

The Gryphon School: Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2025/26

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
The Gryphon School	
Number of pupils in school	1181
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	26%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025/26 – 2027/28
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Jim Gower
Pupil premium lead	Ollie Wake
Governor / Trustee lead	Yvonne Bright

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£287,504
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£287,504

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

As a Church of England school, our strategy is rooted in the Christian principle of “living life in all its fullness” (John 10:10). We believe that every student is a unique and valued individual, deserving of dignity, respect, and the opportunity to flourish. At The Gryphon School we promote four core Christian values; Leadership, Integrity, Fellowship and Exploration (LIFE) and this is embedded within our whole school community, enabling students to flourish morally, academically and socially.

We are determined that all children and young people regardless of background, need, or circumstance, make strong progress and achieve highly across a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum. Our pupil premium strategy is driven by a commitment to provide equity, identifying and removing individual barriers, ensuring that every student can access both the curriculum and the wider opportunities available within our school community.

Our approach is underpinned by:

- Evidence-informed practice, supported by high-quality, continuous professional development.
- A relentless focus on quality-first teaching, which has the greatest impact on closing the attainment gap and benefits all learners.
- Targeted academic support and wider strategies, aligned with the Education Endowment Foundation’s (EEF) tiered model.

While the immediate disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic is now five years behind us, its legacy continues to shape the educational experiences of many students. Our strategy acknowledges the long-term effects on attendance, mental health, and learning confidence—particularly for disadvantaged and SEND students—and integrates support for recovery and resilience.

We recognise that disadvantage is not a fixed label, and our approach is responsive to both common challenges and individual needs. It is rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions. We take a holistic view of student development, addressing academic, social, emotional, and physical wellbeing.

To ensure our strategy is effective, we will:

- Equip all students with the tools they need to access learning, including digital access, literacy support, and inclusive classroom practices.
- Intervene swiftly and effectively when needs are identified, using data and professional insight.
- Embed a whole-school culture of high expectations, where every member of staff takes responsibility for raising aspirations and outcomes.
- Ensure disadvantaged students are positively challenged, supported, and celebrated in their learning journey.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Literacy: Disadvantaged students show lower reading comprehension and writing skills than peers, impacting progress across several subjects. GCSE data confirms gaps in English attainment and very few reaching mastery at KS3. Limited vocabulary and weaker analytical skills hinder performance in extended writing tasks.
2	Numeracy: Disadvantaged students underperform in Maths compared to peers based on GCSE data. Diagnostic assessments highlight difficulties in numeracy and problem-solving, and many lower-attaining students lack metacognitive strategies to approach challenging tasks. KS3 data shows persistent gaps in secure and mastery levels.
3	Attendance: Attendance for disadvantaged students remains a major challenge. Attendance gaps compared to non-disadvantaged students, reflects COVID-19 legacy and high SEMH needs. Absenteeism continues to negatively impact attainment, particularly in KS4, despite targeted interventions and reintegration successes. This challenge reflects the ongoing regional and national picture, clearly stated in published research.
4	SEMH: Our assessments, observations and discussions with students and families have identified social and emotional issues for many students, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and EBSA (emotionally based school avoidance). We have seen an increase in mental health issues in high attainers at KS4. This coupled with SEMH issues amongst disadvantaged learners linked to deprivation, the cost-of-living crisis and social mobility, has had a subsequent impact on attainment.
5	Aspiration & Engagement: Disadvantaged White British students perform significantly below peers in core subjects. This persistent gap reflects barriers such as attendance, SEMH needs, and limited cultural capital, making targeted literacy, numeracy, and aspiration strategies a priority.

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
Improved performance in English for disadvantaged students	- Disadvantaged students demonstrate improved reading comprehension and confidence in extended writing tasks. - KS3 students show readiness for KS4 through teacher assessments and classroom work. - GCSE outcomes reflect stronger engagement and progress in English compared to previous cohorts. - Attainment gap between disadvantaged vs. non-disadvantaged gets smaller.
Improved performance in Maths for disadvantaged students	- Students show greater confidence in problem-solving and numeracy during lessons and assessments. - Increased use of metacognitive strategies observed in classroom practice. - GCSE outcomes and teacher feedback indicate improved resilience when tackling challenging tasks. - Attainment gap between disadvantaged vs. non-disadvantaged gets smaller.
To narrow the gap in overall attendance figures between disadvantaged students and non-disadvantaged students.	- Disadvantaged students demonstrate improved consistency in attendance and punctuality, with a narrowing gap compared to non-disadvantaged. - Fewer cases of persistent absence, supported by positive engagement with reintegration plans. - Student and parent feedback reflects reduced barriers to attending school regularly.
To achieve and sustain improved well-being for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	- SEMH assessments and student voice indicate improved emotional regulation and resilience. - Students actively participate in enrichment activities and report feeling supported. - Staff observations confirm greater engagement and confidence in learning environments.
To improve aspiration and engagement amongst disadvantaged students.	- Students demonstrate increased ambition through participation in leadership roles and enrichment opportunities. - Positive feedback from student voice and mentoring sessions reflects higher motivation and future planning. - Evidence of commitment to learning and school community through consistent engagement in extra-curricular activities. - Attainment gap between disadvantaged vs. non-disadvantaged gets smaller.

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: **£215,484**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Designated Pupil Premium coordinator	Successful schools have clear responsive leadership supporting attainment of disadvantaged students. Parental Engagement Guidance Report EEF Parental engagement EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
The “Gryphon Teacher Standards”	High quality teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment, including disadvantaged students. Great Teaching Toolkit EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Effective Professional Development	Focused on building teacher knowledge and pedagogical expertise, curriculum development and purposeful use of assessment. Effective-professional-development EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
CPD Programme (Adaptive Teaching, Assessment & Feedback, Writing & Scaffolding)	The best available research evidence suggests that there are five approaches – a ‘five-a-day’ – that teachers should consider adopting for pupils with SEND. These five teaching approaches are likely to broadly support all pupils, while particularly supporting many pupils with SEND. Supporting-high-quality-teaching-for-pupils-with-send EEF	1, 2 & 5
Nurture provision	High quality teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment, including disadvantaged students. Cognitive science approaches in the classroom - A review of the evidence EEF List-of-phonics-teaching-programmes EEF Guidance reports - SEND EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Technology and other resources to support high quality teaching and learning	Technology has the potential to increase the quality and quantity of practice that pupils undertake, both inside and outside of the classroom. Technology has the potential to improve assessment and feedback, which are crucial elements of effective teaching. Digital Technology Guidance Report EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

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

Budgeted cost: £38,283

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Small academic intervention (English & Maths)	Intensive individual support, either one to one or as a small group, can support pupil learning. One-to-one tuition EEF Small group tuition EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Targeted Interventions to support SEMH, language development & literacy	Students may require targeted academic support to assist language development, literacy or numeracy. Reading comprehension strategies EEF Phonics EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Aspiration & Enrichment support	Aspiration approaches are diverse and may focus on teaching practice, out-of-school interventions or extra-curricular activities involving peers or mentors. Aspiration interventions EEF	1, 2 & 5
Mentoring & Tutoring	Mentoring in education involves pairing young people with an older peer or adult volunteer, who acts as a positive role model. Mentoring EEF	1, 2 & 5

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

Budgeted cost: £33,737

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance & behaviour interventions	There are a range of approaches which aim to improve school attendance and behaviour, including parental communication approaches and targeted parental engagement interventions. Attendance interventions EEF Behaviour interventions EEF Working with parents EEF	3, 4 & 5

SEMH support	Social and emotional skills support effective learning and are linked to positive outcomes later in life. Social and emotional learning EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Cost of living support	There is evidence that equipment, uniform and curriculum trips can support children for learning, behaviour and attendance. School uniform EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Emergency Food Support	Consistently eating breakfast can lead to academic improvements, due to the nutritional benefits and the social / educational benefits of the breakfast club environments. Breakfast Club Study EEF	3, 4 & 5
Extra-curricular provision	Extracurricular activities are an important part of education and may increase engagement in learning. Arts-participation EEF Physical-activity EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
External & Internal alternative provision	Social and emotional skills support effective learning and are linked to positive outcomes later in life. Social and emotional learning EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Parental Engagement	Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's learning, and levels of parental engagement are consistently associated with better academic outcomes. Parental-engagement EEF	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

Total budgeted cost: £287,504

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2024-25 academic year using key stage 4 performance data and our own internal assessments.

Context

Our most recent Year 11 cohort presented a unique and complex profile, with a significantly higher proportion of students identified as having complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), with 35 students identified as having either an EHCP or K-SEN Support, compared to 24 in 2023/24. Many of these students required intensive nurture support and bespoke Key Stage 4 pathways, including access to external alternative provision. In recognition of these needs, we received additional funding from Dorset County Council to support these placements. Furthermore, several students were on highly individualised learning packages as part of their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), developed and approved in collaboration with the local authority. These tailored approaches were essential to ensuring students' engagement, wellbeing, and long-term outcomes, but they also had a notable impact on our overall attainment data. It is also important to acknowledge that this cohort was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only did they miss the opportunity to sit their Key Stage 2 SATs, but their transition to secondary school was disrupted by national lockdowns, which meant they were unable to participate in traditional transition and induction activities. This lack of foundational assessment and disrupted start to secondary education has had a lasting impact on their academic and social development, further contextualising the outcomes for this group.

Teaching

The headline figures show that our cohort of 45 Disadvantaged students in Y11 performed as follows:

Footnote: Understanding Attainment 8 and Progress 8

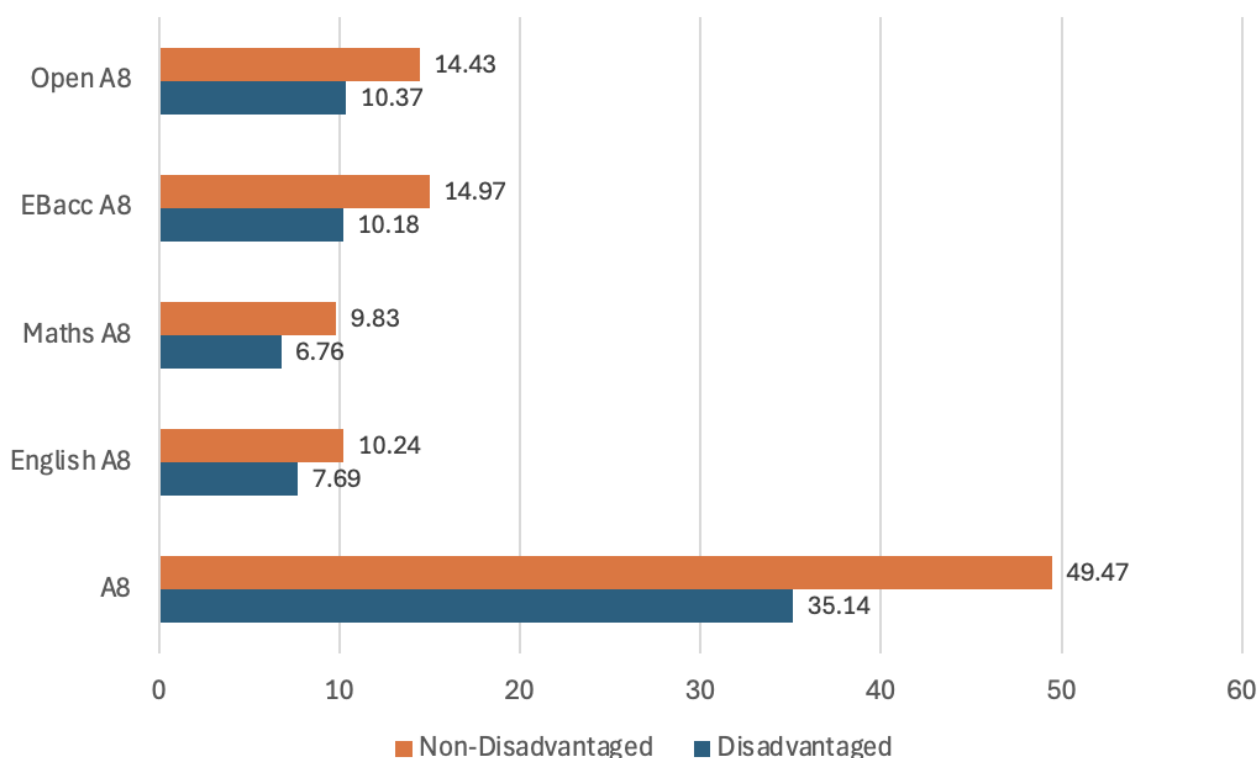
Attainment 8 (A8) measures the average achievement of students across eight qualifications, including English and Maths (double-weighted), three EBacc subjects, and three additional approved qualifications. It reflects absolute attainment rather than progress.

Progress 8 compares students' GCSE results to the national average of pupils with similar Key Stage 2 scores, showing the progress made during secondary school.

However, because this cohort did not sit Key Stage 2 SATs due to COVID-19, Progress 8 cannot be calculated. Therefore, Attainment 8 is being used as the primary evaluative measure for this year.

*(2023-24 in brackets)	Disadvantaged	Non-Disadvantaged	Gap
Cohort	45 (42)	189 (197)	
A8	35.14 (38.31)	49.47 (50.16)	-14.32 (-11.85)
English A8	7.69 (8.43)	10.24 (10.51)	-2.55 (2.08)
Maths A8	6.76 (7.57)	9.83 (9.51)	-3.07 (-1.94)
EBacc A8	10.18 (11.12)	14.97 (14.90)	-4.79 (-3.78)
Open A8	10.37 (11.19)	14.43 (15.24)	-4.06 (4.05)

A8 Measures (Disadvantaged vs Non-Disadvantaged - 2024/25)



Contextual Evaluation of Outcomes

The 2024 results reflect a cohort with distinctive challenges. Disadvantaged students achieved an average Attainment 8 score of **35.14**, compared to **49.47** for non-disadvantaged peers, leaving a gap of **-14.32**. Differences were evident across all subject areas, with the widest gap in EBacc subjects (**-4.79**), followed by Open (**-4.06**), Maths (**-3.07**), and English (**-2.55**). These figures are broadly in line with previous year trends, though the overall gap has widened slightly.

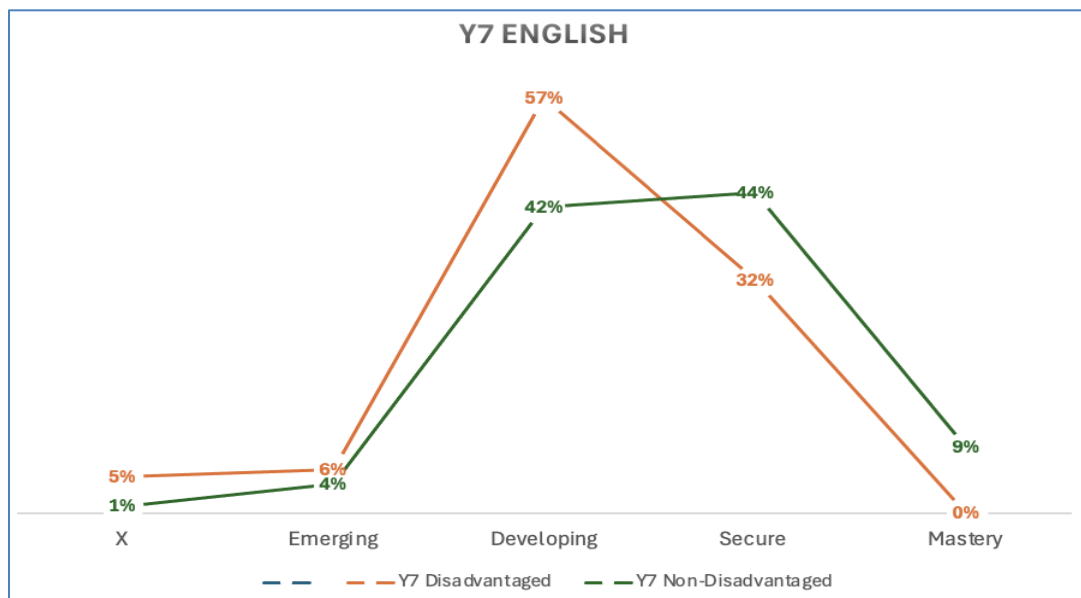
Several contextual factors shaped these outcomes. A higher proportion of students had complex SEND profiles, requiring intensive nurture support and bespoke Key Stage 4 pathways, including placements in external alternative provision funded by Dorset County Council. In addition, a number of learners followed personalised programmes as part of their EHCPs, prioritising engagement and wellbeing over traditional academic routes. These adaptations were essential but inevitably influenced headline attainment measures.

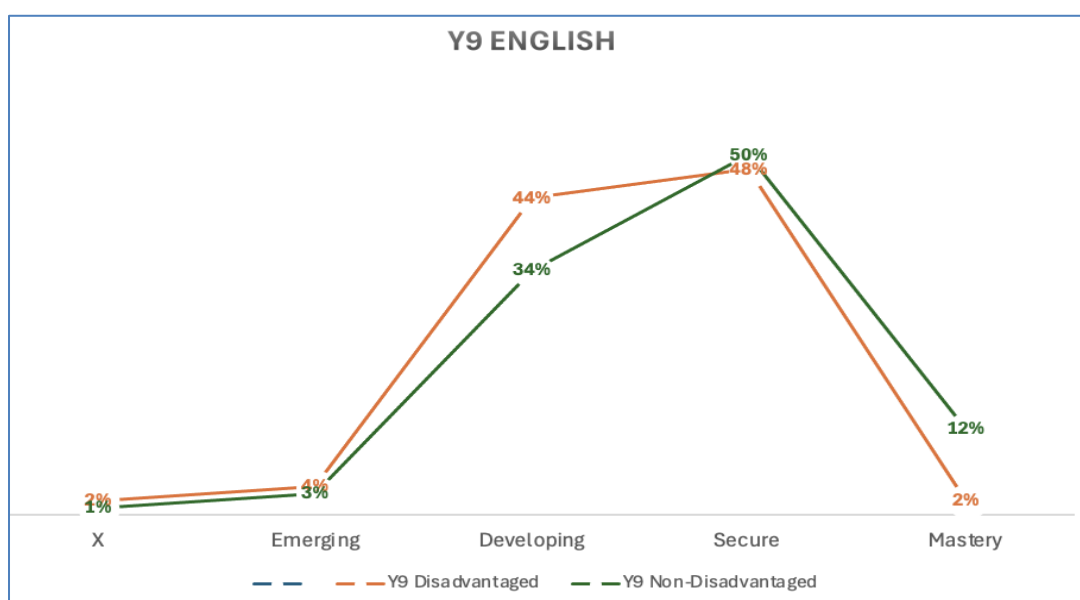
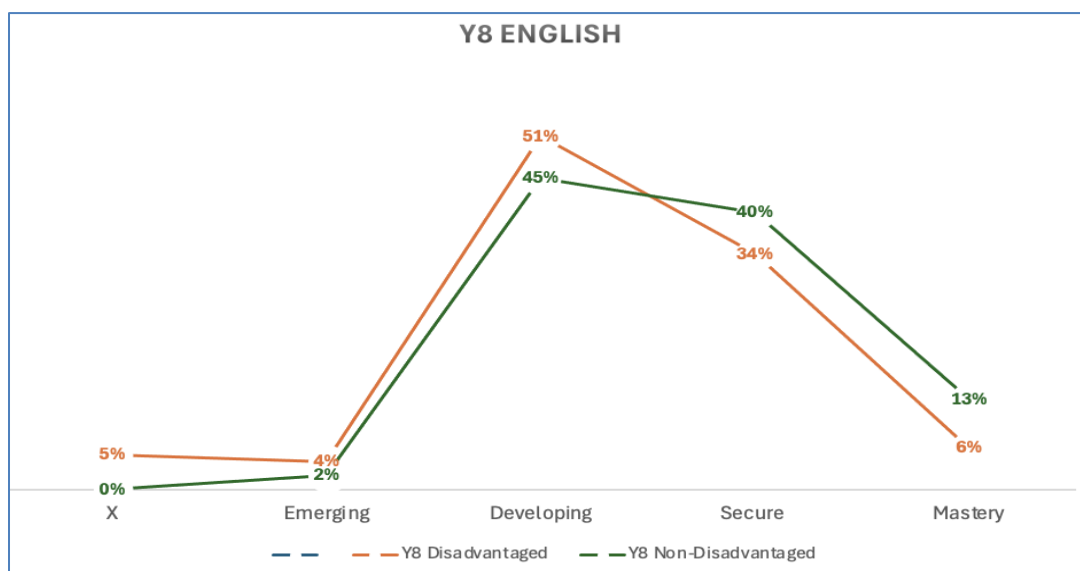
It is also important to recognise the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on this cohort. They entered secondary school without sitting Key Stage 2 SATs and missed the usual transition and induction activities due to lockdown restrictions. This disrupted start affected their academic foundations and confidence, contributing to the attainment patterns seen in the data. These factors underline the need for continued investment in targeted support, high-quality teaching, and strategies that address both academic and social barriers.

KS3 English

Across KS3 English, disadvantaged students show higher proportions in the lower attainment bands compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. In **Year 7**, 11% of disadvantaged students are either not assessed (X) or emerging, compared to 5% for non-disadvantaged, while none of the disadvantaged students have reached mastery (0% vs 9%). **Year 8** shows a similar pattern, with disadvantaged students less likely to achieve secure or mastery (34% secure and 6% mastery) compared to non-disadvantaged (40% secure and 13% mastery). By **Year 9**, the gap persists: disadvantaged students have 50% at secure or mastery combined, compared to 62% for non-disadvantaged. Overall, disadvantaged students are more concentrated in the developing band and underrepresented in mastery.

KS3 English	X	Emerging	Developing	Secure	Mastery
Y7 Disadvantaged	5%	6%	57%	32%	0%
Y7 Non-Disadvantaged	1%	4%	42%	44%	9%
Y8 Disadvantaged	5%	4%	51%	34%	6%
Y8 Non-Disadvantaged	0%	2%	45%	40%	13%
Y9 Disadvantaged	2%	4%	44%	48%	2%
Y9 Non-Disadvantaged	1%	3%	34%	50%	12%

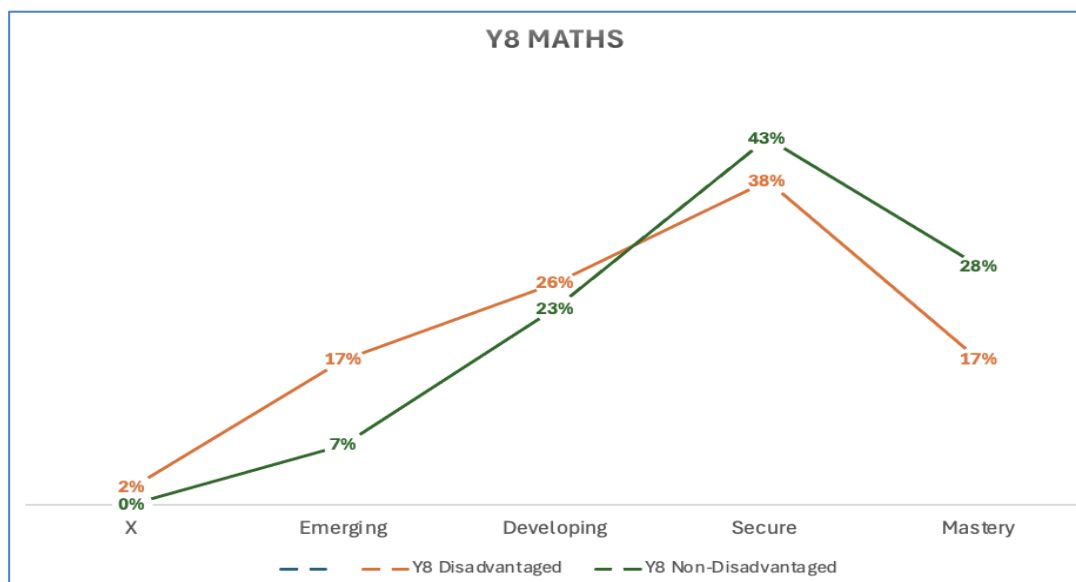
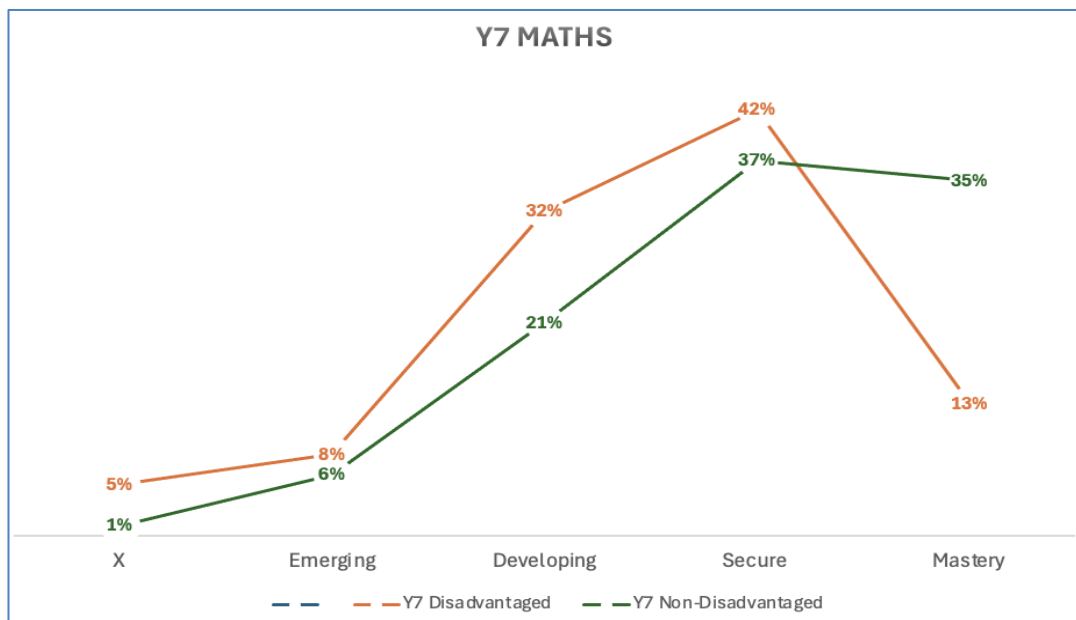


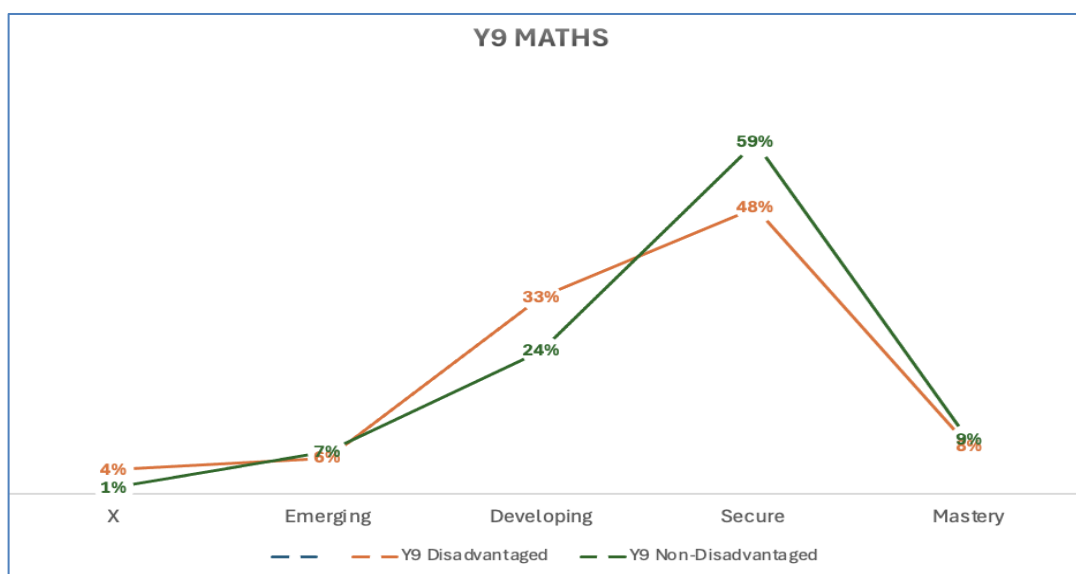


KS3 Maths

Across all year groups, disadvantaged students generally perform below their non-disadvantaged peers, but the gap is less pronounced than in English. In Year 7, disadvantaged students have **55%** at secure or mastery combined, compared to **72%** for non-disadvantaged. Year 8 shows a similar pattern: disadvantaged students have **55%** secure/mastery versus **71%** for non-disadvantaged. By Year 9, the gap narrows slightly, with disadvantaged students at **56%** and non-disadvantaged at **68%**. Notably, mastery levels are consistently lower for disadvantaged students (e.g., Y7: 13% vs 35%; Y8: 17% vs 28%), but disadvantaged students are less concentrated in the “developing” band compared to English, suggesting stronger progression in Maths overall.

KS3 Maths	X	Emerging	Developing	Secure	Mastery
Y7 Disadvantaged	5%	8%	32%	42%	13%
Y7 Non-Disadvantaged	1%	6%	21%	37%	35%
Y8 Disadvantaged	2%	17%	26%	38%	17%
Y8 Non-Disadvantaged	0%	7%	23%	43%	28%
Y9 Disadvantaged	4%	6%	33%	48%	8%
Y9 Non-Disadvantaged	1%	7%	24%	59%	9%





Overall Comparison: English shows a more pronounced attainment gap, especially at the top end, whereas Maths reflects stronger progression for disadvantaged learners but still requires targeted support to close gaps in mastery. These trends highlight the need for differentiated strategies—intensifying literacy interventions while sustaining and extending progress in Maths.

Nurture: GCSE (16 students)

Students following an alternative KS4 pathway, including reduced GCSE options and external provision, achieved significantly lower average grades compared to the main cohort.

English Language: Average grades ranged from **3-** (2.67 points) for the 1-day group to **2-** (1.71 points) for the 2-day group. Subject Progress Index scores were negative for both (-0.98 and -1.89), indicating progress below national expectations.

English Literature: Outcomes were lower, with average grades of **2+** (2.33 points) and **1+** (1.33 points), and Subject Progress Index scores of -1.28 and -1.83.

Maths: Performance was slightly stronger than English but still below expected progress. Average grades were **2+** (2.33 points) and **2-** (1.86 points), with Subject Progress Index scores of -0.95 and -1.44.

Context: These results reflect the highly personalised nature of these students' pathways, which prioritised engagement, wellbeing, and functional skills over traditional academic outcomes. Many students had complex SEND profiles and EHCPs, and their curriculum was adapted to meet individual needs rather than maximise GCSE attainment.

Language:

Name	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	Total Grades	Average Grade	Average Points	Residual	Subject Progress Index
11En/1Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	0	0	0	9	3-	2.67	0.06	-0.98
11En/2Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	1	0	7	2-	1.71	-0.03	-1.89

Literature:

Name	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	Total Grades	Average Grade	Average Points	Residual	Subject Progress Index
11En/1Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	0	0	9	2+	2.33	-0.27	-1.28
11En/2Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	0	1	6	1+	1.33	-0.15	-1.83

Nurture: GCSE Maths (16 students)

Name	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	Total Grades	Average Grade	Average Points	Residual	Subject Progress Index
11Ma/1Day	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	1	1	1	9	2+	2.33	-0.27	-0.95
11Ma/2Day	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	2	0	7	2-	1.86	0.11	-1.44

Targeted Academic Support

Small Group English & Maths Intervention

Interventions were delivered by subject leaders and experienced staff during PM registration and after-school revision sessions, supported by the Gateway curriculum for key students.

Impact:

Students were identified through data reviews and engaged effectively with interventions.

- Maths grades improved by +0.29 from December predictions (whole cohort improvement was +0.06).
- English grades improved by +0.21 for intervention students, compared to a whole cohort decline of -0.38.
- 70% of intervention students achieved Grade 4+ in English Language, with success strongly linked to attendance (e.g., students with 90%+ attendance achieved significantly higher grades).
- KS4 students reported feeling well-prepared for exams.
- 65% of disadvantaged students achieved Grade 4+ in English, close to the national average but still reflecting a 10% gap.

Key Insight: Targeted small-group interventions had a measurable positive impact, particularly in Maths, and were most effective when attendance was consistent. This approach helped narrow gaps and improve confidence for GCSE readiness.

Nurture provision 2024-25

In 2024/25, we continued to develop our early literacy support. We worked closely with our link Specialist Reading Teacher, and our LSMs to deliver individualised reading and spelling programmes for some of our students. Two Nurture teachers completed a Specialist Reading course to develop understanding and skills to embed into lessons. Students were assessed termly using STAR for reading and WRAT for spelling to provide a standardised score. There was a school-wide focus on oracy to support all students, but with clear advantages for our students with speech and language needs. The Nurture department pioneered some of the strategies and adapted some schemes of work to ensure that key oracy strategies were provided for our Nurture students.

Nurture Progress Data 24-25

Year 7 (Cohort 2024)

Progress Sep-Jun	Comprehension SS Progress	Spelling SS Progress
PP	+2.17	+0.20
Non-PP	+1.45	+1.45
Overall	+1.71	+1.06

Three of our students are working with a specialist reading teacher who provides a reading and spelling programme specifically tailored to the student's gaps. One of these is a PP eligible student. This student made +4 points progress in reading and +2 points in spelling. The other two students have not made noticeable progress in their STAR results as they are still working much below the entry level of this assessment. Some comments from the specialist teacher regarding their progress in September 2025: "Pupil A read a passage from the YARC primary Level 1. This is the equivalent level that he read in May. He made 14 errors in May, 5 errors in September." "Pupil B scored 4 out of 8 in May and 7 out of 8 this time. Positive progress, trying hard to scan for the answer."

Our action plan for next year is to embed some of these targets into at least four lessons a fortnight. Two adults will split our lower attaining class to target key gaps in phonological awareness, phonics, reading and spelling. For our next Year 7 cohort, we are going to timetable both classes together, so that we can split students into reading attainment groups to ensure students with wide gaps in reading skills close the gaps as quickly as possible.

Year 8 (Cohort 2023)

Progress Sep-Jun	Comprehension SS Progress	Spelling SS Progress
PP	+0.57 (without anomaly +4.00)	+0.29
Non-PP	+2.91	+1.55
Overall	+2 (without anomaly +3.29)	+0.71

Our PP students made an average of +0.57 reading points progress during the year, however this is skewed by Pupil A who dropped 20 points. Previously, he consistently had scored higher, so this is likely not an accurate representation of his ability. One of our disadvantaged students made +12 points reading progress and subsequently moved into mainstream due to his overall improvement. In addition, four other students moved from Nurture to mainstream during or at the end of the year. Two of our students had fluency interventions, one of whom, despite making no progress in standardised score, made a years' progress. However, we recognise this is not accelerated

progress, so have requested support from the specialist reading teacher for this student. The other has made 18 months' progress in one year.

Spelling has been embedded into the curriculum in Year 8 from 2024/25, as a starter during one unit, as well as integrated across all lessons. This can be seen in the improvement in spelling progress – previous years there had been more marginal improvements.

Year 9 (Cohort 2022)

Progress Sep-Jun	Comprehension SS Progress	Spelling SS Progress
PP	+2.44	-4.00
Non-PP	-3.00 (+0.66 without anomaly)	+2.3
Overall	+0.77 (+2 without anomaly)	+0.33

One PP-eligible student made -14 points progress, which is not a true representation of her ability. Without this data point, all progress in reading is positive. Many opportunities for fluency within lessons were created in order to support reading development outside of interventions. Four students had a term's worth of group fluency interventions, making an average of +2 points progress in the year. Three students had one-to-one interventions; two of whom started the year with reading ages less than 7.5 years. They both have SCLN, and these interventions support their language development, as well as their reading skills.

Due to the analysis of this data, changes are in place for the 2025-26 year, which include both Year 7 classes timetabled together for English so that a reading split can take place four times a week. This will allow us to work in smaller groups, supporting students at their attainment level. For our more competent readers, who do not need fluency or phonics support, we will consider their barriers to learning and try to provide strategies to support these; for example, providing further emotional regulation skills, language skills or inference skills. We also plan to move towards using a new assessment (HAST-2) for spelling with built in gap analysis to provide more targeted spelling teaching. We also plan to trial using SNAP-B special needs assessment profile for some of our key students next year, in order to support all teachers to develop their strategies for supporting our SEN/Nurture students.

Disadvantaged High Prior Attainers (HPA)

A significant focus is placed upon supporting, stretching and promoting aspiration amongst our disadvantaged HPA students in KS4. We are fully aware that nationally there is a significant drop off in engagement, due to factors such as importance of learning, sense of agency and lower perceptions of safety. This is an even bigger issue for our disadvantaged HPAs, as they arrive with us in Year 7 with higher levels of academic attainment compared to their peers. The importance of sustaining that attainment and preventing a steep drop off in engagement is crucial for their future GCSE performance. With that being said, our DHOs work closely with our HPA students, helping to mentor and guide them and ensure they are being challenged appropriately in lessons. A challenge plus group has been established at The Gryphon for HPAs, with disadvantaged HPAs

given priority access. Careers events and post-16 options are regularly promoted, as well as equity being provided to ensure this target group are involved in as many trips and visits as possible. In KS4, students have access to 6th form mentors and meet with them on a regular basis to help with guidance on revision techniques, well-being and organisation.

Evaluation of Disadvantaged High Prior Attainers (HPA) – 2024/25 vs 2023/24:

Analysis of outcomes for disadvantaged HPA students shows **clear progress during the 2024/25 academic year**. The cohort achieved an **average Attainment 8 score of 70.17**, up from **66.13** in 2023/24, and an **average grade of 7.02**, compared to **6.61** previously. This improvement suggests that targeted strategies such as small-group interventions, mentoring, and enrichment opportunities, are having a measurable impact.

Enrichment and Extra-Curricular Activities

Providing disadvantaged students with access to enrichment opportunities is a key priority within our Pupil Premium strategy. Engagement in extra-curricular activities supports the development of cultural capital, confidence, and aspiration, while reducing barriers to participation through targeted funding and pastoral support.

During the 2024/25 academic year, extra-curricular clubs and events included a variety of sports (cross-fit, strength & conditioning, football, netball, hockey, rugby, dodgeball) and creative arts projects (art club, Lego, choir, drama, whole school productions). Unfortunately, due to a change in tracking software and the end of a license with ASPIRE, formal tracking of clubs was unavailable. We now have an established and more consistent way of tracking attendance at clubs, which will be reflected in data for 2025/26. That being said, from our own assessments and knowledge of engagement levels, we have seen the incredible impact that these extra-curricular opportunities have had on some of our most disadvantaged learners (e.g., affiliation with professional sports teams; Southampton FC, Bristol City, Bath Rugby; articles written in the Sherborne Times; performance and engagement in stage shows; affiliation with our local cadet troop).

Provision and Support:

- **Financial Support:** Music lessons were funded for five disadvantaged students (piano and guitar), and costs for overseas trips were subsidised for two students.
- **Targeted Roles:** An **Adventurous Training Co-ordinator** ensures disadvantaged students can participate in the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) scheme. A newly appointed staff member focuses on increasing disadvantaged engagement in trips and visits, which has already led to higher uptake.
- **Promotion:** Pastoral staff actively promote opportunities under the “Think PP” initiative, and Dorset CC FSM events are regularly advertised via email and social media.

Impact

- **High Participation:** Disadvantaged students have engaged in a wide range of activities, including sports teams, Lego club, music clubs, school productions, and equality council.
- **Trips and Visits:** **249 out of 312 Pupil Premium students** participated in a curriculum trip last year, demonstrating strong engagement.
- **Recognition:** Disadvantaged students were celebrated at award events (e.g., sports awards) and participated in school productions, reinforcing inclusion and aspiration.

- **Family Engagement:** FSM families were regularly informed about holiday activities and opportunities, improving communication and access.

Wider Strategies

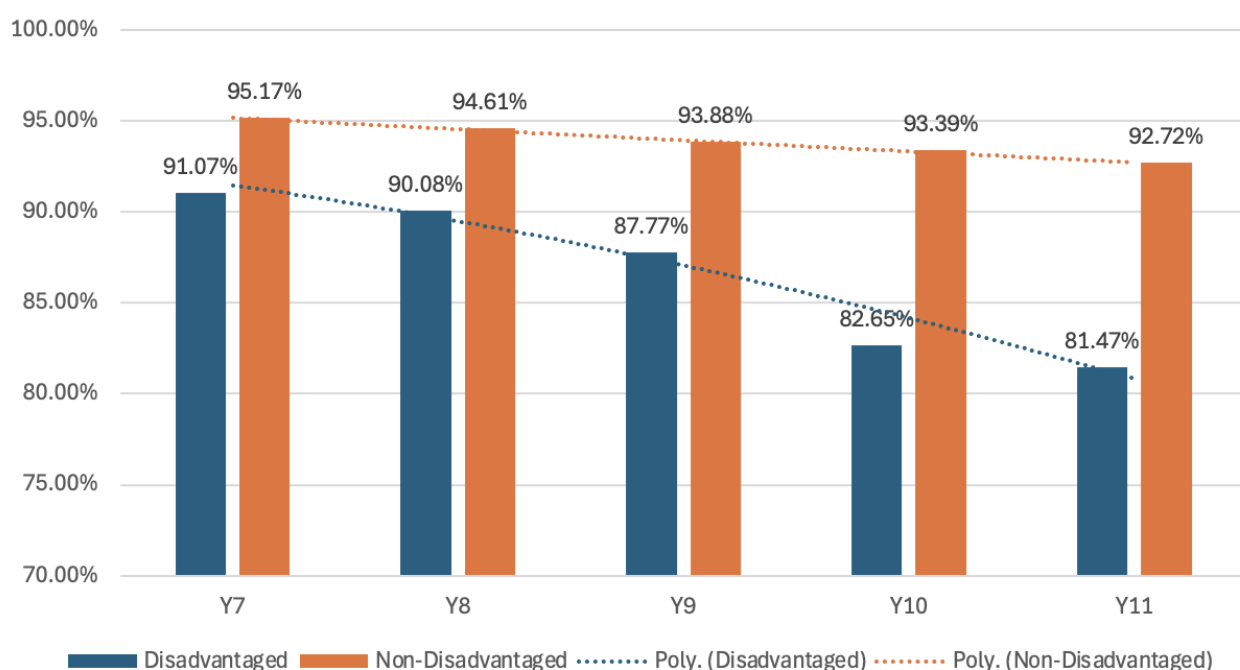
Attendance Evaluation and Context

Overall attendance for disadvantaged students across Years 7–11 was **86.61%**, compared to **93.95%** for non-disadvantaged students, creating a gap of **7.34%**. Nationally, disadvantaged secondary pupils averaged around **89–90% attendance** in 2023/24, meaning our figure is approximately **2–3 percentage points below the national benchmark**, and our gap is wider than the typical national gap of 4–5%. Persistent absence remains a significant challenge, with **39.59%** of disadvantaged students below 90% attendance compared to **12.67%** of non-disadvantaged peers, exceeding national persistent absence rates for disadvantaged pupils (around 30–35%).

Reasons for the Gap: This cohort included a high proportion of students with complex SEND needs and EHCPs, many of whom required alternative provision or bespoke learning packages. These students often faced barriers to regular attendance linked to health, anxiety, and social-emotional needs. Despite these challenges, intensive interventions were implemented, including graduated responses, targeted attendance strategies, and external agency involvement. Notably, some students classified as severely or persistently absent made significant progress, and two students who had not attended school for two years successfully reintegrated and sat their GCSEs in English and Maths.

Attendance Disadvantage vs. Non-Disadvantage 2024/25					
	Disadvantaged	Non-Disadvantaged	Gap	Disadvantaged Persistent (<90%) Absentees	Non-Disadvantaged Persistent (<90%) Absentees
Y7	91.07% (91.84%)	95.17% (94.91%)	-4.10%	24.53% (28.57%)	6.95% (9.39%)
Y8	90.08% (88.02%)	94.61% (93.13%)	-4.53%	29.09% (42.86%)	14.38% (16.67%)
Y9	87.77% (83.34%)	93.88% (93.06%)	-6.11%	39.59% (56.52%)	10.36% (18.52%)
Y10	82.65% (84.44%)	93.39% (92.37%)	-10.74%	52.27% (51.16%)	15.34% (18.42%)
Y11	81.47% (82.07%)	92.72% (89.68%)	-11.25%	51.11% (50.00%)	16.40% (30.96%)
Total	86.61% (86.46%)	93.95% (92.71%)	-7.34%	39.59% (44.92%)	12.67% (18.97%)

Attendance Disadvantaged vs. Non-Disadvantaged 2023/24



SEMH

A comprehensive range of interventions supported students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, including counselling, The Haven, Gateway (IAP), ELSA, mentoring, and targeted youth work. Additional strategies included SNAP-B assessments, social skills embedded in the Nurture curriculum, and regular check-ins by DHOYs.

Impact:

- **The Haven** provided daily support for 30–50 students and timetabled sessions for 22 vulnerable students across Y7–Y11 to help with regulation and emotional wellbeing.
- Key Pupil Premium students accessed counselling and listening ear services.
- **SNAP-B assessments** showed measurable progress for **73% (11 out of 15)** Gateway students who had follow-up assessments.
- Students demonstrated improved confidence in recognising emotions and applying regulation strategies.
- Student voice feedback confirmed all participants felt better able to regulate, with 7 Gateway students specifically contributing to this evaluation.

Key Insight: SEMH interventions had a significant positive impact on emotional regulation and engagement for vulnerable learners, particularly those with complex needs. Daily access to The Haven and structured programmes like Gateway and SNAP-B assessments were critical in reducing barriers to learning and improving readiness for academic progress.

National and Regional Context

Mental health challenges among secondary-aged students (11–16) remain a significant concern nationally:

- **Prevalence:** Around **1 in 8 children and young people (CYP)** aged 5–19 experience clinically significant mental health difficulties, with rates increasing with age.
- **Recent trends:** The Centre for Mental Health reports that **approximately 200 students in an average secondary school in England currently have a mental health problem**, with sharp rises in anxiety, depression, and eating disorders over the past decade.
- **Regional disparities:** Loneliness and bullying remain high-risk factors, with some areas reporting **up to 139 per 1,000 young people feeling lonely often or always**, and school absence strongly linked to poor mental health.
- **Impact on attendance:** DfE research confirms a causal link between mental ill health and persistent absence, particularly in Year 11, where poorer mental health predicts higher authorised absence rates.
- **SEND and SEMH overlap:** National SEND data shows **18.4% of pupils have some form of SEND**, with SEMH needs among the fastest-growing categories. Pupils with EHCPs rose to **5.3% of the school population in 2024/25**, and SEN support to **14.2%**, reflecting increasing complexity of need.

Why This Matters for The Gryphon: Our SEMH interventions align with national priorities to address rising mental health needs and their impact on attendance and attainment. The combination of nurture provision, targeted emotional support, and external agency involvement is essential given the higher-than-average proportion of students with complex SEND and SEMH needs in our disadvantaged cohort. These strategies not only support wellbeing but also underpin academic progress and reintegration for students at risk of exclusion or long-term absence.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England

Programme	Provider
N/A	N/A

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	We have a dedicated PP Champion and bespoke programmed calendar of events for our Service PP community. Monthly events range from enrichment activities, trips/visits and community engagement. We also have a dedicated “Deployment Workbook” for families who have a parent serving overseas. Counselling support is also put into place for students that require it.
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	See impact statement from 2024/2025, below.

Intent	Implementation	Impact (End of academic year 2024/2025)
Ensure our SPP pupils have an identity within the school community.	- SPP pupils are identified at the start of every academic year and this group shared with all staff. - A programme of events put on throughout the academic year (one a month), for SPP pupils (*see series of events on next page).	86% of pupils said they felt more valued, compared to previous years or their last school, as a result of the activities put on for service children this year. - All pupils that responded to the survey said they now felt part of a trusted community made up of other SPP pupils within the school.
Ensure our SPP pupils feel safe, supported and listened to.	- Dedicated pastoral support via our Service Champion / HOY / DHOY / Tutor. - Counselling provided for SPP pupils if/when necessary.	86% of pupils said they felt comfortable approaching their tutor or the service champion if they needed further support due to forces-related issues
Ensure our SPP pupils know where to seek and find support outside of school.	- All SPP pupils provided with an SPP information and support booklet at the beginning of each academic year, with avenues of support and who they can speak to if needed. - Links and resources regularly shared with SPP pupils & families via email.	- All parents were emailed about the SPP provision at the start of the year. - Many parents have emailed me since/completed the online form sent with the initial letter about home circumstances that I have been able to respond to. - Contact with 3 tutors re. tutees that needed extra support - Contact with multiple parents sharing useful resources/links
Ensure any transition is well supported by key staff members and relevant information shared with teaching staff.	- Staff responsible for transition will have identified any SPP pupils moving from Y6 to Y7, and tailored transition events offered if necessary. - If any pupil arrives part way through an academic year, an intensive transition period will be offered, which may involve regular check-ins, use of The Haven or Gateway, or even a phased entry to lessons.	- Only 44% of year 7s attended the September lunch but 78% attended the Christmas event. - Next year the lunch will be held in early October to allow Year 7 to be more settled in and hopefully increase attendance from these students. 71% of students said they would like more regular tutor-time/lunch-time contact/activities.
Ensure our SPP pupils are encouraged and directed towards enrichment activities.	- Extra-curricular clubs are promoted regularly, via tutor notices and Service Champion. - A programme of events put on throughout the academic year (one a month), for SPP pupils (*see series of events on next page).	- SPP events have been put on roughly once a month, although this has been altered to fit when we are in school and work around exams, other trips etc. 73% of SPP pupils have engaged with activities this year, selecting the activities they most want to do (including Y11) 55% of pupils attended/will attend at least 1 if not both trips (not including Y11 who were not invited due to clashes with PPE/exams)
Ensure that any SPP pupil who has a parent deployed is closely monitored and supported by key staff members.	- Regular check-ins, use of The Haven or Gateway, if appropriate. - A deployment pack/journal provided for the pupil, to help record feelings and emotions. - If needed, we can provide a student with a Chromebook, to keep in touch with their deployed parent via TEAMS, Zoom or Skype.	67% with a parent deployed this year said they felt more supported during this time. 86% of pupils said they felt comfortable approaching their tutor or the service champion if they needed further support due to forces-related issues.