

Pupil premium strategy statement – Todmorden High 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	891
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	32.3% (288)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025-26 (Year 3 of 3)
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Emily Rawlinson, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Alice Coates, Deputy Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Jon Hairsine

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£336,646
Accounting adjustment (1year windfall only as treatment of PP is updated in accounts)	£48,260
Total budget for this academic year	£384,906

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Todmorden High School, our vision is to enable every individual to unlock their unique potential. We are guided by the values of ambition, respect, care, and honesty, which shape our culture and drive our commitment to equity and excellence.

We recognise that disadvantaged students face significant and lasting challenges, many of which have been deepened by the current cost of living crisis. These challenges create both academic and personal barriers that disproportionately affect those from less advantaged backgrounds.

Our Pupil Premium strategy is designed to address these barriers through quality first teaching, targeted and evidence-based interventions and wider more bespoke strategies. We are committed to identifying and responding to the specific needs of each student, including financial hardship, limited access to resources, and disrupted learning experiences.

Most of our Pupil Premium funding is allocated to staffing and staff development to ensure that all students, particularly those who are disadvantaged, receive high-quality teaching from the outset. We know that getting it right first time in the classroom is far more effective than relying on additional catch-up sessions. Quality First Teaching supports social inclusion, boosts self-esteem, and enables students to engage fully in extracurricular activities. A key area of investment is our in-school coaching programme, which focuses on improving teaching practice with a strong emphasis on raising outcomes for disadvantaged students.

Alongside our commitment to Quality First Teaching, we place a strong emphasis on pastoral care, targeted support, and wider strategies. This reflects our understanding that the barriers faced by disadvantaged students are often complex, varied, and unique, requiring a flexible and personalised approach. For one student, this might mean access to a new uniform and essential resources; for another, it could involve additional support in maths or access to counselling. Some students may initially thrive through high-quality teaching alone, but their needs may evolve over time. Our strategy is underpinned by a robust plan and deliberately designed with the flexibility to adapt, recognising that this cohort is made up of individuals whose circumstances and needs can change.

We recognise that good attendance is fundamental to academic success and personal development. For disadvantaged students particularly, every day in school matters. Persistent absence can widen the attainment gap, limit access to enrichment opportunities and reduce future life chances. At Todmorden High School, we take a proactive and compassionate approach to improving attendance, working closely with families to understand and address the underlying causes of absence. Our strategy includes early identification of concerns, personalised support plans and strong collaboration between pastoral, academic and external support teams. Research shows that pupils with 95–100% attendance at Key Stage 4 are 1.9 times more likely to achieve a Grade 5 in English and Maths GCSEs than those with 90–95%

attendance. Missing just 10 days in Year 11 can reduce the likelihood of achieving this benchmark by around 50%. By prioritising attendance as a key driver of equity, we aim to ensure that all students, especially those facing disadvantage, are present, engaged and ready to learn.

We believe that achieving true equity sometimes means putting disadvantaged students ahead of others, ensuring they receive the additional support needed to thrive. Without this focused approach, we risk limiting their opportunities and undermining social mobility.

Every student, regardless of background, deserves to leave our school equipped with the qualifications, skills, and personal attributes needed to succeed in life. By placing disadvantaged students at the heart of our strategy, we aim to close the gap in outcomes and empower all learners to realise their full potential.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge		
1	Attendance		
	2024-2025	Todmorden High School	National average
	Whole School Attendance	91.7%	91.1%
	Disadvantaged attendance	87.7%	NA
	Whole school persistent absence (below 90%)	22.2%	18.7%
	Disadvantaged persistence absence (below 90%)	40.6%	NA
	Low school attendance significantly affects students' academic progress and personal development. When students miss school, they develop gaps in their learning, which often leads to lower attainment and reduced confidence as		

	they feel behind their peers. This can impact their motivation and engagement with learning. Poor attendance also disrupts routines, making students more likely to experience behavioural issues. Additionally, being out of school increases the risk of safeguarding concerns, as vulnerable students may lack the protective structure and oversight that school provides. Furthermore, low attendance limits opportunities for students to develop essential social skills, such as teamwork, communication, and relationship-building; all of which are vital for success both in and beyond the classroom.															
2	Attainment <table><tr><td>2024-2025</td><td>Todmorden High School</td><td>National Average</td></tr><tr><td>Attainment 8</td><td>46.0</td><td>45.9</td></tr><tr><td>Disadvantaged attainment 8</td><td>36.3</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>Basics 5+</td><td>43%</td><td>45%</td></tr><tr><td>Disadvantaged basics 5+</td><td>29%</td><td>26%</td></tr></table> Disadvantaged students often face lower levels of literacy and numeracy, which can lead to frustration, disengagement from learning, and increased behavioural challenges. These foundational gaps, particularly in reading, language development, and comprehension, significantly hinder pupils' ability to access the curriculum and succeed in day-to-day school life. Low literacy and language skills disproportionately affect disadvantaged pupils, limiting their capacity to understand instructions, engage with texts, and express themselves effectively. This impacts academic achievement and reduces confidence and participation in classroom activities. The consequences of lower attainment are far-reaching. Students with limited literacy and numeracy are less likely to meet expected standards, which restricts their access to further education, qualifications, and future career opportunities. Over time, this can perpetuate cycles of disadvantage and reduce social mobility. Additional considerations include: • Vocabulary gaps affecting pupils' ability to understand subject-specific terminology, especially in subjects like science, history, and maths • Limited exposure to rich language environments at home, meaning disadvantaged pupils may require more targeted support to catch up	2024-2025	Todmorden High School	National Average	Attainment 8	46.0	45.9	Disadvantaged attainment 8	36.3	35	Basics 5+	43%	45%	Disadvantaged basics 5+	29%	26%
2024-2025	Todmorden High School	National Average														
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	• The importance of early intervention and sustained support to close these gaps and ensure all pupils can thrive academically and socially
3	Mental health Analysis of safeguarding data, counselling referrals, and staff voice indicates that disadvantaged students are disproportionately affected by mental health challenges. These barriers have a direct impact on their ability to engage with learning: • Attendance and participation: Mental health difficulties often result in students missing lessons more frequently. When they are present, they may struggle to focus, participate, or engage meaningfully with the content. • Emotional readiness to learn: Students facing emotional or psychological challenges may find it difficult to regulate their behaviour, manage stress, or maintain motivation, which further hinders academic progress. • Staff observations: Staff consistently report that disadvantaged pupils typically require more emotional support and are more likely to present with signs of anxiety, low mood, or disengagement in the classroom. These findings highlight the need for targeted mental health support and proactive strategies to ensure these students can access learning and thrive in a safe, supportive environment.
4	Aspirations We have identified several significant barriers to achievement and progression among our disadvantaged students, particularly in relation to aspirations and post-16 choices: • Low aspirations and course selection: Several students are not studying courses that match their academic potential. This is often due to low aspirations, which can result in students selecting less challenging or inappropriate pathways. • Limited aspirations towards higher education: Disadvantaged students are less likely to aspire to university. Student voice feedback highlights a lack of understanding about what university entails, misconceptions around affordability, and a general fear of the unknown. These factors contribute to a reluctance to consider higher education as a viable option. • Familiarity over ambition in post-16 Choices: Many students opt for Burnley College due to its familiarity, even when other institutions may offer more ambitious or offer better-suited opportunities. This suggests

	a need to broaden students' awareness of the full range of post-16 options available to them. Engagement with careers guidance: Disadvantaged students are often the hardest to engage in careers guidance interviews. They typically require more intensive support with applications and a greater investment of time to ensure they are making informed and aspirational choices.
5	Punctuality In 2024-2025 students were late to school 11.39% of the time, for disadvantaged students it was 16.86%. The school day begins with focus time a crucial period that sets students up for success. Prompt attendance is essential to ensure students are mentally and physically prepared for learning. During this time, staff check uniform and equipment, helping students start the day organised and ready. Missing focus time can mean arriving at lessons unprepared, which may impact engagement and progress throughout the day. Learning begins the moment students enter the classroom. Arriving late, even by just five minutes to each lesson can result in the loss of up to three weeks of learning time over the course of a school year. At Todmorden High School, every lesson starts with a Smart Start, a retrieval activity designed to activate prior knowledge and prepare the brain for new learning. These early moments are crucial. For some students, this task can be challenging, and avoidance behaviours such as arriving late can prevent them from accessing valuable opportunities to succeed. In subjects like PE, promptness is especially important. Students who arrive late may find their class has already moved to another location, missing out on practical learning and team participation. Lateness also means missing the teacher's initial explanation, which often sets the foundation for the entire lesson. Without this, students may struggle to engage with the content and fall behind. Being late to form time has further consequences. Uniform and equipment checks are missed, and students may not receive targeted interventions such as handwriting support that are designed to help them thrive. Punctuality is not just about being on time. It is about making the most of every learning opportunity and setting students up with the skills to be punctual after they leave school.

6	Sense of belonging While our staff and students often express a strong sense of connection to the school, this is not always shared by all parents and stakeholders in the wider community. This is particularly evident among some disadvantaged families and those whose own experiences of Todmorden High School were shaped by a very different school culture in the past. Parents of disadvantaged students are often less likely to feel able to fully engage with school life. This can be seen in lower levels of participation in activities such as reading the weekly letter, attending parents' evenings, or accessing revision resources. These missed opportunities can contribute to a sense of disconnection and reduce the support available to students outside the classroom. In some cases, parents may not fully align with our current values and expectations. This can lead to a disconnect between home and school, which affects how students engage with their learning and how supported they feel in their educational journey. We also recognise that some parents do not always approach the school directly when concerns arise, choosing instead to share their views online. This can make it more difficult to resolve issues constructively and collaboratively. Building a stronger sense of belonging across our whole community is essential. We are committed to strengthening relationships with parents and carers, fostering trust, and ensuring that every family feels valued and included in our shared mission to support student success.
7	Financial hardship Families facing financial challenges often struggle to afford essential aspects of school life, such as uniform, learning resources, and educational trips. These experiences are not just enriching, they are vital for building confidence, broadening horizons, and deepening engagement with learning. When students are unable to participate, it can reinforce feelings of exclusion and limit their access to opportunities that support academic and personal growth. Transport costs can also be a barrier. Some parents are unable to attend meetings or events at school due to the expense of travel. In some cases, students themselves face difficulties getting to school, which can affect attendance and punctuality. Access to technology is another key issue. Many disadvantaged families do not have a PC or laptop at home, making it difficult for students to complete

	home learning tasks, revise effectively, or even view their timetables. This digital divide places them at a disadvantage compared to their peers and can widen gaps in attainment. We are committed to identifying and addressing these challenges. By working closely with families, providing targeted support, and ensuring equity of access to all aspects of school life, we aim to remove financial barriers and help every student thrive.
8	Home learning completion Home learning is a vital part of academic progress, but we have identified several challenges that disproportionately affect our disadvantaged pupils. Completion rates for home learning tasks are consistently lower among disadvantaged students. This is often linked to reduced support at home, where parents may feel less confident in assisting with schoolwork or may not have the time or resources to do so. Engagement with home learning support provided by school is also more difficult for these students. Whether it's attending after-school sessions, accessing online resources or seeking help from staff, disadvantaged pupils are less likely to take up these opportunities. A lack of resilience is another key factor. When faced with challenging tasks, disadvantaged students are more likely to give up rather than persevere. Many also lack the tools and strategies needed to research or problem-solve when they do not immediately know the answers. This limits their ability to work independently and build confidence in their learning. Access to technology remains a significant barrier. Without a PC or laptop at home, students struggle to complete online tasks, revise effectively or even view their timetables. This digital gap continues to widen the attainment divide. We are committed to addressing these challenges by providing targeted support, improving access to resources and helping students develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed beyond the classroom.

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.

The success criteria overlaps and many of the intended outcomes. Where this happens, it has not been repeated.

Intended outcome	Success criteria		
Raising the attainment of students at GCSE.			
		Disadvantaged Students 2024-2025	Target Disadvantaged students 2025-2026
	A8	36.29	42
	4+ Basics	45%	55%
	5+ Basics	29%	40%
Improved engagement in school.			
		Disadvantaged Students 2024-2025	Target Disadvantaged students 2025-2026
	Average rate—HT report Sep	27.74	20.00
	1+ Suspensions	68.22%	50%
	ARCH ratio	85%	90%
	Average number of positives	1428	1700
	Average number of negatives	-259	-180
	Extra-curricular	34% (all students)	35%
Belonging	Attendance at parents evening		
		Disadvantaged Students 2024-2025	Target Disadvantaged students 2025-2026
	Y7 Cohort 2030	NA	65%
	Y8 Cohort 2029	42% (25)	65%
	Y9 Cohort 2028	37% (20)	65%
	Y10 Cohort 2027	37% (22)	65%
	Y11 Cohort 2026	50% (24)	65%
	- Parent surveys will show parents would recommend this school. - The school's improvement plan will highlight a clear breakdown for further qualitative success measures.		

Attendance of this group improves match national average of all.		Disadvantaged Students 2024-2025	Target Disadvantaged students 2025-2026	
	Attendance	87.7%	91%	
	Persistently absent (below 90%)	40.6%	30%	
Punctuality		Disadvantaged Students 2024-2025	Target Disadvantaged students 2025-2026	
	Late to school	16.86%	10%	
Destinations		Disadvantaged Students 2023-2024 (internal data)	Disadvantaged Students 2024-2025	Target Disadvantaged students 2025-2026
	Students in sustained education, employment or training	93.9%	NA	95%
	Students studying level 3	36.7%	NA	50%

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: £192,453

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Quality first teaching in core Prioritise quality first teaching for disadvantaged students. Questioning focus, additional support and extra feedback. Allocate additional time and staffing to develop the curriculum and learning in maths, English and science. TLRs also help to recruit and retain strong teachers. Costings Science £40,043 (TLRs and capacity) English £32,980 (TLRs and capacity) Maths £33,550 (TLRs and capacity) Total £106,573	Quality first teaching is the most highly effective approach for improving outcomes among disadvantaged students in core subjects such as maths, English, and science. The Education Endowment Foundation emphasises that strong teaching is the most powerful lever schools must raise attainment, particularly for pupils facing disadvantage. Strategies such as explicit instruction, scaffolding, and metacognitive techniques when delivered consistently and thoughtfully help ensure that all learners can access and engage with the curriculum. Supporting this, research commissioned by the Sutton Trust found that the impact of high-quality teaching is especially significant for disadvantaged pupils, with stronger teaching capable of accelerating their progress substantially compared to weaker instruction. This highlights the critical role of teacher effectiveness in closing the attainment gap and promoting equity in education.	1, 2, 4, 8
CPD for staff with a particular focus on routines. Training for staff on 'routines for a reason' with time for practice.	Embedding consistent routines across classrooms is a cornerstone of effective teaching and learning, and targeted CPD can play a pivotal role in achieving this. Training sessions such as "routines for a reason" provide staff with the rationale behind routines, alongside structured opportunities to practise and refine them collaboratively. The Education Endowment Foundation highlights that routines such as greeting students at the door or implementing	2, 3, 5, 6

Routines built into coaching for individual staff. Department plans provide subject specific support. Costings Senior leader planning and implementation time £10,991 Total £10,991	consistent “do now” activities can significantly enhance learning time when they are explicitly taught and consistently reinforced across the school (Mould, 2022). To ensure sustainability, these routines should be embedded not only in classroom practice but also within departmental coaching and school improvement plans. The Education Endowment Foundation’s School’s Guide to Implementation underscores the importance of aligning professional development with whole-school priorities, recommending a structured yet flexible approach that includes planning, delivering, and sustaining change through collaborative leadership and ongoing support (EEF, 2024).	
Reciprocal reading This is run during focus time with all students, but small groups of students, especially those who are disadvantaged receive targeted support. Costings Deputy SENCO £14,400 Literacy mentor £3,482 Total £17,882	The Education Endowment Foundation conducted an efficacy trial of the FFT Reciprocal Reading programme, which showed that pupils receiving the intervention made an average of two months’ additional progress in reading comprehension compared to similar pupils who did not receive the intervention. The programme teaches four key strategies predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarising and is delivered in small groups by trained staff. It was found to be particularly beneficial for pupils who could decode text but struggled with understanding it.	2, 3,
Coaching A robust and rigorous coaching programme that ensures all staff receive targeted support to enhance their professional practice, thereby improving outcomes for disadvantaged students. Costings Senior leader capacity £40,788	Leverage Leadership written by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo • Bambrick-Santoyo’s Leverage Leadership outlines seven key levers for school improvement, with instructional coaching as a central driver. • His “See It, Name It, Do It” model provides a clear, actionable framework for coaching that improves teacher practice through observation, feedback, and rehearsal. • Coaching is shown to be the most efficient use of leadership time to drive sustained improvement in teaching quality. Ambition Institute and Steplab • Instructional coaching is described as one of the most effective forms of professional development,	2, 6

Additional staffing capacity £16,229 Total £57,007	combining granular goals, targeted feedback, and rehearsal. • Their Instructional Coaching Bundle helps schools embed coaching at scale, improving teaching quality and closing the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils. Pathfinder Teaching School Hub • Pathfinder's Coaching for Mentors programme supports mentors in delivering high-quality instructional coaching to early career teachers. • The programme uses video-based feedback and practice cycles, helping mentors refine their coaching and better support novice teachers working with disadvantaged students. Essex Research School • Research from Essex highlights that effective teacher development has a disproportionately positive impact on disadvantaged pupils. • Coaching and sustained professional development help teachers implement high-impact strategies like explicit instruction and formative assessment, which are proven to benefit disadvantaged students.	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 85,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
ARCH Belong Social and emotional support sessions. Targeted interventions for a range of needs. Support for students who need to work independently. A sensory room to help students regulate and engage more effectively with their learning. Costings	ARCH Belong provides a supportive environment that promotes student wellbeing and engagement. Social and emotional sessions help build resilience and self-regulation, which are linked to improved academic outcomes and reduced attainment gaps especially for disadvantaged pupils (Education Policy Institute, 2021). Targeted interventions and independent workspaces support diverse learning needs. The sensory room helps students regulate emotions and re-engage with learning, with evidence from UK schools showing its value for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs (Whitehouse PRU, 2025).	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8

ARCH Belong leader £15,080 ARCH Belong staff £10,628 Total £25,708		
Secondary ready During Key Stage 3, students who are working significantly below age-related expectations in maths and English receive targeted small-group instruction delivered by qualified teachers. PITJ salary and 0.5 of SRI Costings ARCH Deputy SENCO £4,322 Secondary ready teacher £24,521 Total £28,843	During Key Stage three, students who are working significantly below age-related expectations in maths and English benefit from targeted small-group instruction delivered by qualified teachers. This approach is grounded in evidence that shows small-group tuition can significantly improve learning outcomes when tailored to individual student needs. According to the Education Endowment Foundation, small-group instruction is most effective when it is closely aligned with classroom teaching and led by experienced educators who use assessment data to guide instruction. Additionally, research from Scholastic highlights that differentiated small-group instruction allows for more focused teaching, increased student engagement, and better opportunities for formative assessment, which collectively support accelerated progress in literacy and numeracy.	1, 2, 3, 8
Small group academic interventions Assessment is used for identifying students and measuring impact GL Assessments (reading, maths, language), internal data, phonics screening and staff referrals Support Offered Reading: Ruth Miskin Fresh Start (1:1 phonics) Speech and Language: Lingo programme Maths: Bespoke curriculum using White Rose Maths, Numbots, Plus One. Big Maths	Targeted interventions in literacy and numeracy are essential for closing attainment gaps and ensuring equitable access to the curriculum for students working below age-related expectations. Research from the Australian Education Research Organisation highlights that students entering secondary school with literacy and numeracy skills significantly below their peers' face barriers to learning across subjects and are at increased risk of poor academic and life outcomes. Diagnostic assessments play a critical role in identifying specific learning needs early, allowing educators to tailor instruction and provide timely support. For example, phonics interventions even at secondary level have been shown to significantly improve reading fluency and comprehension, enabling students to access the wider curriculum more effectively. Similarly, speech and language support through structured programmes like Lingo can enhance oral language skills, which are foundational for literacy development and academic success. In mathematics, bespoke curricula using resources such as White Rose Maths and Numbots are supported by evidence	1, 2, 3

Handwriting: Targeted small group support Costings Assessment costs £500 Deputy SENCO £4,301 LSA £10,521 Literacy mentor £3,472 Total £23,330	showing that explicit, structured instruction and visual representations lead to measurable gains in understanding and retention. These interventions, when delivered by suitably trained staff and monitored for fidelity, are not only impactful but also cost-effective in the long term, as they reduce the need for more intensive support later.	
Home learning Daily home learning club Bespoke support for some students through ARCH Belong Home learning analytics reported home and acted on in school. Costings Systems and Process TLR holder £1000 Librarian £6,119 Total £7,119	Home learning plays a vital role in supporting disadvantaged students, particularly when it incorporates evidence-based strategies such as spaced retrieval and active recall. According to the Education Endowment Foundation, homework can lead to an average of five months' additional progress, with even greater gains when tasks are well-structured, linked to classroom learning, and supported through initiatives like homework clubs. This impact is especially pronounced for disadvantaged pupils when schools provide a positive working environment and appropriate scaffolding. Additionally, research from the Australian Education Research Organisation shows that spacing and retrieval practice significantly enhance long-term retention, making learning more durable and accessible over time. To support this, our school offers a home learning club to provide a structured and supportive space for students, and monitors homework setting and submission, rewarding students for engagement and effort.	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8

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

Budgeted cost: £107,453

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance A detailed attendance strategy to support disadvantaged students attending. Costings Learning manager in charge of attendance £12,003 Admin support for attendance £1,310 Senior leader in charge of attendance £12,000 Rewards for attendance £1000 Total £26,313	Improving attendance is one of the most impactful strategies for raising attainment among disadvantaged students. According to the Education Endowment Foundation, 75% of schools identify poor attendance as a key barrier to progress for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding, alongside low reading levels. Regular attendance ensures continuity in learning, access to high-quality teaching, and opportunities for social development all of which are essential for closing the attainment gap. The Department for Education highlights that Year 11 pupils with near-perfect attendance are almost twice as likely to achieve a grade 5 in English and Maths GCSE compared to those with lower attendance, and that persistent absence can reduce future earnings by up to £10,000 by age 28. For disadvantaged students, who may already face multiple barriers to learning, consistent school attendance is a protective factor that supports academic success, wellbeing, and long-term life chances.	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
Pastoral care Each year group has a dedicated learning manager who supports them to be successful. Students receive support in a variety of ways, in particular mentoring and guidance. The safeguarding staff work alongside ensuring the highest standards of safeguarding. Costings Year group learning managers £33,089 Safeguarding staff £10,000	Schools invest in learning managers to provide consistent, personalised support that improves student outcomes both academically and socially. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation shows that mentoring, when structured and focused on building skills and setting goals, can positively impact attendance, behaviour, and academic progress. In secondary schools, dedicated pastoral roles like learning managers help foster a sense of belonging and connectedness, which contributes to improved engagement and wellbeing. Investing in safeguarding supports disadvantaged students by creating safe, stable environments that enable them to attend school regularly, engage in learning, and build trusting relationships with staff. This is especially important for pupils facing trauma, neglect, or social vulnerability, as safeguarding helps remove barriers to achievement. Research shows that strong teacher-student relationships and consistent support significantly improve outcomes for vulnerable learners (Di Lisio et al., 2025).	1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Total £43,089		
ARCH Engage Alternative provision (AP) to support students who are struggling to access mainstream. AP staff £7,451 Teacher time £2,591 Total £10,042	Evidence supports the implementation of alternative provision in schools to meet the needs of students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties, particularly in reducing the risk of exclusion and promoting successful reintegration. A recent doctoral thesis from the University of Manchester highlights that pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties are disproportionately represented in exclusion statistics, and that mainstream settings often struggle to meet their complex needs due to competing demands such as behaviour policies and academic pressures. The study found that targeted alternative provision, supported by local authority systems and tailored interventions, can significantly improve outcomes for these students by addressing their emotional and behavioural challenges in a more flexible and supportive environment.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Parental engagement Parental communication strategy Positive visits to school Parental voice Training for staff Identify hard to reach parents Set up a PTFA Costings SLT capacity £3000 Total £3,000	Improving parental engagement with school will support parents in providing additional supportive challenge to their children. Where parental engagement in school and learning is high, children make more progress and attain better results.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Extra-curricular participation Fund and partially fund places Provide equipment or transport to access trips or extra-curricular Prioritise the student voice of disadvantaged students	Participation in extra-curricular activities is a powerful driver of personal development, academic success, and social mobility, particularly for disadvantaged students. To ensure equitable access, schools should actively fund or partially fund places and provide essential equipment or transport to remove financial and logistical barriers. Research by the Social Mobility Commission highlights that children from the poorest households are significantly less likely to participate in extra-curricular activities, especially in music and sport, due to cost and limited availability. Addressing these barriers not only promotes inclusion but also enhances students' confidence, wellbeing, and aspirations. Furthermore, prioritising the voices of	1, 3, 6, 7

Costings Extracurricular TLR holder £1,000 Allowances for trips, transport and resources £2,000 Music lessons £3,000 Total £6,000	disadvantaged students in shaping extra-curricular provision ensures that opportunities are relevant, empowering, and responsive to their needs. As Donnelly et al. (2019) argue in <i>An Unequal Playing Field</i>, such inclusive practices are essential for fostering soft skills and expanding future opportunities.	
Counselling Employ Noah's Ark counsellors to provide counselling. £3,000 contribution Total £3,000	Counselling plays a vital role in supporting disadvantaged students in secondary schools by addressing the complex emotional, social, and psychological challenges that often hinder their academic success. Students from low socio-economic backgrounds frequently face stressors such as trauma, instability at home, and limited access to resources, which can negatively impact their mental health and learning outcomes. School counselling provides a structured, empathetic space where these students can develop coping strategies, build resilience, and receive tailored interventions that promote both well-being and academic achievement. Research highlights that effective counselling, especially when supported by targeted training for school counsellors, enhances their ability to meet the unique needs of underserved populations, leading to improved self-efficacy and better student outcomes.	1, 3
Raising aspirations Brilliant club is a programme to support students to access university who may not otherwise attend. ARCH Aspire is a raising aspiration and enriching form time for our students with the highest prior attainment (disadvantaged students are boosted up). Costings Brilliant club £2,822 CEIAG lead £1,187	The Brilliant Club's Scholars Programme supports disadvantaged students by providing them with access to university-style learning experiences that build academic confidence, skills, and aspirations. Delivered by PhD researchers, the programme helps students aged 8–18 engage with challenging content beyond the standard curriculum, culminating in a final assignment and a graduation event at a competitive university. This experience is particularly impactful for students who may not have familial or community exposure to higher education. Importantly, research using data from the Higher Education Access Tracker has shown that students who participated in the programme were more likely to achieve strong GCSE results in maths and English compared to peers with similar prior attainment. By focusing on academic enrichment and aspiration-raising, the Scholars Programme plays a vital role in helping disadvantaged students overcome systemic barriers to university access.	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8

Total £4,009	ARCH Aspire is a targeted and enriching form time initiative designed to raise aspirations among students with the highest prior attainment, while providing a vital boost for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. By combining academic challenge with tailored mentoring and exposure to aspirational pathways, ARCH Aspire fosters a culture of ambition and self-belief. The programme aligns with research from the University of Warwick, which highlights that successful support for academically able disadvantaged pupils requires structured activities, strong leadership, and partnerships that enhance cultural capital and progression opportunities. Moreover, evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation suggests that interventions which combine aspiration-raising with academic support such as mentoring, feedback, and metacognitive strategies are more effective in closing the attainment gap than those focused solely on motivation. ARCH Aspire exemplifies this integrated approach, ensuring that high-potential students, regardless of background, are equipped to thrive and succeed.	
Everything else Throughout the year disadvantaged students present with unique challenges that we support on a need's basis. For example, a new calculator, bus fare, coat, laptops etc. Costings Everything else £12,000 Total £12,000	Throughout the academic year, disadvantaged students often face unique and unpredictable challenges that require responsive, need-based support. These challenges can range from lacking essential learning tools like calculators, to needing necessities such as bus fare or a warm coat. Providing such targeted assistance is not only compassionate but also evidence based. Research shows that allocating additional resources to disadvantaged students can significantly improve educational outcomes. For instance, a Bellwether Education Partners report highlights that increased per-pupil spending, particularly when directed toward students in poverty, leads to higher educational attainment, improved future earnings, and reduced adult poverty rates. This underscores the importance of flexible, context-sensitive interventions that address the real-world barriers disadvantaged students face.	1, 2, 3, 7

Total budgeted cost: £384,906

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

All students have access to a high-quality curriculum delivered by skilled and knowledgeable teachers. This curriculum has continued to strengthen year on year, with internal quality assurance and review processes consistently highlighting improvements in both design and delivery. These enhancements are reflected in the overall upward trajectory of student outcomes for the Class of 2025.

However, while whole-school outcomes have improved, disadvantaged students continue to underperform in comparison to their peers. This highlights the need for continued focus on ensuring that all students, regardless of background, are supported to achieve their full potential.

	National average 2024	THS all 2025 (157)	THS disadvantaged 2025 (42)	THS Gap 2025
A8	45.1 (35% disadvantaged)	45.9	35.9	10.0
4+ basics	65% (44% disadvantaged)	64% (100)	45% (19)	19%
5+ basics	46% (26% disadvantages)	42% (66)	25% (11)	17%

Disadvantaged students continue to underperform compared to their peers, with outcomes influenced by a range of complex and overlapping barriers, including mental health challenges, low attendance, and limited parental engagement. The school has adopted a strategic and multi-layered approach to addressing these issues, embedding support for disadvantaged learners within staff professional development, departmental improvement plans, and the whole-school improvement strategy. However, the impact of these measures is not yet consistent across all areas, and raising attainment and progress for this cohort remains a key priority.

Despite the overall gap, attainment among disadvantaged students is varied, with notable successes in several subjects. Disadvantaged students achieved an average grade of at least a grade 5 in biology, physics, chemistry, art, photography, EPR, design technology, performing arts, Latin, and health and social care. Many disadvantaged students performed exceptionally well, the highest scoring student achieved an A8 score of 74.0, and 19 out of 42 disadvantaged students scored above the 2024 national average for all students 45.1. These outcomes highlight the potential within the cohort and reinforce the importance of continued, targeted support to ensure all disadvantaged students can thrive.

Attendance

2024-2025	Todmorden High School 2023-2024	Todmorden High School 2024-2025	National average for all students
Whole School Attendance	89.6%	91.7%	91.1%

Disadvantaged attendance	86.1%	87.7%	
Whole school persistent absence (below 90%)	29.6%	22.3%	18.7%
Disadvantaged persistence absence (below 90%)	50.0%	40.6%	

There have been notable improvements in the attendance of disadvantaged students, reflecting the impact of targeted support strategies. These gains are attributed to the sustained efforts to encourage regular attendance and to ensure that students feel successful and supported once in school. Many of these pupils are among those who have benefited from the wider interventions outlined in this strategy document.

Despite these positive developments, severe absence remains a key area for improvement. To address this, weekly strategic meetings are held between the attendance lead and a member of the safeguarding team to coordinate timely support and intervention. Furthermore, the school has maintained dedicated placements for several vulnerable students, ensuring continuity in their education and reducing the risk of them becoming missing from education.

These actions demonstrate a sustained and proactive commitment to improving attendance and ensuring that our most at-risk learners are supported both academically and emotionally.

Behaviour

Day-to-day behaviour is effectively managed through ClassCharts, and data from 2024/25 shows a marked improvement in engagement and conduct among disadvantaged students. This cohort received 369,956 more positive behaviour points compared to the previous academic year, with the average student ratio rising from 83% in 2023/24 to 89% in 2024/25, therefore indicating a more positive and consistent behavioural climate.

There has been a 19% reduction in the suspension rate for our DA cohort, reflecting the impact of targeted interventions and support strategies. This improvement contributes to an overall 17% reduction in the school's suspension rate, demonstrating a positive shift in behaviour and engagement across the wider student body.

In addition, the school successfully secured funding from the local authority to establish an in-school Tier 1 Alternative Provision facility, which opened in January 2025. This provision has had a significant impact on reducing suspensions for the students allocated to it. Among the seven students who accessed ARCH inclusion, six were disadvantaged, and they experienced a 55% reduction in the number of suspension days and a 30% reduction in time spent in ARCH restoration. These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of targeted, inclusive interventions in supporting our most vulnerable learners.

Home learning completion

The home learning hand-in rate for disadvantaged students stands at 60%, compared to 72% for all students. However, student voice indicates that many disadvantaged students value home learning and can clearly articulate its benefits to their progress. To support engagement, resources have been provided, including targeted access to the home learning club and the distribution of laptops to students without reliable access to technology at home. These measures have had a positive impact, reflected in a reduction of 726 negative behaviour points related to home learning for disadvantaged students in 2024/25 compared to the previous year. While there is still a gap, the improvements suggest that our strategic support is beginning to make a meaningful difference.

Conclusion

While progress has been made towards achieving the intended outcomes of our strategy, we are not yet fully on target. Key improvements have been seen in curriculum quality, teaching, attendance, behaviour, and home learning engagement, particularly for disadvantaged students. However, attainment for disadvantaged students remains below that of their peers, and the impact of strategic interventions is not yet consistent across all areas. The complexity of barriers faced by this cohort means that further targeted work is essential. Continued focus on high-quality teaching, tailored support, and strategic intervention will be critical to closing the gap and achieving our overall objectives.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
The Scholars Programme	Brilliant club

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