

# Pupil premium strategy statement – Phoenix Academy 2023-2024

This statement details our school’s use of pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

*At Phoenix Academy our focus is on overcoming the barriers that our pupils face. We recognise the individual and collective barriers to learning that affect our pupils. We seek to harmonise our Social, Emotional Learning approach with this strategy and utilise this funding to achieve these wider aims. We intend to use this funding as a means to mitigate against the impact that previous negative educational experiences that have been experienced. We also seek to assist them in navigating the impact of any particular diagnosed condition they have with the wider aim of improving their academic performance and preparedness for later life in line with the SEND: CODE of practice 2015. We intend to improve the whole school approach to self-regulation strategies this will mean the utilisation of the DOJO software to better, positively, engage parents as well as building on the intervention that are guided by the Education Health Care Plan.*

*Where appropriate we work alongside the virtual school head and other stakeholder agencies to support pupils.*

## School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	46 pupils
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	80%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers <b>(3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)</b>	2022 - 2025
Date this statement was published	2022
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2023
Statement authorised by	Elyse Phillips
Pupil premium lead	Elyse Phillips (Principal)
Governor / Trustee lead	Gary Smith / Natalie Deen

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£30,555.00
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£10,730.00
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£41,285.00

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

### Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The majority of our pupils arrive and leave school via local authority funded transport. This reduces the opportunities school can provide in regard to extra-curricular activities and so as not to undermine the impact this can have on both academic performance and preparedness for later life, actions need to be in place to mitigate this.
2	All of our pupils attend Phoenix because mainstream approaches to academic learning has not meet our pupil's needs. Often this has resulted in exclusions and educational trauma. Consequently, pupils may have 'spikey' profiles and so progress has to be measured in creative ways (see curriculum impact document). The support required to maintain forward momentum can be multi-varied and complex.
3	We have identified that the SEMH needs of our pupils, whether they be disadvantaged or not, impacts upon the community opportunities that pupils can engage in and has had an all too often negative impact on their impression of the activity and their ability to successfully navigate such events.
4	Pupils with SEMH needs struggle to collaborate and make meaningful adult and peer relationships. This can have long lasting and pernicious impacts for both the pupils' current achievement but their ability to meet the demands that increasing maturity will place on them.

### 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
Disadvantaged pupils to be able to develop regulation strategies to manage their SEMH needs through the use of therapeutic intervention.	Data analysis to identify the reduction in the amount of restrictive physical interventions and a reduction in amount of co-regulation needed to support pupils.

Pupils to make explicit progress in their SEMH-based curriculum.	Data analysis each term to identify progress within pupils' intervention programmes and regularised meetings with teachers to focus on key strands of intervention and to touch base with any other concerns or positive feedback.
Disadvantaged pupils to contribute towards developing a positive school ethos.	Recordings of reflection data throughout each day to identify engagement within lessons. Positive feedback to be given through weekly well done assemblies and the giving of a multiplicity of awards to reflect different achievements.

## 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

Budgeted cost: £1,785

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Whole school approach QFT</i>	High quality teaching improves pupil outcomes, and effective professional development offers a crucial tool to develop teaching quality and enhance children's outcomes in the classroom. <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development</a>	2

## Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £7,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Remote learning programme (Purple Mash) to support engagement if pupils cannot access school</i>	Using programme to utilise the good practice features of remote education <a href="https://www.gov.uk">Remote education good practice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	1

	<a href="http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk">Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a>	
TT ROCKSTARS	Using programme to utilise the good practice features of remote education <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Remote education good practice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	1

## Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £32,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Rewards for pupils to support the behaviour strategy	To continue to provide rewards for positive behaviours in the academy, such as trophies, certificates and postcards home to encourage and support.  <a href="http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/G1.-LOtCManifesto.pdf">http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/G1.-LOtCManifesto.pdf</a>	2
National Breakfast	Continuing providing essential nutrition when it will most benefit their ability to learn as well as their general development  <a href="http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk">National School Breakfast Programme   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a>	4
Hygiene Packs	To continue to assist young people as they transition to adolescence and to minimise social stigma related to this.	4
Educational visits Subsidy	High quality teaching improves pupil outcomes, and effective professional development offers a crucial tool to develop teaching quality and enhance children's outcomes in the classroom.  <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development</a>	1
Environment	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959632317300011">Influence of environmental conditions on students' learning processes: A systematic review - ScienceDirect</a>	1,2
Rockit Music	<a href="http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk">Arts participation   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a>	1,2,3,4
Drama /Poetry Performance	<a href="http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk">Arts participation   EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</a>	1,2,3,4
SEMH membership	Continue to have wider sources of pertinent evidence base knowledge.	4

**Total budgeted cost: £41,285.00**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year 2022 – 2023

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

#### Externally provided programmes

Activity	Impact of this approach	Actual Spend																		
<p>Attendance officer to support families accessing school and facilitate safe and wellbeing visits when required</p>	<p><i>Continued support through the resource of an Educational welfare officer for the school. This has meant weekly monitoring of attendance and patterns and trends were quickly addressed and meeting to support parents/carers where arranged. Home visits were possible where attendance was of concern.</i></p> <p>The attendance offer has been working closely with SLT and the family intervention team, moving forward they will now be responsible for the monitoring and implementation of attendance strategies within</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><i>Phoenix</i></th> <th><i>National for state funded special schools</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Whole school attendance academic year 2022 – 23</i></td> <td><i>89.5%</i></td> <td><i>86.8%</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Persistent absence</i></td> <td><i>21.4%</i></td> <td><i>38.7%</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Authorised</i></td> <td><i>5.4%</i></td> <td><i>9.5%</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Unauthorised</i></td> <td><i>5.1%</i></td> <td><i>4.7%</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Holiday</i></td> <td><i>6.4%</i></td> <td><i>N/A</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>the academy.</p> <p>Outcome: This post will not be funded moving forward as Strategic support will still be maintained through the use of Trusts attendance officer. Meetings with the LA will continue termly, and</p>		<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>National for state funded special schools</i>	<i>Whole school attendance academic year 2022 – 23</i>	<i>89.5%</i>	<i>86.8%</i>	<i>Persistent absence</i>	<i>21.4%</i>	<i>38.7%</i>	<i>Authorised</i>	<i>5.4%</i>	<i>9.5%</i>	<i>Unauthorised</i>	<i>5.1%</i>	<i>4.7%</i>	<i>Holiday</i>	<i>6.4%</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<p>£458.02</p>
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	attendance will be vigilantly monitored both against national trends but also at the level of a pupil's normative behaviour.	
PP Lead to facilitate and oversee the impact of PP strategy	Strategical support for staff to implement the strategy and time to attend Trust wide PD to support for successful implementation of the funding allocation. The delivery of training for all staff on the use of rewards and restorative practice has improved understanding of a rewards-based approach when it can be successful and when and why it will not be. There will be a greater focus on restorative practice and its implications as this best fits or overall Trauma informed paradigm.	£ 0
Purchase of a school pet	<p>The academy purchased a rabbit, a timetable was made so that each class could spend time with him in class. This was after some positive feedback from the Huggle Pets experience, and it had been very successful in reaching some pupils and helped staff to support regulation for pupils (and on occasion themselves).</p> <p>The ongoing positive feedback from both staff and pupils have mean that we have taken the decision to better and more effectively utilise this activity to improve self-regulation and extend the envelope of some children's empathy, which staff have found very rewarding.</p> <p>It is challenging to find a core statistical basis that is both valid and reliable for a new intervention such as this. We have elected to use our Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) by term.</p> <p>Measures of hyperactivity have reduced by 45% from Autumn 1 to Summer 2.</p>	£529.58

National breakfast	<p>Phoenix has been accepted for the national breakfast program to support schools with financial costs towards breakfast. We have been able to provide cereal and bagels daily for breakfast at a greatly subsidised price. This has had a big impact on the pupils and parents who now know that breakfast will always be available at no additional cost. This has been particularly helpful during this cost-of-living crisis and is most effective in the winter months given the additional amount of limited household incomes that are being spent on heating and cooking at home. The benefits of a regularised nutritional regime in term of growth, mood and the ability and willingness to form relationships are undisputed and we can show that there has been a better performance at remaining in class AND engaging with learning.</p> <p>Staff have also noted that in creating this morning breakfast routine it helps to establish the flow of the rest of the daily routines that are the cornerstone of behavioural management as well as providing the stability to allow the hypervigilance of some pupils to settle at an appropriate and workable level.</p> <p>Staff reported breakfast clubs bringing additional social benefits by helping pupils develop new friendship groups. Several saw benefits in pupils developing friendships across year groups</p> <p>Schools reported additional benefits for pupils with lower self-confidence, with breakfast clubs giving a space for pupils to learn to be more confident.</p> <p>Some special schools reported that breakfast clubs supported learning and helped pupils to adapt to changes in their routine</p>	£251.99
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<p>outdoor learning</p>	<p>A marquee was purchased to enhance outdoor learning in the academy this was done for the following reasons: the current physical geography of the school means there can be limited space indoors to be both separate from other classes and have a unique, engaging and sometimes challenging learning experience. This builds on our existing work within the Forest School process but allows us to be better equipped to make this offer despite the variable intentions of the weather; there had been noted that after a period outside there seemed to be a general improvement in pupil's mood and willingness to engage( as we are not able to quantify the impact of increased exposure to sunlight it is difficult to state what is the causal factor, the sun or the environment or the mixture of both)</p> <p>There have been some really positive individual experiences as well as a general readiness to engage with learning in this environment. We have noted that those pupils with ASD and ADHD diagnoses have found that this is a particular help to them.</p> <p>We have 30 children from a total number of 47 children that meet this criteria.</p>	<p>£1497.66</p>
<p>Therapeutic intervention (animal assisted therapy (Huggle Pets))</p>	<p>Huggle pets was not a complete success last year but where it had been affective the whole school felt the benefits. There had been ongoing issues though with the level of need that our pupils display compared with the what the organisation are most accustomed and prepared to manage. It was very sad that this was not proving as effective this year for pupils as they were not getting the level of interaction with the pets that they had hoped for and so the demonstrable benefits of maintaining the working relationship reduced. A decision has been made that the benefits of interactions with animals can be maintained (see above) within the school. This allows us to make further savings of expenditure that can be redirected towards other actions.</p> <p>There was limited evidence of any significant impact save from the anecdotal feedback that stated the process seemed to work but perhaps the environment was not best suited to providing positive outcomes.</p>	<p>£4240.00</p>

<p>Student rewards and activities</p>	<p>The use of class Dojo – (online reward system) as linked to our behaviour policy and SEMH curriculum which has been regularly monitored</p> <p>This included the purchase of a book each for the pupils for Christmas and rewards to align with class dojo.</p> <p>This has been a real and enduring benefit to the school. It is a fantastic way to keep parents up to date with what their children are doing and achieving. For many of our parents that phone call or contact from the school is laced with fear and anxiety (as almost all of the pupils that attend Phoenix were sadly asked to leave their mainstream school and this has an impact on the whole family). If this anxiety is allowed to turn into resentment, then the biggest partner we have in improving the educational outcomes of our pupils is lost to us. So, we have made sure that, where possible, parents are so used to getting positive feedback that they do not fear or hide from contact with us but actively seek it out. And, most importantly when things go wrong parents are prepared to be openminded to both the cause and solution. This helps avoid the pernicious Us/Them dichotomy being formed.</p> <p>97% of all parents/carers are logged on to class dojo with the average post being seen by 86% of parents/carers</p> <p>Parent view <i>“it helps me to feel less anxious knowing I can see if he’s having a good day”</i></p> <p><i>“I love seeing what they have been up to and they always look so happy”</i></p>	<p>£845.99</p>
<p>Hygiene packs</p>	<p>We were finding that our year 6 pupils were struggling with the transition to adolescence and were not adhering to basic hygiene practice. School nurses came in and all year 6 pupils were provided with a hygiene pack to support parents financially and to encourage good practice for pupils. Parents really appreciated the support and found it easier to talk to their children about personal hygiene with the support offered from school. Given the obvious impact these issues can have a social interactions and self-image we felt it essential to provide this.</p>	<p>£114.70</p>

<p>Educational visits subsidy</p>	<p>The reality of many of our pupils' lives is that due to their behaviour being difficult for parents to manage and with limited ability to self-regulate, that they often are not exposed to experiences that many would feel are a key part of the social and emotional development of child. This is not to blame parents, the opposite in fact, it is perfectly understandable that taking a child with self-regulation issues on a plane, or a train or coach with the general public is a challenge mainly due to the judgements of others on their parenting. It is our hope that building pupil confidence through these experiences helps to enable parents to feel more confident in the activities that they undertake with their children. This is FAR from the only benefit, others include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SELF REGULATON/CONFIDENCE IMPROVEMENT</li> <li>• LIFE EXPERIENCE-</li> <li>• CREATING NEW BEVHAVIOURAL NORMS BETWEEN BEING TOLD OF THE TRIP AND ATTENDING</li> <li>• BUILDING CONFIDENCE TO DELAY GRATFICATION</li> <li>• WORKING TOGETHER</li> <li>• DISPELLING NEGATIVE PERSONAL ATTITUDES ABOUT THEMSELVES</li> </ul> <p>The excursions and trips that our pupils were able to attend helped with our long-term reward strategy and provided challenges for the pupils to overcome in terms of regulation and relationship maintenance. This was very successful and gave the pupils a real boost and a set of positive points of reflection as the year progressed.</p> <p>Pupils have been able to broaden their experiences within the wider curriculum. It has enabled all pupils to access trips for no cost to enrich their curriculum offer. This has been well received with pupils and has increased pupil engagement in lesson and is demonstrated through their class books. Parents/carers voice shows they are pleased with the added offer from school. Some of the trips that pupils have been on this academic year are; Dudley zoo where we have purchased a pass for all the pupils to attend anytime through out the year. We have been able to offer reward and academic trips such as the Snow dome and Tamworth Castle</p> <p>100% of pupils were able to access a trip in 2022 – 2023 academic year</p> <p>Parent voice “this is the first time my child has ever accessed a trip, he really enjoyed it too”</p>	<p>£923.25</p>
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<p>Environment</p>	<p>Before the project work was undertaken. Staff and pupil surveys were conducted to capture their voice around the environment. (This was to support our work as part of the Walsall Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware Schools Award “<i>If spaces could speak ...</i>” and as part of our Inquiry Question based CPD work)</p> <p>At this point, 66% of staff and 100% of pupils felt that the areas did not feel calm and 100 % of both staff and pupils felt that the spaces would not help them regulate or support them to feel important or listened to. With the hypervigilance that our pupils display these results were clearly going to have a negative impact on their educational engagement and achievement. It has to be recognised that the school was not designed around the needs of these pupils and so has to be adapted and moulded to do so.</p> <p>Following the environmental developments that took place (having been thoroughly researched and using evidence-based approaches) the surveys were repeated and now 100% of staff and pupils felt that the spaces were safe, helped promote calm, supported regulation and helped them as it was more suited to the needs of the pupils.</p> <p>Questionnaires were given out to gauge the impact; staff and pupils reported that they felt calmer, and the space supported our values of acceptance, belonging, regulation, respect and pride.</p> <p>There was a decrease in the use of restricted physical intervention in the summer term in comparison to the spring term.</p> <p>Qualitative data taken prior to the changes says that staff and pupils felt; “it feels like an institution” “I’m closed in but not safe”</p> <p>The survey results revealed pupils felt:</p> <p><b>“I feel like I can breathe”</b></p> <p><b>“I feel calm”</b></p> <p><b>“This space is for me”</b></p> <p>Given the positive impact that this has had across the whole school, there are other areas of the school that can be environmentally moulded to improve pupil experience.</p>	<p>£15,122.93</p>
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<p>Rockit Music</p>	<p>Weekly music sessions</p> <p>It was identified that our wider curriculum offer could be improved through sourcing additional teaching support intis area. The positive benefits that music can have been incidentally noted in our Inquiry Question on the physical environment. After researching this further the specific benefits to some of our cohort and the general benefits to all became clearer and so a decision to explore this was made. The intention was to provide an entertaining lesson; expose teachers to different styles and modes of engagement that could be incorporated into future lesson planning; expose pupils to the benefits of listening and playing music; assess which pupils found music relaxing (the full hemisphere impact of music); for pupils with ASD would it help with fine and gross motor skills.</p> <p>Pupils have benefited from a professional musician coming into the academy once a week. They have had access to a wide range of musical instruments and exposure to different musical styles. Planning has been done to plan the lessons around the topics the pupils are completing, and this has enabled pupils to see the influence of music on them and its wider benefits to society as a whole. And, they had a lot of fun!</p> <p>Pupils have engaged well with this and attendance in lessons is high and pupil’s overall behaviour in lessons is good. This is supported by whole school data. Teachers have given positive feedback on the impact this has had on the pupils and on them.</p> <p>We have noted that from the first 4 terms of the year that had been a notable drop in property damage (10.3%) BUT this worsened to previous years levels at the end of the year. One of the implicit reasons that we encourage this activity is that it puts an onus on respecting the property of others.</p>	<p>£6930.00</p>
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Team Teach training	<p>It has always been required that the whole team are trained using Team teach methods as these are seen as best practice in this area. Though not a part of the job anyone enjoys, having staff that are confident when to use this training feeds into everyone's general confidence. This is especially true of the pupils who very often have the insight that their behaviour can put them at risk even though they cannot regulate themselves at the time. Knowing that someone can safely protect them encourages stability, calmness and allows the vital relationship between teacher and pupil to grow.</p> <p>Three members of staff have been trained to teach Team Teach at instructor level. This was to support staff in using restricted physical intervention and de-escalation techniques. Staff have really benefited from having onsite trainers and any misconceptions can quickly be addressed. New staff can immediately be trained and a consistent approach to behaviour can be maintained. Staff are more confident to use techniques and all staff have received the same level of training within the academy. This has allowed refresher sessions throughout the year.</p> <p>Records of RPIs are recorded as a statutory requirement.</p>	£4519.99
Software for online learning  Purple mash	<p>All pupils have access to purple mash and it is used at home and in the academy. Work is set and pupils can work through at their own pace – this has been affective for some of our more reluctant learners.</p> <p>This has enabled pupils to be set targeted work and support any learning that has need to be completed at home. Given the recent impact on education of wider societal health issues it is vital that the skill of being able to engage pupils in learning even at a distance is maintained</p> <p>We have had 60% of pupils engage with this.</p>	£705.58
TT Rockstars	<p>Multiplication program to support pupils with their times tables, this can be accessed at home or at school. it has been a real success, in terms of pupil's engagement; pupils have really enjoyed the resource and it has improved the overall scores of pupils across all year groups.</p>	£122.64
Hobbit performance	<p>It was felt that our pupils would benefit from the creativity and expression that performing would bring them. However, it is also true that the levels of self-regulation are, in part, dependent on how safe, secure and stable they feel. To increase exposure to the creative arts a theatre group has been booked. Pupils were engaged and loved watching a live performance in the academy.</p>	£799.00

	<p>Pupils were lively and engaged and the performance was such a success we have booked for next year and hope to invite parents</p> <p>We were very proud of all of our pupils who managed to positively engage in this process and many parents feedback that this was the first time that they had been able to see a play. And so we will do more!</p>	
PEP the poet	<p>Pupils loved having an author visit the academy and work with him to create their own poetry. He worked with each year group developing their confidence to attempt poetry but to also share the outcomes of this with others.</p> <p>This exposed pupils to a new experience and offered them greater insight into language and its emotional impact. Engagement in literacy can be a real challenge (though it should be noted that modern technology demands a level of literacy but is not framed as knowledge). If you were to imagine the learning of each child as a map it can be a real challenge to find fixed landmarks as means of a guidance. This type of activity enables a real and concrete place to be set upon that map. which makes navigation consistently easier. This is not purely instrumental, it can have long term impacts for those pupils who have experienced trauma, (even the trauma of exclusion) as it helps to reframe negative experiences with positive ones.</p> <p>EVIDENCE; BEHAVIOUR PRIOR/POST AND WHEN IN ATTENDANCE SPEAKS TO ENGAGEMENT. FORMATIVE VOCAB ASSESSMENT HAS THIS IMPROVED? HAVE THE PUPILS EFFORTS AT POETRY PRIOR TO ATTENDANCE SHOWN IMPROVEMENT POST ATTENDANCE-</p>	£867.00
SEMH membership	<p>It has been really beneficial to be part of an organisation with specific focus on supporting pupils with SEMH needs. Being part of a network of SEMH schools has meant that we can pool and share ideas and this has supported whole school improvement.</p> <p>EVIDENCE-IMPLEMENTATION OF IDEA/ACTION BASED ON WEEL REGARDED AND TRUSTED FEEDBACK AND HOW THIS IMPACTED PUPILS</p>	£131.67

## Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<i>For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: <b>How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year</b></i>
N/A
<b>The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils</b>
N/A



## Further information (optional)

At present Phoenix Academy follows an evidence-based approach to developing and implementing our pupil premium strategy as well as all of the schools' strategies. The overarching paradigm that has been adapted is a general Social, Emotional Learning. We specifically focus on a what is widely called a "trauma informed" approach. We have five key values:

**Acceptance    Belonging    Regulation    Respect    Pride**

**These key values inform and underpin all that we do at Phoenix Academy.**

This is because many of our pupils have experienced adverse childhood experiences and given the research indicating how long lasting and detrimental these experiences can be, especially if someone has experienced multiple incidents, it was felt that the evidence clearly guided us to take action. This is not the experience of all the pupils, but the working practices that this approach uses have also been seen to be highly effective at dealing with the negativity associated with the breakdown of the former school placement.

We are always acutely aware that our pupils have had difficult journey in education prior to attending Phoenix Academy. This approach is also a very useful in seeking to objectify staff understanding of behaviour; staff are given training that promotes and understanding of the neurodivergence of our pupils as well as how neurobiology affects behaviour. This helps to create a distance between the behaviour and the pupil allowing for greater self-reflection, developing into improved insight into self-regulation. IN practice what does this mean? If a pupil exhibits negative behaviour, the teaching and support teams try to understand what caused that behaviour (after bringing it to an end) rather simply asserting blame. It also guides that we follow a practice of restorative justice. This is not as scary as it sounds. It simply means that we sill sit down with the pupils WHEN they are ready to talk about what happened and are able to engage in self-reflection and discuss what they feel they should do to address the incident as well as future actions. This process is integral to the development of positive working relationship between teaching and support staff and the pupil. For our trauma informed approach to work children MUST feel safe, secure and stable and evidence guides that this is best done through the building of these relationships.

As noted in our challenges (above) the fact that a majority of our pupils are facilitated in attending the school through Local Authority funded transport really limits the amount of extracurricular offers that can be made available. This necessitates that we find some way to address wider interests and opportunities within school time. The out of school trips provide many different areas of influence, from long term rewards to motivate, to cultural capital and life experiences; to offer safe and secure challenges; social and emotional engagement in a different environment; further relationship building and most crucial of all a point of positive reflection for when it has not been the easiest lesson.

We have utilised online software platforms to support our specific academic improvements around reading and literacy. It should be noted that given that most of our pupils will have a current mental health diagnosis and have at the very least, some negative associations with school attendance, maintaining a presence in class, engaging in tasks, succeeding at tasks, there are more notable barriers to engagement than would be experienced within a mainstream cohort of pupils. Despite this the teaching and support staff work with focus and empathy in trying to minimise the amount of time it takes for pupils to adjust to their new school.

Here it needs to be highlighted how the Covid pandemic had an impact on most of our pupils (when most were not in attendance at Phoenix Academy) their attendance and engagement appear to have been even more acutely affected than others with all of the consequences for behaviour impacting academic attainment. Also, impacting on the work to prepare children for life as engaged citizens. We are hopeful that we will mitigate the impact of this on our pupils, one source of optimism is that we tend to see that our pupils do not demonstrate linear patterns of learning but more step changes producing what we term a spiky learning profile. A possible implication is that once a stable and safe relationship has been established the hyper vigilance of the pupils has reduced more cognitive calories are spent remembering what they have learnt rather processing anxiety and fear. Having a platform that pupils can engage with when they feel able to engage entirely supports this approach.

Due to the reasons noted previously there has had to be adaptation to the general guidance given by the Education Endowment Foundation, with regard their tiered approach to spending the pupil premium funding as well as the evidential basis on which decision are made. For example, a decision has been made to spend monies explicitly on high quality teaching as targeted academic support and wider strategies were identified through evidence as meeting the more immediate demand and where the improvements to attainment can be gained most readily. We also have to address the quality and level of evidence. The EEF rightly guide that independent research is the most valid and reliable way to invest this funding to achieve given outcomes. However, most research tends to deal with mainstream provision and needs, and where there is a specific focus on SEN this can mean that the whole range of possible issues are included that are not SEMH focused. In fact, given the multiplicity of need within the SEMH sector alone finding useful and usable evidence for, primary school, having experienced ACEs, having a diagnosis of ADHD.or OCD or ASD (or others), it is not always possible to find relevant research to help address issues within the school. This is why we have to place greater reliance on the data we collect in house, despite the known limitations this has. To counter this, we have developed an Inquiry Question process to support staff CPD and seek greater insight into what the pupils and staff require to improve attainment. This process led to the work about changing the school environment to make it calmer and more conducive, feeling safe and secure, which has been a real success (as noted by the staff and pupil surveys). We are always looking for more data and research to help improve the outcomes for our pupils.

As this 3-year strategy will be reviewed at the end of this academic year we have instituted a review of the data that we collect and we will analyse this to see if it is valid, can be or requires a new metric.