PUPIL PREMIUM POLICY

NAMED PERSON:	Mr Richard Peel Deputy Headteacher
Last Review Date:	September 2026
Review Cycle:	1 Year
Next Review Date:	September 2027

Mr Andy Crossey **Chairman of Governing Body**
Signed: A.D. Crossey
Date: September 2026

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide background information about the pupil premium grant so that all members of the school community understand its purpose and which pupils are eligible
- Set out how the school will make decisions on pupil premium spending
- Summarise the roles and responsibilities of those involved in managing the pupil premium in school.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the pupil premium conditions of grant guidance (2026-27) published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. It is also based on guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on virtual school heads' responsibilities concerning the pupil premium, within the DfE Pupil Premium: Overview guidance, and the service premium.

In addition, this policy refers to the DfE's information on what maintained schools must publish online.

Under the School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012, Schedule 14 there is specified information which has to be published on the school's website. Section 9 of this regulation requires schools to publish:

"The amount of the school's allocation from the Pupil Premium grant in respect of the current academic year; details of how it is intended that the allocation will be spent; details of how the previous academic year's allocation was spent, and the effect of this expenditure on the educational attainment of those pupils at the school in respect of whom grant funding was allocated."

The above information will be published by the school annually via the "Pupil Premium Strategy Statement" document, which can be accessed on the school's website. In meeting this requirement we will observe our continuing responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, so that individuals or groups of individuals, including children funded by the Service Premium, cannot be identified.

3. Purpose of the Grant and Funding Criteria

The pupil premium grant is additional funding allocated to publicly funded schools to:

- Raise the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities to help them reach their potential
- Provide support for children and young people with parents in the regular armed forces

This funding is allocated to schools on the basis of the number of students who have been eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point over the last six years (known as 'Ever 6 FSM'). From 2026–27, FSM eligibility is expanded to all households in receipt of Universal Credit; however, only pupils eligible for 'Targeted FSM' (household income below £7,400) continue to enter the Ever 6 FSM cohort and attract Pupil Premium funding. Pupils eligible solely for 'Expanded FSM' do not qualify for Pupil Premium.

The Pupil Premium is aimed at addressing the current underlying inequalities which exist between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their more affluent peers. The Pupil Premium also provides funding for children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months and children of service personnel.

The school receives £1,100 per eligible student. Children of service personnel receive £360 per eligible student.

4. Use of the Grant

As a school in receipt of Pupil Premium funding, we are accountable to our parents and school community for how we are using this additional resource to narrow the achievement gaps for our students. New measures have been included in the performance tables and are published annually on a national level. They capture the achievement and progress of disadvantaged pupils covered by the Pupil Premium.

The school will use the grant to support these groups, which comprise pupils with a range of different abilities, to narrow any achievement gaps between them and their peers.

We recognise that not all pupils eligible for pupil premium funding will have lower attainment than their peers. In such cases, the grant will be used to help improve pupils' progress and attainment so that they can reach their full potential.

Pupil Premium is not a personal budget for individual pupils, and schools do not have to spend pupil premium so that it solely benefits pupils who meet the funding criteria. It can be used:

- to support other pupils with identified needs, such as those who have or have had a social worker, or who act as a carer
- for whole class interventions which will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils

Context:

- The Buckingham School has a significant proportion of pupil premium pupils (24.7% in year 7 to 11), although this proportion is lower than the national average, (25.7% in January 2025).
- There is significant variation as to the proportion of pupil premium pupils in each year group.
- Whilst many achieve successful outcomes, we have identified 7 key challenges among our disadvantaged pupils:

    1. Lower levels of achievement on entry to the school, which continues to grow during KS3 and KS4
    2. Pupil Premium students can exhibit a range of social and emotional issues
    3. Lower levels of attendance
    4. Lower reading ages on entry to the school
    5. Home learning environments, social capital and parental engagement
    6. Attitude towards learning

- A significant proportion of the school body, including disadvantaged pupils do not live in Buckingham itself or Maids Moreton (an adjoined village).
- **Improving outcomes for Pupil Premium pupils is a key priority of the school**

Arising barriers to success

- Limited aspiration on the part of the pupil or their wider family
- Lack of independent study skills
- Lack of support outside of school in the form of time, emotional support, guidance and practical support
- Lack of funds to assist in accessing extra-curricular activities, school trips and visits, materials and equipment
- Low numeracy and literacy skills
- Low self-esteem and a lack of self-belief
- Poor attendance

Decisions

The school's pupil premium activities align with the 3 tiered approach described in the EEF's (Education Endowment Foundation) Pupil Premium Guide. They must be those that:

- Support the quality of teaching
- Provide targeted academic support, such as small group interventions that link to classroom teaching
- Tackle non-academic challenges, such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional needs

In making decisions on the use of the Pupil Premium the school will:

- Ensure that Pupil Premium funding allocated to our school is used solely for its intended purpose.
- Use the latest evidence based on proven strategies which work to narrow the attainment gaps and adapt these as necessary to meet the needs of our students. (such as Education Endowment Foundation research and best practice guidance from the Local Authority
  Buckinghamshire Education Strategy 2022-27

Be transparent in our reporting of how we have used the Pupil Premium so that parents, interested stakeholders and Ofsted are fully aware of how this additional resource has been implemented. Note: The DfE's conditions of grant require that all Pupil Premium spending (excluding Service Pupil Premium) falls within the DfE's statutory 'menu of approaches' – not merely the EEF's 3-tier model, which is the evidence base underpinning it. Any activity funded by PP must fall under one of the approaches listed in the DfE's

'Using Pupil Premium: guidance for school leaders'. Schools are not required to use every approach on the menu, but cannot fund activity outside it.

- Encourage the take up of free school meals by working proactively with our parents and carers in a sensitive and supportive manner and to remove any potential barriers or stigma attached to claiming them. In doing so, we also recognise the pivotal role that parents and carers play in the lives of their children.
- Be mindful of the fact that eligibility and take up of free school meals does not equate with students being considered to be of 'low ability' because of social circumstances.
- Ensure there is robust monitoring and evaluation in place to account for the use of Pupil Premium by the school and governing body.
- Recognise the fact that free school meals pupils are not a homogenous group and cover a wide range of needs. As such, the strategies or range of strategies the school uses to raise attainment will take their group or individual needs fully into account.
- Use high quality teaching and learning as a preferred way to narrow the gaps in attainment in the first instance. We will also use high quality interventions with proven evidence of impact to assist students who need additional support in a time-limited way
- provide effective feedback to enable students to know their next steps in making progress
- Use the Pupil Premium for all Year Groups, not just those taking examinations at the end of the academic year.

Use of the Grant continued
Some examples of how the school may use the grant include, but are not limited to:

- Providing extra one-to-one or small-group support
- Running catch-up sessions for Key Stage 3 students who join the school behind in numeracy and literacy
- Providing extra tuition where needed (for example, ahead of GCSEs)
- Funding educational trips and visits
- Supporting with uniform and resources
- Student First Team, including the Pupil Premium Champion.

5. Eligibility and Funding
Eligible pupils fall into the categories explained below.

5.1 Ever 6 Free School Meals
Pupils recorded as eligible for free meals at any point in the last 6 years (as determined by the~~.~~ DfE's latest conditions of grant guidance 2026-27).

All families where the parents are in receipt of Universal Credit will be eligible, regardless of their household income. Note: From the start of the 2026–27 academic year, the DfE is expanding FSM eligibility to include all pupils from households in receipt of Universal Credit. However, only pupils eligible for 'Targeted FSM' (based on the existing £7,400 income threshold) will attract Pupil Premium funding. Pupils eligible only for the new 'Expanded FSM' category will not qualify for Pupil Premium. school

5.2 Looked After Children (LAC)
Pupils who are in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English authority, including those who attend academies and Non Maintained Special Schools (NMSS). It is for the local authority to decide how much of this funding to pass on to the child's school. If LAC PP funding is retained by the local authority it must still be spent to improve the attainment of looked-after children and in accordance with the menu of approaches

5.3 Previously-Looked After Children
Pupils who were looked after by a local authority or other state care immediately before being adopted, or who left local authority or other state care on a special guardianship order or child arrangements order (previously known as a residence order). This includes children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales

5.4 Ever 6 Service Children

Pupils recorded in the most recent October census:

- one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces, including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full-time reserve service - this includes pupils with a parent who is in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England
- They do not currently have “service child” status, but they have been registered as a “service child” on any DfE school census in the past 6 years
- one of their parents died while serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme

This funding is primarily to enable schools to offer pastoral support and help mitigate the negative impact of family mobility or parental deployment. It can also be used to help improve the academic progress of eligible pupils if the school deems this to be a priority.

Note: Unlike the rest of the Pupil Premium grant, schools are not required to spend Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in line with the DfE’s menu of approaches. The primary purpose of SPP is to enable schools to offer mainly pastoral support and help mitigate the negative impact of family mobility or parental deployment on service children. It can additionally be used to help improve the academic progress of eligible pupils if the school deems this to be a priority.

5.5 FSM Eligibility Verification and Census Requirements (from 2026–27)

From 2026–27, two new fields are required in the DfE School Census for all FSM-eligible pupils: **FSM Eligibility Last Verified Date** and **FSM Eligibility Category Code** (TFSM – Targeted; EFSM – Expanded; OFSM – Other). Schools must verify each pupil’s FSM eligibility at least once per year and record the date. Failure to do so, or submitting a verification date more than one year before the census reference date, may result in loss of meal funding and could endanger receipt of Pupil Premium for that pupil. The school must ensure these fields are accurately populated in the MIS (SIMS) ahead of each October census.

The school must be able to identify three distinct FSM groups in its MIS at all times: (1) Targeted FSM pupils (PP-eligible); (2) Expanded FSM pupils (meal-entitled, non-PP-eligible); (3) Ever 6 FSM cohort. If a pupil moves between Targeted and Expanded FSM categories, separate eligibility records with appropriate start and end dates must be maintained. Where multiple funding sources apply, DfE FSM eligibility takes precedence.

The significant increase in FSM numbers from 2026–27 will be funded through a separate **FSM Expansion Grant** paid by the DfE, calculated on the basis of newly eligible Expanded FSM pupils recorded in the October census. Pupil Premium funding itself is expected to remain broadly stable, as Expanded FSM pupils do not attract PP. Accurate census recording is therefore essential both to secure the Expansion Grant and to protect existing PP allocations.

Carry-forward: Schools are not required to spend all Pupil Premium grant received in the financial year beginning 1 April 2026. Any funding carried forward must be used in accordance with the conditions of grant for the financial year in which it is spent, and must be accounted for in the school’s Pupil Premium Strategy Statement for that academic year.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1: Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Keeping this policy up to date, and ensuring that it is implemented across the school
- Ensuring that all school staff are aware of their role in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and supporting pupils with parents in the armed forces
- Planning pupil premium spending and keeping this under constant review, using an evidence-based approach and working with virtual school heads where appropriate
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium to assess the impact of the school's use of the funding
- Reporting on the impact of pupil premium spending to the governing board on an ongoing basis
- Seek regular feedback from pupils and families to inform the development and review of Pupil Premium strategies.
- Publishing the school's pupil premium strategy on the school website each academic year, by 31 December 2026, as required by the DfE
- Providing relevant training for staff, as necessary, on supporting disadvantaged pupils and raising attainment
- Ensuring FSM eligibility for all pupils is verified at least annually, accurately recorded in the MIS with the correct category code (Targeted/Expanded FSM), and that records are up to date before each October census to protect Pupil Premium allocations and the FSM Expansion Grant

6.2 Governors

The governing board will nominate a named Pupil Premium Governor who is responsible for:

- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring the school is using pupil premium funding appropriately, in line with the rules set out in the conditions of grant
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, in conjunction with the Headteacher, to assess the impact and effectiveness of the school's use of the funding
- Monitoring whether the school is ensuring value for money in its use of the pupil premium
- Challenging the Headteacher to use the pupil premium in the most effective way
- Setting the school's ethos and values around supporting disadvantaged members of the school community

6.3 Other School Staff

All school staff are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy on a day-to-day basis
- Setting high expectations for all pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium
- Identifying pupils whose attainment is not improving in response to interventions funded by the pupil premium, and highlighting these individuals to the senior leadership team
- Sharing insights into effective practice with other school staff
- Being aware of which pupils in their classes are Targeted FSM (Pupil Premium-eligible), Expanded FSM (meal-entitled but non-PP), and Ever 6 FSM, so that support and monitoring are appropriately targeted

6.4 Virtual School Heads

Virtual school heads are responsible for managing pupil premium funding for children looked after by a local authority, and allocating it to schools. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying the eligible looked after children and informing the local authority
- Making sure methods for allocating and spending ensure that looked after children benefit without delay
- Working with each looked after child's educational setting to put together a personal education plan, agree how pupil premium funding will be spent to meet the need identified in this plan, and ensure the funding is spent in this way
- Demonstrating how pupil premium funding is raising the achievement of looked after children
- Virtual school heads are in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority they work for.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.