> <p>Increase in EHCP applications to support SEMH students.</p> <p>Behaviour curriculum embedded. Students are explicitly taught expected behaviour at the beginning of each academic year and then embedded through assemblies and morning moods as well as through using the GAA way of teaching in lessons.</p>
By Summer 2027 the mental health and well-being needs of the pupil premium cohort will be met by a combination of in-school provision /signposting to additional support.	<p>Pastoral referral data for mental health and well-being service requirements indicates the % of pupil premium referrals is in line with non-pupil premium pupil referrals.</p> <p>Qualitative data from pupil voice, including BeeWell survey, Pass Survey, teacher observations and parental feedback also from safeguarding (CPOMs) and Emotional Health and Wellbeing team indicate need is being met.</p> <p>A range of internal pastoral interventions is in place to reduce high tiered referrals to external support.</p> <p>EBSA PP cohort show incremental positive improvements in attendance data as appropriate for EBSA identified pupils.</p> <p>A reduction in persistent absence due to EBSA.</p> <p>External validation of the mental health and wellbeing offer through Anchored Schools Program.</p>

<p>By Summer 2026 pupil premium pupils will enjoy better connection to the Academy, through a fully integrated 'advocacy' programme, yielding significant benefits especially for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>An increase in participation rates of pupil premium pupils, through targeted invite to enrichment clubs, educational outings, and career-orientated events, with attendance tracked and analysed.</p> <p>Pupil premium students are provided with opportunities to engage with higher education institutions as part of the GAA Excel Academy.</p> <p>All Excel Academy Students will be provided with the opportunity to visit a location of cultural capital. Student voice data will show a greater connection to the academy ethos and values.</p> <p>Pupil premium students will engage with Accelerator programmes such as Make Your Mark and the Scholars Programme. Data will show improved Maths and English results.</p> <p>Data will show the pupil premium cohort will have received a 1:1 career interview and college support plan.</p> <p>Reduction in NEET figures to 0% NEET.</p>
<p>By Summer 2026 all pupils (particularly disadvantaged) achieve improved attendance and punctuality, including a reduction in persistent absence.</p>	<p>GAA attendance will remain higher than the national average including for pupil premium pupils.</p> <p>There will be an in-school gap of no more than 2.0% between pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils for attendance.</p> <p>PA will be below national average for all groups including pupil premium.</p>

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: £371,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Developing high-quality teaching, assessment and a broad and balanced, knowledge-based curriculum which responds to the needs of pupils		
Ensure Inclusive Quality First Teaching (IQFT) provision for all learners, to ensure interventions outside the classroom become less necessary via robust quality assurance.	<p>EEF- The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important factor to improve pupil attainment. Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/supportfor-schools/school-improvement-planning/1-highquality-teaching</p> <p>1. High-quality teaching EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>All teachers should know the PP students in their classes and should use strategies such as live marking and cold call to target those at most need. Seating plans should be annotated to clearly show PP students for teachers.</p>	1
A strategic Curriculum, Assessment, and Teaching and Learning Team developed, who lead on high-quality curriculum development, assessment, and teaching and learning CPD. This expertise is further enhanced	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/curriculum-research-reviews	1, 2

through support from Trust Improvement Networks, which have provided specialised assistance for subject curriculum leaders, along with follow-up support.		
<p>RISE project</p> <p>Improvement priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve student basics measure to ensure that more students achieve English and maths at 4+ and 5+. <p>English:</p> <p>Activity (A): Dixons system leader to carry out review internally in English and from this identify any additional intervention.</p> <p>Activity (B): Dixons system leader to work with the Head of English to improve the quality of teaching within the department through learning walks, data meetings, instructional coaching and departmental support.</p> <p>Maths:</p> <p>Activity (A): Dixons system leader to carry out review internally in Maths and from this identify any additional intervention.</p> <p>Activity (C): Dixons system leader to work with the Head of Maths to improve the quality of teaching within the department through learning walks, data meetings, instructional coaching and departmental support.</p> <p>Activity (D): School leaders to recruit an academic mentor and develop a programme of support for students. This will require an academic mentor to be appointed.</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regional-improvement-for-standards-and-excellence-rise/regional-improvement-for-standards-and-excellence-rise</p>	1, 6

<p>Activity (I): Dixons system leader and One World to carry out direct work with the academy senior and middle leaders to identify best practice, embedding our key instructional principles.</p> <p>Activity (J): Dixons to facilitate a visit for senior leaders to observe a school with outstanding quality of education provision.</p> <p>Activity (K): Dixons systems leaders to work with the quality of education to co-construct a plan for PD based on the discovery phase work from the One World / Dixons partnership.</p> <p>Activity (L): Dixons systems leaders to work with the quality of education lead to implement a monitoring and tracking system to capture the current school picture in relation to the quality of education.</p> <p>Activity (M): Dixons system leader to support the quality of education leads to develop and implement a coaching model in school and provide support to train high quality coaches.</p>		
Mentoring and coaching for teachers		
<p>Lead practitioners in maths to support the quality of curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning.</p> <p>Additional members of staff to support Gateway provision (most vulnerable learners)</p> <p>Peer coaching in Maths and English for lead with Rise advisor aimed at increasing English and Maths 4+ at</p>	<p>‘Good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils’ - Education Endowment Foundation, Guide to the Pupil Premium (London: 2019)</p> <p>‘In classrooms of the most effective teachers, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds learn just as much as those from advantaged backgrounds’ - Department for Education,</p>	1, 2

<p>GCSE (including pupil premium students)</p> <p>Peer coaching in PE, History and Design Technology alongside Rise advisor to raise attainment at GCSE (including pupil premium students)</p>	<p>Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils (London: 2015)</p> <p>‘The effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds: over one school year, these pupils gain 1.5 years’ worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with average 3, 5, 10 6 performing teachers’ - Sutton Trust, Interim Report (London: 2011)</p> <p><u>EEF blog: Anchoring Curriculum Knowledge Using Metacognitive... EEF</u> (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p><u>Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning EEF</u> (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p><u>Summary of recommendations poster 2021-10-27-151056 qiiz 2021-10-29-074723 miux.pdf</u> (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</p>	
<p>Professional development to support the implementation of evidence-based approaches, for example training provided by a DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics programme, mastery based approaches to teaching or feedback.</p>		

<p>The GAA Way: Model for instruction to develop consistency and quality-first teaching.</p> <p>Use of the new teaching and learning field guide to increase quality first teaching. Focus on formative assessment and modelling in conjunction with the rise initiative.</p> <p>Aim to increase consistency of quality first teaching including for pupil premium students</p>	<p>EEF (2021, “Putting Evidence to Work: A School’s Guide to Implementation”) shows that schools with a shared, well-embedded pedagogical model achieve better outcomes across all pupil groups.</p> <p>Hattie (Visible Learning, 2009–2023) meta-analyses find that clarity of instruction, teacher collective efficacy, and feedback have very high effect sizes (0.70+), all of which depend on consistent instructional practices.</p> <p>Consistency means that disadvantaged pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Experience fewer “pedagogical shocks” as they move between classes. -Encounter aligned routines, expectations, and language of learning. 	
<p>CPD programme internal and external provision to support early career teachers as well as NPQ courses to continue to develop more experienced staff.</p> <p>Staff inset days and twilight CPD offer focused on group coaching, to ensure a common approach and focused on the highest leverage action steps+, in conjunction with the ‘GAA Way’</p> <p>Staff half termly deliberate practice CPD to embed key foci on SEND and adaptive teaching</p> <p>Curriculum and Assessment CPD and development days for each KS3 department to ensure it is a powerhouse for KS4.</p> <p>Use of Ambition materials to support development work (this</p>	<p>EEF indicates that a quality teacher in front of disadvantaged pupils serves as one of the best strategies for improving PP outcomes. Evidence supports that quality CPD can have a positive impact on the effectiveness of teachers.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-career-framework</p> <p><u>Effective Professional Development EEF</u> (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</p> <p>The evidence supporting cognitive science strategies in the classroom is extensive and supports improved outcomes, especially for disadvantaged learners. CPD such as this supports staff to be effective in</p>	<p>1, 6</p>

<p>includes curated materials from domain experts).</p> <p>Fortnightly professional collaboration sessions to develop subject specific strategies to improve T&L, with a focus on adaptations to ensure inclusivity.</p> <p>Steplab for peer and SLT drop ins, along with skills builder CPD (self-guided) that can be allocated</p> <p>CPD: <i>Teaching Walk Thrus</i></p> <p>CPD: The 5 a Day approach</p>	<p>planning and delivery of learning tasks and EEF indicates that quality teachers in front of learners is fundamental in improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners.</p> <p><u>Cognitive science approaches in the classroom - A review of the evidence.pdf (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)</u></p> <p>EEF Metacognition and self-regulation is high impact of up to +7 months.</p> <p>EEF indicates that PP pupils benefit from good teaching and learning – collaborative planning allows for co-planning to develop staff subject and curriculum knowledge.</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £210,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Interventions to support language development, literacy and numeracy		
<p>Expanded the SLT to include an Assistant Principal with a focus of disciplinary literacy with oversight of literacy intervention programme.</p> <p>Middle leadership role to support in the areas of disciplinary reading and writing to ensure it is embedded across all departments.</p>	<p>Systematic development of vocabulary through the curriculum - Alex Quigley research 'Closing the Vocabulary gap' - Academic Vocabulary needs to be taught explicitly and methodologically to close the attainment gap.</p> <p>Acquiring '+Disciplinary Literacy' is key for pupils as they learn new, more complex concepts in each</p>	1, 2

<p>All pupils to undertake NGRT reading test. Tiered response to arising need. Offer includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal offer – Reg and Read Literary Canon, Reading Plus in KS3, curriculum planning for Disciplinary reading, writing and vocab, Transition novel, Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, Word of the Week, Library provision. <p>For weakest readers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group intervention, Lexonik Leap SAS below 85, Lexonik Advance SAS 85 - 115, EAL provision – new arrivals and SAS below 85. • 1:1 intervention for phonics support and general reading support and EAL provision, stanine 3. 	<p>subject: <u>EEF- Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</u>,</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/literacy</p> <p>Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English: Why Closing the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report <u>word-gap.pdf</u> (<u>oup.com.cn</u>)</p>	
Activity and resources to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged pupils with SEND		
<p>SEND Gateway curriculum provision- is a mirrored curriculum to mainstream provision. Smaller class sizes, that are fluid groups.</p> <p>Blending the SEND and Reading & Disciplinary Literacy workstreams to provide literacy intervention for SEND students.</p>	<p>The curriculum intent of the “GAA Gateway Provision” is to provide an ambitious, knowledge rich, bespoke learning provision, for those pupils who need an enhanced learning experience in order to be “mainstream adaptation” ready.</p> <p>EEF- <u>Special Educational Needs In Mainstream Schools</u>. <u>EEF-High quality teaching benefits pupils with SEND. The ‘Five-a-day’ Principle</u>.</p>	All
Teaching assistant deployment and interventions		
<p>Targeted support in Inclusion area. Including the preparation and completion of bespoke Learning Plans for SEND and running a suite of targeted intervention linked to EHCP and broader SEND needs.</p>	<p>Effective use of teaching assistants has been proven to support pupil progress by 4 months. In England, positive effects have been found in studies where teaching assistants deliver high-quality structured interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching, It has also been shown to improve attitudes and wellbeing.</p>	1, 2

	Teaching Assistant Interventions <u>EEF</u> (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
One to one and small group tuition		
Academic mentor Tutor Trust	Tier 2 Pupil Premium- The tiered Model and menu of approaches. EEF - Mentoring – impact of effective mentoring programmes EEF Target Model – (Page 18) EEF =121 Tutoring +5 Months, Small Group Tutoring +4 Months EEF- Guidance for teachers mathematics . Evidence suggest that targeted specific intervention increases pupil confidence and overall grades. Sir Kevan Collins (Previous CEO EEF) - Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF Independent review of tutoring in schools: phase 1 findings - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Sunset Sessions- Year 11 After school intervention programme.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one:	1

	<u>One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</u> And in small groups: <u>Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</u>	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £145,310

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Supporting pupils' social, emotional and behavioural needs		
<p>Significant expansion of the safeguarding team.</p> <p>Full Time Emotional Health and Well-being officer.</p> <p>Full Time First Aid officer.</p> <p>Pennine Health Trust (NHS) Tameside & Glossop Mental Health Support Team working in school with just below CAHMS threshold pupils.</p> <p>Anchored Schools Award, expertise from the awarding body to audit and support in providing best practise in pupil wellbeing.</p> <p>Man Utd foundation mentoring</p>	<p>Social and Emotional Learning EEF +4 Months.</p> <p>naht-coronavirus-wellbeing-proof-4-1.pdf (annafreud.org)</p> <p>Home : Mentally Healthy Schools</p> <p>Education recovery in schools: spring 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Anchored Schools</p>	1, 2, 4

Early intervention systems – ITAS (information around the student – key stage 3 and 4 weekly meetings)		
Supporting attendance		
<p>Focused review of attendance approach as part of the Rise initiative including system leader support</p> <p>Increase in attendance team staffing.</p> <p>Continued use of a blended GAA/SOL attendance model to help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target and implement bespoke plans to support PA families. • Prioritises PP pupils/ home visits. • Embed rewards system. • Ensure all staff responsibility to monitor, support and challenge attendance at all levels. <p>Increased use of attendance passports</p> <p>Weekly SLT focus on attendance</p> <p>Use of new trust Power BI dashboard to track improvement or worsening of attendance of selected individual students</p>	<p>GAA internal data evidence that where pupils attend they achieve.</p> <p>Higher overall absence leads to lower attainment at KS2 and KS4. The Department for Education (DfE) published research in 2016 which found that: Pupils with no absence are 2.2 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs grade 9-4 or equivalent including English and mathematics than pupils that missed 15-20% of KS4.</p> <p>DfE's <u>Improving School Attendance</u> advice - (section 4 lessons)</p> <p><u>Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</u> _The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.</p>	1, 5, 6

Additional Attendance and Welfare Year Managers at key stage 3 and key stage 4.		
Attendance officer allocated to a specific year group and focus on PP attendance. To set high expectations and increase parental contact.	Both targeted interventions and universal approaches have positive overall effects (4 months). Track and act fast to close any emerging differences in the attendance of PP students when compared with non-PP students. Attendance officer/ team will make initial contact. Review of data tracked and actions put in place. Specific intensive intervention where attendance fall below 95%.	
<p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's Improving School Attendance advice.</p> <p>Ensure that systems and procedures are applied consistently, and that parents fully understand the importance of attendance.</p>	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.	
Enrichment Programme (linked to GAA / GAET Charter for Enrichment project).	<p>Outdoor adventure learning EEF +4 months.</p> <p>Social & emotional learning +4 months.</p> <p>Behaviour Intervention EEF + 3 months.</p> <p>Sports Participation EEF +2 months.</p>	3, 4

<p>Duke of Edinburgh.</p> <p>Manchester United Foundation- Provides intervention, inspiration and leadership opportunities for those involved (A full impact report is available on request).</p> <p>Careers. Ensuring all Gatsby benchmarks are met at 100%.</p> <p>Partnership with Manchester research project, mapping interventions for NEET young people. Professor Lisa Russell.</p> <p>Careers Champions – pupil champions trained to deliver sessions to peers.</p> <p>Young Carers – lead staff member, programme, and support package (case studies available)</p> <p>Educational visits with hardship support.</p> <p>GAA subject cultural capital audit. Evidence base of subject specific and academy wide opportunities.</p>	<p>Manchester United Foundation provide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) interventions which seek to improve pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly on the academic or cognitive elements of learning. Focusing on SEL can have a moderate impact on learners by 4 months <u>Social and emotional learning EEF</u> <u>(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</u> and also underlines the commitment to developing the whole child, and improvements are evident in non-academic data too.</p> <p><u>NEET Early Intervention - Dr Lisa Russell - University of Huddersfield</u></p> <p><u>Approaches to supporting young people not in education, employment or training - a review</u> <u>(nfer.ac.uk)</u></p> <p><u>Poorer young people more likely to have career aspirations that... EEF</u> <u>(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</u></p> <p>Sec-ed- using pupil premium to enrich cultural education.</p> <p>Alex Quigley research: disadvantaged pupils miss out on experiences which add to their 'Cultural Capital' and academic understanding.</p>	
Extended school time, including summer schools		

Sunset Sessions- Year 11 Intervention programme.	<p>Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one:</p> <p><u>One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</u></p> <p>And in small groups:</p> <p><u>Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</u></p>	1
Breakfast clubs and meal provision		
Welfare- pupil sunrise breakfast club.	<p>Social & emotional learning +4 months. DFE- We know that it is important for pupils to start the day with a nutritious breakfast. Several reports evidence shows that providing a healthy school breakfast at the start of the school day can contribute to improved readiness to learn, increased concentration, and improved wellbeing and behaviour.</p>	1, 4, 5
Communicating with and supporting parents		
<p>Parental communication and engagement strategy includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent evenings. • Focussed year group. parental evenings e.g. Year 11 lift off evening. • Primary liaison and admissions. • Targeted work with hard-to-reach families e.g. attendance work and behaviour work. 	<p>Based on research with local schools both primary and secondary we have identified a need to set aside a proportion of funding to support GAA in improving Parental engagement and avoid widening attainment gaps supported by an awarding body.</p> <p>EEF +4 Months Progress.</p> <p><u>Tier 3 Communicating with and supporting parents. Pupil Premium- The tiered Model and menu of approaches.</u></p> <p><u>Parental engagement EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</u></p> <p>Tailoring communications to encourage positive dialogue about learning.</p> <p>Regularly reviewing how well the school is working with parents, identifying areas for improvement</p>	All
<p>Parental support strategy includes.</p> <p>Co-ordination of charitable support from various charities - Save</p>	<p>Offering more sustained and intensive support where needed</p> <p><u>EEF- How Can Schools Support Parents' Engagement in their Children's Learning? Evidence from Research and Practice.</u></p>	3, 4, 6

<p>the Children, Manchester United foundation, Local authority food vouchers.</p> <p>Identified attendance and welfare staff to support hard to reach families directly and through signposting to additional external support.</p>	<p>Effective Teaching of EAL Learners - The Bell Foundation (bell-foundation.org.uk)</p> <p>National research and Local Context-</p> <p>GAA serves a diverse catchment area and has one of the most deprived areas in Europe. Areas of deprivation exist deeply within our community, yet do not dip low enough to trigger PP funding, thus increasing the need for social, academic, and economic support from GAA.</p> <p>Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set aside a proportion of funding to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.</p>	
Pupil Equipment to Ensure Readiness to Learn		
<p>All pupil premium pupils receive their food preparation and nutrition ingredients, product design materials and art materials. Removing all "additional contributions" which are traditional in most schools.</p>	<p>Save the Children and IDACI data available in school related to specific community need by neighbourhood or GAA cohort</p>	1, 6
Previously LAC (any pupil on roll that are previously LAC)		
<p>16 pupils in total fit into this category at GAA.</p> <p>A range of the wider strategies above are used to support this cohort of pupils according to needs that emerge. Monitored termly by Safeguarding Lead.</p>	<p>Promoting the education of looked- after children and previously looked-after children.</p> <p>The evidence used to support this cohort of pupils is based on a range of strategies from above and no specific single strategy applies to this cohort alone.</p>	All
Service PP Pupils		
<p>5 pupils in total fit into this category at GAA.</p> <p>A range of the wider strategies above are used to support this cohort of pupils. Monitored termly by SLT.</p> <p>Positive promotion of services through DofE</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-examples-of-best-practice</p> <p>The evidence used to support this cohort of pupils is based on a range of strategies from above and no specific single strategy applies to this cohort alone.</p>	All

course and dedicated member of staff is available to support service pupils, with any issues as and when needed.		
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Total budgeted cost: £727,310

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

	2022-2023			2023-2024			2024-2025		
Measure	Non-pupil premium	Pupil premium	GAP	Non-pupil premium	Pupil premium	GAP	Non-pupil premium	Pupil premium	GAP
Overall A8	40.6	29.1	11.5	40.1	31.3	8.8	40.6	32.8	7.8
5 or above in En & Ma (%) Basics	32.3	18.0	14.3	31.2	24.1	7.1	33.3	20.8	12.5
4 or above in En & Ma (%) Basics	56.1	39.0	17.1	59.4	37.1	22.3	57	34.7	22.3
5 or above in EBacc (%)	5.5	1.0	4.5	13.0	6.9	6.1	11.9	7.9	4
4 or above in EBacc (%)	8.5	3.0	5.5	19.6	12.1	7.5	18.5	13.9	4.6
5 or more subjects inc. En & Ma, 4+ (%)	47.6	30.0	17.6	50.7	31.9	18.8	50.4	30.7	19.7
EBacc APS	3.4	2.5	0.9	3.6	2.8	0.8	3.6	2.9	0.7

The gap has been reduced in overall A8 from 8.8 to 7.8 and also in Ebacc 4+ and 5+. Eng and Maths gaps have not reduced hence the focus on RISE support with English and Maths as mentioned earlier in the report.

Subject specific successes:

- Health & Social Care (PP): 91.7% Pass+, 58.3% Merit+
- ICT (PP): 40% Pass+, 20% Distinction
- Media (PP GCSE): 40% Grade 4+, 20% Grade 5+
- Biology (PP): 75% Grade 4+; 62.5% Grade 5+
- Chemistry (PP): 100% Grade 4+; 83.3% Grade 5+

Teaching and Learning

Quality first education has the greatest impact upon narrowing the attainment gap and as such the unrelenting focus on CPD and teaching in the classroom remains at the forefront of all academic developments at GAA. This is an outline of the guiding principles used in the previous year.

Through the comprehensive *On Tour* programme, regular triangulation of student voice, book looks, and data analysis, leaders systematically evaluate classroom practice. This rigorous approach ensures that resources, staffing, and interventions are deployed strategically to maximise impact, particularly for disadvantaged students as PP books are compared to non-PP books.

Teaching across the school follows *The GAA Way*, an evidence-informed framework grounded in research from Rosenshine's *Principles of Instruction*, Dylan Wiliam's work

on formative assessment, Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion*, and the *Uncommon Schools* model. Lessons are knowledge-rich and structured to maximise learning time through explicit instruction, modelling, and scaffolding. Frequent checks for understanding and adaptive teaching are used to address misconceptions swiftly, maintaining high expectations for all learners. Following Ofsted 2025 feedback, professional development has focused sharply on improving the consistency of formative assessment and addressing misconceptions within lessons.

The school's culture is built on high expectations, respect, and ambition. Teachers "teach to the top," ensuring all students -including those eligible for Pupil Premium- are challenged appropriately, with targeted support where necessary. To sustain high-quality teaching, leaders have introduced *Step/ab* for bespoke feedback and a group coaching CPD model to promote consistent implementation of curriculum intent. Staff expertise is continually developed through internal coaching, NPQ qualifications, and external subject-specific training. Teachers marking for exam boards receive financial incentives to deepen subject knowledge and assessment literacy. By improving teachers pedagogy we aimed to cut the PP gap through quality first teaching.

The curriculum is carefully designed to ensure progression, retention of knowledge, and the development of language and literacy. Reading and oracy remain whole-school priorities, with recent CPD focusing on oracy as a bridge to extended writing. Teachers adapt their practice to meet the needs of students with SEND and those facing disadvantage, ensuring that reasonable adjustments and targeted interventions are made where appropriate. Through this coherent, evidence-informed approach, leaders ensure that high-quality teaching and targeted academic support work in tandem to close gaps in attainment and enable every learner to thrive academically, socially, and personally.

This year the focus on modelling, teacher radar, academic monitoring during independent practice and 100% engagement as well as developing formative assessment further aims to narrow the gap through quality-first teaching.

Attendance

Pupils in years 7-9 outperformed the FFT national average for attendance, with Year 8 showing the highest performance compared to FFT national average. With PP students there was a gap of -0.1%. Year 10 PP students performed above FFT by 1.9%. Year 10 and Year 11 remain a key focus for improvement as the cohort trend below the FFT national average, respectively ranging from a gap of -2.5% to -3.3%. Overall, GAA concluded the 2024/25 academic year close to FFT National Averages—recording 85.1% compared to the FFT National Average of 87.1. At GAA the school falls into the lowest quantile for FSM at Q5, and these students are trending at the same percentage with comparison schools.

A concerted school-wide effort to improve punctuality yielded substantial results. Just 1.0% of GAA's Attendance marks were late marks for academic year 2024/25 compared to 1.2% for academic year 2022/2023.

Whilst the headline figures for attendance show significant improvement and are broadly in line with (post pandemic) national figures, currently the PA national figure is 20.7% compared to GAA at 27.4%. From the number of students that are classed at below 90% attendance, 69% are PA and PP. Each student at PA is receiving bespoke support in improve attendance routines by an allocated attendance officer for consistency and removing any barriers. In line with DfE best practice guidance we will strengthen support these pupils to establish and embed new attendance habits in 2025/2026.

End of year national attendance data for Great Academy Ashton in 24-25 ended at 88.9%. The minimum target set by the DfE (ABIE) is 89.6% for this academic year 25-26.

Literacy

The focus of the overall strategy is to develop the use of academic vocabulary, in particular tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary, reading for pleasure, disciplinary reading, and writing. Alongside this, in practical based subjects there is the development of oracy skills in the academic register, using the tier 2 and 3 vocabularies.

Several literacy specific initiatives are now well established, which include a vibrant new library with investment in a well curated and engaging catalogue. Every pupil has a library induction, subjects use the library for research lessons and the library beats at the heart of our school during breaks, dinners and after school. All pupils hear an academic word of the week every day in morning mood and reinforced in form time with the use of the Frayer Model. In academic year 2024/25 we introduced an improved reading curriculum offered during the universal programme in place; four times a week form groups read a shared novel in dedicated 'Reg and Read' time on the timetable. A transition book is given to each new year 7 pupil 'Who let the Gods Out' and every child in Year 8 receives a copy of the Shakespeare play Romeo and Juliet. All pupils in KS3 have been using Reading Plus from September 2022 as part of reading curriculum, a focused reading platform that addresses weaknesses in reading.

The NGRT is completed annually with all year groups. In November 2024 the average improvement was +2.1 on average SAS score, with 3 of 4-year groups making over +2 progress and one year group making +4.5 progress. Using NGRT data, Year 11 Stanine 3 pupils are now receiving 1:1 bespoke intervention. In June 2024, the Year 7 cohort added +4 on their in year NGRT SAS, this is statistically significant. In September 2025, all year groups are now at least 100 on SAS, year 7 are 97.3.

Disciplinary Reading and Writing is now led by a single brief Middle Leader, the focus of work in 2025/26 continues to be that all subjects plan strategically for the teaching of disciplinary reading, using academic extracts and excerpts that are then linked to meaningful comprehension activities. In most subjects, the responses to which can then lead to a piece of extended academic writing.

The school is a part of the Right to Succeed project across Tameside, this is a proven literacy initiative to help improve levels of literacy in areas of disadvantage, the focus is Year 7 and Year 8. At the end of the year all pupils improved their score (although PP / non-PP gap remained).

Routines & Culture

Great Academy Ashton has effectively implemented a proactive behaviour curriculum to consistently remind pupils of expected routines and standards. This curriculum includes key components such as the 'Morning Mood' routine, originally developed through our collaboration with the DfE Behaviour Hub and now extended to encompass all year groups, along with Strong Start, Do Now and Finish Now strategies. These elements are seamlessly integrated into every lesson, and Learning Modes are increasingly utilised to structure activities across various subjects. In the 2025/26 academic year, we will further enhance our methodologies, including student and staff training on relational inclusion.

An analysis of the 2024/2025 behaviour data indicates a reduction in reliance on internal isolations and suspensions. This is a three year trend in reductions in suspensions across all students in the school. Suspensions for Pupil Premium Students reduced by 14.55% and the number of sessions lost due to suspensions for Pupil Premium students reduced by 27.03%. The number of Pupil Premium students suspended in comparison to non-Pupil Premium students is an area of focus. To address this, we are reinforcing our commitment to professional development through Coaching for all teaching staff. This program emphasizes a spectrum of Positive Framing techniques, essential for the effective implementation of classroom norms and routines. Additionally, we continue to leverage positive reinforcement to align pupil behaviour with our expectations.

Our involvement in a regional pilot for relational inclusion is another strategic step forward. Here, 50 staff members will receive specialized training in relational inclusion, equipping them to better assist pupils during moments of dysregulation. The effectiveness of these interventions is monitored via the Class Charts system. Notably, the overwhelming number of GREAT points awarded (86756) compared to the instances of behaviour incidents (27867) is a testament to our successful behavioural strategies. Furthermore, a leadership review by the Director of Education for GAET has affirmed continuous improvements in specific areas of pupil behaviour. The Academy also achieved a Good Ofsted Judgement for behaviour in March 2024 for the first time.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Nationally there has been an increase in mental health needs following the pandemic. Therefore during 2023/24 we increased the number of safeguarding support staff available to pupils in school to address low level need, in particular working with emotionally based school avoidance pupils and families. We have continued to secure the partnership with the Pennine Health Care Trust Mental Health Support Team (MHST) to work with pupils to alleviate the need for CAMHS referrals by providing early intervention and low-level targeted support. This integrated working partnership, along with the additional staffing, has allowed increased numbers of pupils to access mental health support quicker within and beyond the academy.

Advocacy

In the academic year 2023/24, GAA successfully attained full compliance with the Gatsby benchmarks, achieving 100% across all categories except for Gatsby Benchmark 3, where we reached an impressive 90%. The Academy remains fully aligned with provider access legislation and proudly secured the prestigious Inspiring IAG award for 2023/24. For the 2024/25 cohort, 98% of Year 11 students received post-16 offers, a testament to our commitment to academic progression and student success.

Overall, there is a clear improvement trajectory in Personal Development and Well-Being (PDWB) provision, with targeted actions improving inclusion, culture, wellbeing support, and enrichment access. Registers are being more robustly completed and checked to ensure PP access and to be able to compare year on year.

Disadvantaged pupils now access a structured and fully mapped Personal Development and RSHE curriculum, with the GREAT values embedded throughout school life. Safeguarding and pastoral structures are well established, supported by a full counselling provision, a Young Carers network, a dedicated Wellbeing Officer, and effective partnerships with external agencies. Enrichment and leadership opportunities have expanded significantly, with over 40 clubs, Duke of Edinburgh participation, and an increasing number of student voice and leadership roles. Targeted funding has successfully removed financial barriers, ensuring equal access for disadvantaged pupils.

Data from 2024–25 shows that 21 out of 31 pupils enrolled in our Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme are from disadvantaged backgrounds. This represents 68% of participants, which is above the Academy's overall proportion of pupil premium students. Great Academy Ashton continues to fully cover the expenses for these pupils, ensuring that financial circumstances never limit access to opportunity or personal development.

We are also honoured to have been conferred the Anchored Schools Gold Award, a distinguished recognition of our excellence in PSHE, safeguarding, and student wellbeing. This accolade exemplifies our unwavering commitment to cultivating critical attributes such as resilience, empathy, and sound decision-making within our student body. Our PSHE curriculum, rigorously quality-assured by a leading national expert, remains dynamically responsive to the unique and evolving needs of our school community. The collaboration between our Personal Values Lead and Safeguarding Lead ensures that our approach is continuously updated, reflecting the latest guidance and addressing emerging local challenges to mitigate risks for our pupils. This comprehensive strategy underscores our dedication to fostering a safe, supportive, and forward-thinking educational environment.

In partnership with the Manchester United Foundation, Great Academy Ashton continues to inspire and empower young people through a broad programme of mentoring, leadership, enrichment, and personal development activities. During 2024/25, a total of 487 students engaged in Foundation programmes, including 181 Pupil Premium and 181 Free School Meals students. Across the academic year, 493 hours of delivery supported inclusion, wellbeing, and aspiration, helping students develop confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging. Leadership initiatives such as the Changemakers programme enabled 10 female students to enhance teamwork and communication skills, with 100% reporting increased confidence and 90% improved resilience. Mentoring and targeted interventions supported 76 students across 184 sessions, with 85% demonstrating improved behaviour and attendance, 97% showing a better attitude to learning, and 97% reporting improved wellbeing. Case studies demonstrated reductions of up to 47% in negative behaviour points and significant improvements in self-regulation. In summary, provision for disadvantaged pupils in personal development and well-being is strong and improving, supported by inclusive systems and proactive leadership.

GAA has contributed to the educational advancement of over 70 pupils by funding their participation in both national and international trips, thereby reinforcing the learning objectives of GAA's ambitious curriculum. Participation in the second GAET enrichment conference was significant; it involved pupils from all GAET schools in the creation of an enrichment program that benefits all pupils, with half of the participants being Pupil Premium pupils.

GAA boasts a wide range of enrichment activities including in school events, clubs, educational visits and residential trips. Some enrichment opportunities are offered universally, so that PP students are included alongside their peers. PP take-up of optional enrichment opportunities remains a focus for GAA as internal data suggests that where involvement for pupils is optional, PP representation can dip. A range of strategies are used to monitor and encourage PP engagement throughout the year. Enrichment opportunities and data reflect proportionate participation between all student groups. Current data suggests that participation in Enrichment activities is

proportionate to the school PP data. This is further supported by FSM6 students' attendance figures.

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
Manchester United Foundation	https://www.mufoundation.org/
Seneca	https://senecalearning.com/en-GB
GCSE Pod	https://www.gcsepod.com/
Language Nut	https://www.languagenut.com/en-gb/
School Cloud	https://www.schoolcloud.co.uk/
Maths Watch	https://vle.mathswatch.co.uk/vle/
Learning by Questions	Learning by Questions LbQ

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year**

A DDSL is available to support the 5 service pupils, with any issues as and when needed. Case study evidence available.

Member of SLT, the DSL oversees progress, welfare, and attainment of service PP pupils

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

No notable gaps in progress, attainment, or attendance.

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.