

## **PUPIL DEVELOPMENT GRANT STRATEGY STATEMENT**

This statement details our school's use of the PDG for the 2025-26 (review) & 2026-27 academic year.

It outlines our strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending had within our school.

### **School Overview**

| Detail                                | Data                                        |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| School Name                           | Welshpool High School                       |
| Number of pupils                      | 807                                         |
| Proportion (%) of PDG eligible pupils | 14.48% (including FSM/LAC & Young Carers)   |
| Date this statement was published     | September 2026                              |
| Date of which it will be reviewed     | September 2027                              |
| Statement authorised by               | Jeff Johnson (Chair of Governors)           |
| PDG lead                              | Jon Arnold                                  |
| Governor lead                         | Adam Pawley / Jeff Johnson (or Chairperson) |

### **Funding Overview**

| Detail | Amount          |
|--------|-----------------|
| PDG    | <b>£136,451</b> |

### **Part A: Strategy Plan**

#### ***Statement of intent***

The aim of the PDG funding is to reduce the gap in attainment between learners eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not. At Welshpool High School we believe that high expectations of all learners will raise achievements. The PDG places priority on the achievement of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds ensuring there are strategies in place that will help our learners to succeed. Some learners from disadvantaged backgrounds require additional support; therefore, we will use different resources available to help them to reach their full potential, including the PDG.

Our approach to the PDG has various strategies, we do not think any one strategy would be enough to close the attainment gap. The use of the PDG is targeted to improve attendance, raise aspirations, encourage positive behaviour for learning and develop literacy and numeracy skills.

Low attendance, low aspirations, persistent absenteeism, sub-standard behaviour and poor literacy and numeracy skills are barriers to success and so it is logical that funds are targeted towards knowing our students well and helping them in these areas.

Attendance levels for FSM learners rose in 2024-25 by 7.6% to 84.1% and the gap between FSM learners and the overall school population closed to 7% in 2024-25, from 13.3% in 2023-24. This was followed by an overall FSM attendance of 84.2% in 2025-26, with the gap between FSM learners and the overall school population standing at 7.8%. There are often additional barriers in

the way of our disadvantaged learners reaching the high levels of attendance that we aspire to at Welshpool High School. This can be due to a wide range of issues, including; parent/carer support, transport issues, caring responsibilities, and more incidents of ill health or financial pressures.

Some of our disadvantaged learners have lower aspirations of themselves in terms of what they could achieve in school and in the future, this can be shaped by them not always taking up opportunities for enrichment and also opportunities available outside of school, sometimes due to financial pressures, peer expectations, lack of confidence or experience and also transport issues.

Although the overall Fixed Term Exclusion figures have once again decreased in terms of year on year figures , and the school is one of the leading schools in Powys (Top of this set of figures when last released) for the lowest exclusion rates, FSM learners still make up a higher percentage of Fixed Term Exclusions than is desirable. This can be for reasons including a lack of role modelling outside of school, poor health or nutrition, adverse childhood experiences or attachment issues. The role of the attendance officer, alongside Heads of Year in signposting issues is key alongside the role of the Social Inclusion Officer – in working to improve this position.

Low levels of literacy and numeracy can put FSM learners at a significant disadvantage. For example, it is clear that our disadvantaged learners are less likely to read widely and often less likely to have access to a wide range of reading resources outside of school, less likely to use public libraries or read newspapers. This can severely impact their 'cultural capital', their awareness of local, national and international issues and also their ability to access and understand the curriculum.

### ***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                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FSM learners have:                  |                                                                                                                                       |
| Improved Literacy & Numeracy levels | Targeted FSM learners improve literacy levels<br>Targeted FSM learners improve numeracy levels                                        |
| Improved attendance                 | FSM attendance is improved (76.5% 2023-24 / 84.1% 2024-25 / 84.2% 2025-26) Target: 86%+ (& to be above Family, Powys & National data) |
| Reduction in Persistent absence     |                                                                                                                                       |

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| <p>Improved behaviour &amp; Reduced FTE</p>                                          | <p>FSM Persistent absence is reduced (2023-24) = 14.8%, (2024-25) = 11.35% (2025-26) = 7.41% Target: below 10%</p> <p>Reduced FSM exclusions: (23-24 = 34, 24-25 = 21) 2025-26 = 9 (4 pupils in total) Target: Below 20 FSM FTE</p> <p>Lesson Grading No 3 &amp; 4's (6493 June 2023 / 5844 June 2024 / 3864 June 2025), 3629 June 2026 Target : 3400 June 2027</p> <p>Lesson Grading No 1's (83,736 June 2023 / 95,071 June 2024 / 112,371 June 2025) 107,688 June 2026. Target: 113,000 June 2027</p>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>Increased active involvement in school enrichment &amp; leadership activities</p> | <p>Increased active involvement in school enrichment &amp; leadership activities FSM. FSM learners take part in wider school life (Sports, Performing Arts, Student Council, Eco Group, SNAG). In 2025-26 16% of FSM pupils took part in these roles/activities. Target: 20%.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>Improved Outcomes at Key Stage 4</p>                                              | <p>FSM Key measures show a decrease below 2024-25 figures, but remain significantly above 2023-24 figures for: Capped 9, Literacy points score &amp; Level 2 Threshold.</p> <p>Overall targets for the school are as follows: C9 380 / Lit PS: 42 / Num PS: 42 / Sci Ps: 42 / Ave Learner PS: 42 / L1: 100% / L2: 80% / L2 Inclusive: 75% / 5 A*-A: 20%.</p> <p>FSM targets need to show a growth versus 2025-26 &amp; 2024-25 levels (where possible*): C9 304.4 317 / Lit PS: 37.23 35 / Num PS: 30.46 34.5 / Sci PS: 28.77 33.5 / *L1 Threshold 92.31% 100% / Level 2 Threshold 46.15% 41.67% / L2 Inclusive 23.08% 33% / 5A*-A 0% 0% and close the gap on overall outcomes gap.</p> |

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|  | FSM learners' attendance to Additional Support sessions (Year 11) is high |
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### ***Activity in this academic year***

This details how we intend to spend our PDG **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

### **Learning and Teaching**

Budgeted cost: Literacy & Numeracy Intervention £39,171 & Social Inclusion Officer £37,104

| <b>Activity</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Evidence that supports this approach</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| Literacy intervention: 1. working alongside FSM learners in Key Stage 3 to ensure that standards of Literacy are improved 2. Working alongside FSM learners in Key Stage 4 to develop literacy in advance of GCSE examinations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Recommendation 3 on 2025 Estyn Report 'Improve cross-curricular planning to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills progressively'                                                                                                                                                              |
| Numeracy Intervention: Working alongside FSM learners to improve numeracy standards at Key Stage 3 & 4<br>Implement oracy strategies across the school (Cold call / No opt out)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Literacy & Numeracy scores. Despite both rising in 2024-25 compared to 2023-24, the target is for a continued rise and to close the gap towards non-disadvantaged learners. The FSM Literacy Point score rose again in 2025-26 to 37.23 (from 35).The Numeracy Point Score fell to 30.46 (from 34.5) |
| Improved use of Literacy & Numeracy Flightpaths to assist with Planning for Challenge and standardised work scrutiny.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Targeted learners to improve spelling & reading levels                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Key stage 4 Social Inclusion Officer : The Social Inclusion Officer works alongside learners who have low attendance, persistent absence, exhibit a reluctance to attend school, have anxiety around some lessons/elements of school. The Social Inclusion Officer works individually with learners to improve standards of work, co-ordinates attendance to catch-up sessions and also co-ordinates attendance to Work Experience and Work Placements for Key Stage 4 learners | Targeted Key Stage 4 learners show an improvement in attendance, reduction in persistent absence, reduced anxiety and increased confidence around school.<br><br>All targeted learners attend Work Placement for Year 10 Work Experience                                                             |

**Wider strategies (for example and where applicable, Health and Well-being, Curriculum and Qualifications, Leadership and Raising Aspirations)**

Budgeted cost: Attendance Officer £23,120, Social Inclusion Officer mentioned above\*, RADY Lead (part cost) £14,455.

| Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Evidence that supports this approach                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <p>Attendance Officer - To prioritise 1<sup>st</sup> day and follow up contact home. To monitor attendance and inform/liaise with HT/AHT/HOY/Family Liaison Officer. To communicate with parents / carers on a daily basis.</p> | <p>Despite the rise in attendance in 2024-25 &amp; 2025-26, the attendance levels of FSM are still too low, and there is still a significant gap between FSM attendance and overall attendance. The Attendance Officer plays a crucial role in contact with parents, liaison with the SLT member 1/c Attendance, liaison with HOY &amp; the school's Family Liaison Officer. Recommendation 4 on the 2025 Estyn report 'Improve Attendance, in particular that of pupils eligible for free school meals' .</p> |
| <p>Social Inclusion Officer*</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>See above*</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p>RADY Lead (Assistant Headteacher contribution)</p>                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>2025-26 Disadvantaged pupils outcomes were lower in Year 11 than in 2024-25. But remained higher for most measure versus 2023-24. The RADY Lead will be vital in Co-ordination of especially ; KS3 progress to improve tracking of Attainment at KS3, Co-ordination of FSM pupils as part of Leadership roles in school, including: Student Council, SNAG, Arts events, Sports teams, ECO group &amp; CC.</p>                                                                                               |

**Total Budgeted Cost:**

Literacy Intervention £27,494

Numeracy Intervention £11,677

Social Inclusion Officer KS4 £37,104

Attendance Officer £23,120

RADY Lead part of salary 14,455

## Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

### PDG outcomes

This details the impact that our PDG activity had on pupils in the **2025-26** academic year

#### Success criteria:

##### To Increase FSM attendance

FSM attendance 2023-24 76.5%

FSM attendance 2024-25 84.1%

This is a 7.6% increase

FSM attendance 2025-26 84.2%

This is a maintaining of the increase seen in the previous academic year.

The gap between Overall attendance & FSM attendance closed to 7% in 2024-25 (versus 13.3% in 2023-24), it stood at 7.8% in 2025-26, still significantly above 2023-24.

##### Reduce FSM Persistent absence

2023-24 = 14.8%

2024-25 = 11.3%

2025-26 = 7.41%

##### Improve FSM KS4 outcomes

Capped 9 = FSM 287.04 (2023-24) 317 (2024-25) **304.4 (2025-26)**

Literacy FSM 34.08 (2023-24) 35 (2024-25) **37.23 (2025-26)**

Numeracy FSM 30.92(2023-24) 34.5(2024-25) **30.46 (2025-26)**

Science FSM 31.38 (2023-24) 33.5(2024-25) **28.77 (2025-26)**

5 A\*-A FSM 11.54% (2023-24) 0% (2024-25) **0% (2025-26)**

Level 1 Threshold FSM 96.15% (2023-24) 100% (2024-25) **92.31 (2025-26)**

Level 2 Threshold FSM 38.46% (2023-24) 41.67% (2024-25) **46.15% (2025-26)**

##### Improve FSM behaviour

FSM FTE 2023-24 = 34

FSM FTE 2024-25 = 21

FSM FTE 2025-26 = 9

Reduction of 12 FSM learners, preceded by a reduction of 13 learners in 2024-25.

Amount of FSM learners FTE 2023-2024= 19

Amount of FSM leaners FTE 2024-25 = 11

Amount of FSM learners FTE 2025-26 = 4

Reduction of 7 FSM, learners, preceded by a reduction of 8 FSM learners in 2024-25

##### Ensure 100% of Year 10 FSM learners attend Work Experience

This was achieved in full

**PDG funding in 2025-26 = £148,600**

| Evaluation on planning for securing improvements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | R | A                   | Y | G |
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| <p>Summer Term Impact<br/>To be completed by 09.09.26</p> <p><b>Literacy Intervention</b><br/>Literacy Intervention continued for Reading with Key Stage 3 targeted pupils throughout the Summer term. In Year 7 4 targeted pupils made considerable progress in reading scores, Year 8 = 4, Year 9 = 5.<br/>Year 10 Literacy intervention has started from June 2026.</p> <p><b>Numeracy Intervention</b><br/>Targeted Year 11 pupils intervention starts in September 2026. This is a whole term earlier than 2025-26 academic year.</p> <p><b>Attendance Officer</b><br/>Whole School attendance in half term 6 during the 2024-25 Academic Year = 90.74%, FSM attendance = 85.02%. 2025-26 = 88.7% &amp; 70.62% FSM</p> <p><b>Social Inclusion Officer</b><br/>The Social Inclusion Officer continued to work alongside Year 10 pupils that had been working within this provision during the academic year. Under this role there is also the accountability of ensuring pupils attend Work Experience at the end of year 10. 100% of e-FSM pupils attended a placement in 2024-25. 100% also attended in 2025-26. The end of the summer term also allowed for the Inclusion Officer to start working alongside targeted pupils in Year 9 in preparation for the 2026-27 academic year</p> <p><b>RADY Lead/ AHT</b><br/>The Assistant Headteacher is developing a system for tracking attainment at Key Stage 3, so that we can track more effectively the attainment of FSM pupils alongside the behaviour and attendance. A further impact of this will be to provide greater knowledge of the make up of year groups.</p> |   | X<br><br>X<br><br>X | X |   |
| <p>Autumn Term Impact<br/>To be completed by 15.01.27</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |                     |   |   |
| <p>Spring Term Impact<br/>To be completed by 01. 05.27</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |   |                     |   |   |

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|                                                             |  |  |  |  |
| Overall Impact September 2027<br>TO COMPLETE – AUG/SEP 2027 |  |  |  |  |

|                                                                                                                         |                                                                          |
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| <b>Did the action plan address the issue and meet the success criteria?</b><br><b>TO COMPLETE August/September 2027</b> |                                                                          |
|                                                                                                                         | <b>What impact has the action plan had on pupils/ staff?</b>             |
|                                                                                                                         | <b>What impact has the action plan had on the Wider School Community</b> |
|                                                                                                                         | <b>Lessons learned for consideration – future planning</b>               |