



Pupil Development Grant School Statement: The Maelor School

This statement details our school's use of the PDG for the 2024 to 2025 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	The Maelor School
Number of learners in school	671 (y7-11)
Number and proportion (%) of PDG eligible learners	69 pupils / 10.28%
Date this statement was published	November 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2025
Statement authorised by	Leanne Eyre
PDG Lead	Leanne Eyre/Lisa Steen
Governor Lead	Cora Suckley

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount
PDG funding allocation this academic year	£81,650
Total budget for this academic year	£4,748,297

Part A: Strategy Plan

Statement of intent

Supporting all pupils to 'Realise their Potential'

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve well across the curriculum. The focus of our PDG strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, and ensure that they leave The Maelor School having 'Realise[d] their Potential'.

We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, such as those who have a social worker and young carers. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.



Excellence in teaching

Ensuring high-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach. By embracing research undertaken by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), we know that ensuring excellence in teaching is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap. At the same time, this will benefit all pupils in our school.

Knowing our pupils and their needs

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment. eFSM students will not be treated as one homogenous group assumptions about the impact of disadvantage will not be made. There will be a focus on high expectations, appropriate levels of challenge and interventions that are focused around detailed knowledge of each student.

Challenges

This section details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our students who are eligible for free school meals.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	CATS assessments on entry to Year 7 in 2024 indicate that many of our eFSM pupils have a lower mean CATS score than their peers.
2	Assessments of lower school students indicate that students eligible for free school meals generally have lower literacy than their peers. This impacts their progress in all subjects.
4	Our assessments, observations and discussions with students and families suggest that the education of many of our students who are eligible for free school meals continue to be affected by the impact of the partial school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to a greater extent than for other students. These findings are supported by national studies.
5	Our observations suggest many lower attaining students who are eligible for free school meals lack metacognitive / self-regulation strategies when faced with challenging tasks, notably in their monitoring and evaluation of their answers.
6	Our assessments, observations and discussions with students and families have identified social and emotional issues for many students, such as anxiety and low self-esteem. This is partly driven by concern about catching up lost learning and exams/future prospects. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged students. School exclusion data shows that students who are eligible for free schools are higher than other students.
7	Our attendance data indicates that attendance among students who are eligible free school meals is lower than their peers. A greater proportion of students eligible for free school meals have been 'persistently absent'. This reflects the national picture.



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.

Activity in this academic year

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Excellent attainment and progress among students who are eligible for free school meals across the curriculum at the end of KS4.	2024/25 KS4 outcomes demonstrate that eFSM students make strong progress in their qualifications, given their starting points.
Improved literacy skills among students who are eligible for free school meals across lower school (years 7-9).	Personalised Assessments in Reading and STAR Reader data demonstrates an improvement in skills among eFSM students. This improvement will also be evident through engagement in lessons and work scrutiny.
Improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among eFSM students across all subjects.	Teacher reports and class observations suggest students who are eligible for free school meals are more able to monitor and regulate their own learning. This finding is supported by student progress data and scrutiny of eFSM students' work.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all students, including those who are eligible for free school meals.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2024/25 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations; • quantitative data from PASS survey; • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among eFSM students.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all students, particularly our students who are eligible for free school meals.	Sustained high attendance for 2024/25 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the attendance gap between eFSM students and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced. • the percentage of eFSM students who are persistently absent reduces significantly



This details how we intend to spend our PDG **this academic year** to achieve the intended outcomes listed above.

Teaching and Learning

Budgeted cost: £41,614.44

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach (links to EEF Toolkit and other relevant research)	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments. Training will be provided for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted correctly.	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each student to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction.	1, 2, 3,4
Developing metacognitive and self-regulation skills in all students. Ensure that students receive effective diagnostic feedback that moves learning forwards. This will involve ongoing teacher training and support and release time.	Teaching metacognitive strategies to students can be an inexpensive method to help students become more independent learners. Likewise, teacher feedback aids students in understanding their next steps, and how to progress.	1, 5
Further investment in CPD for middle leaders in relation to design of Curriculum for Wales. This will involve understanding the research behind curriculum design, and collaboration with and across schools.	Students need to be able to develop schemata in order to make links across curriculum areas. In order for learning to be transferred into students' long term memories, it needs to be built upon prior learning and grounded in the context of what students already know. Therefore, an effectively sequenced curriculum will help students to learn more effectively.	1,5
Improving literacy in all subject areas. We will fund professional development focussed on each teacher's subject area	Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject.	1, 3
Small group intervention for reading	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind.	1, 2, 3



Community Focused Schools (to include: (i) building strong partnerships with families; (ii) responding to the needs of the community; (iii) collaborating with other services)

Budgeted cost: £13,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Implement a range of alternative provisions and curriculum pathways.	<p>Bespoke provisions supported by support staff ensure that students receive a curriculum that meets their needs, and maintains engagement in school life.</p> <p>Some provisions focus on helping students to more effectively regulate their choices and behaviour.</p>	1, 2, 6, 7

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

Budgeted cost: £26,535.56

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Well-being curriculum during PG Days and Form Tutor time	EIF's report on adolescent mental health found good evidence that CBT interventions support young people's social and emotional skills and can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.	5
Implement Attendance Policy.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/attendance-interventions-rapid-evidence-assessment	7
Uniform and resources	Some funding is used purchase items for identified students.	All
Tools to ensure effective communications within school, and from school to families (Bromcom implementation)	Research shows that parental engagement can have a significant impact on students' learning.	All

Total budgeted cost: £81,650