

Part B: Review of the previous academic Jan 25 – Dec 25. Date Written 18.12.2025

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Aston Academy is on track to achieve the intended outcomes of its three-year Pupil Premium strategy. Evidence from attainment, attendance, behaviour, literacy and wider personal development demonstrates a clear improving trajectory for disadvantaged pupils, particularly in 2024–25. While gaps remain, the direction of travel is positive, and recent improvements indicate that the strategy is well designed, effectively implemented and increasingly impactful.

Attainment and Progress

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils show a significant improvement in 2024–25, marking a clear turning point following post-pandemic disruption.

- Progress 8 (PP) improved to -0.57 (FFT-based), with the gap to non-PP pupils more than halving.
- Attainment 8 (PP) increased to 35.49, reducing the attainment gap by over 5 points in one year.
- English and Maths outcomes at both Grade 4+ and 5+ improved for disadvantaged pupils, with gaps narrowing meaningfully.

These gains align closely with the strategy's focus on high-quality teaching, curriculum coherence, literacy and targeted academic intervention.

Attendance

Attendance remains a strategic priority and a key barrier for some disadvantaged pupils; however, early signs of improvement are evident.

- Whole-school attendance recovered strongly to 91.0% in 2024–25.
- PP attendance improved to 84.6%, representing a positive year-on-year increase.
- Persistent absence for PP pupils stabilised and reduced slightly, following a period of post-pandemic increase.

While attendance and PA gaps remain significant, the improvement seen reflects the growing impact of a relational, data-informed approach to attendance, including personalised support and strengthened engagement with families and external agencies.

Behaviour and Engagement

The introduction of a revised behaviour policy has strengthened consistency and clarity across the school.

- Clear expectations and consistent sanctions are now embedded for all pupils.
- C2/C3 incidents initially increased as expectations were reset but have since reduced, indicating improved understanding and compliance.
- This has contributed to calmer classrooms and improved access to learning for disadvantaged pupils.

Literacy and Curriculum Access

Literacy remains a central pillar of the Pupil Premium strategy.

- Targeted interventions informed by NGRT data have enabled early identification and precise support for disadvantaged pupils.
- A dedicated KS3 reading lesson has strengthened fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.
- Improvements in reading are reflected in positive movement across reading stanines, supporting improved access to the wider curriculum.

Cultural Capital, Wellbeing and Belonging

Significant progress has been made in strengthening wellbeing and pupils' sense of belonging.

- Increased WMIM referrals for disadvantaged pupils have enabled earlier mental health intervention and access to external support.
- A broad, inclusive extracurricular offer is well attended, with low-barrier activities such as board games club supporting social confidence and engagement.
- Structured debates in form time, targeted careers guidance, the Aston Way pedagogy in KS3 and a refined PSHE curriculum have strengthened pupils' sense of identity, voice and aspiration.

Next Steps

In line with DfE guidance and Ofsted expectations, the next phase of the strategy will focus on embedding effective practice and accelerating improvement, particularly in reducing persistent absence, strengthening literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, and sustaining positive behaviour and wellbeing support. Through ongoing evaluation and responsive refinement, Aston Academy is well placed to continue narrowing gaps and securing sustained success for disadvantaged pupils over the remainder of the three-year strategy period.