

## Pupil premium strategy 2023-26

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

This paper outlines the following:

- Highlands school overview 2025/2026
- Highlands School's pupil premium strategy, 2023-2026
- How Highlands School intends to spend pupil premium funding for 2023-26
- Review of year 2 2023-2026 PP strategy (2023/24)

### School overview (2025-2026)

Detail	Data
School name	Highlands School
Number of pupils in school	7 – 11: 1,229 12-13: 469
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	17.13% 311 PP students
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	2023/26 Year 2 of 3 year plan
Date this statement was originally published	18 Dec 2023
Date on which it will be next reviewed	December 2025
Statement authorised by	Vincent McInerney
Pupil premium lead	Mia Lloyd
Governor / Trustee lead	Matt Miller

### Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year (24-25)	£221,450
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable).	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> If your school is an academy or in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year.	£221,450

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

Highlands School has a relentless focus on improving the school experience of disadvantaged pupils. Whilst the proportion of pupils considered disadvantaged is in line with pupil premium grant criteria, we do not consider this as a rationale for a difference in aspirations. We have high expectations for all our pupils irrespective of their vulnerabilities and are delighted that pupil premium students entering our sixth form are securing places at top destinations such as Oxford and Cambridge. As part of our ambitious offer we ensure pupils who receive the pupil premium are enabled to access destinations and pathways that match, or exceed, those achieved both nationally and by their peers within the school. Working collaboratively with Marc Rowand, the DfE special advisor, we have devised a pupil premium strategy which invests heavily in robust attendance systems; a knowledge rich curriculum, a comprehensive wider enrichment offer, a tailored careers programme and targeted intervention.

Our pupil premium strategy works towards the first objective through investment in rigorous attendance processes. This includes effective tracking systems, additional resources and a systematic pastoral approach to ensuring our disadvantaged students attend school.

The strategy works towards the second objective through investment in our curriculum. All our students are offered a broad, knowledge rich and well sequenced curriculum which is deliberately designed to build their long term memory and expose them to the very best of what is thought and said. Our CPD offer is fundamental to the effective implementation of our curriculum. This aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning- the greatest lever we have in making a difference to the outcomes of students with pupil premium.

Thirdly, our strategy enables our wider enrichment and careers programme. This is carefully planned and resourced to ensure that disadvantaged students have the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in later life. We work to raise the aspirations of our disadvantaged students and their knowledge and understanding of their career options after attending Highlands School so that our disadvantaged students are equipped to excel in their post-16 or 18 goals.

Finally, our pupil premium strategy recognises the individuality of need. We recognise that the barriers our pupil premium students face are diverse and extensive. We seek to understand who our pupil premium students are and identify the barriers they face using, updating and reviewing internal data. We use evidence-based research and collaboration with outside agencies to identify the most effective methods for meeting the needs of identified students. We carefully implement strategies with a clear plan for reviewing effectiveness at each stage. Such strategies include small group subject specialist tuition, welfare support and our targeted literacy intervention, Lexia.

## Challenges

This details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged pupils. These challenges were identified in 2023. The December 2025 impact report is on page 12

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Our assessments and data suggest that pupils who are SEN K and disadvantaged do not make consistent progress.</p> <p>Disadvantaged SEN make up approx 14% of the disadvantaged group. From 2022-2023 pupils who were SEN had an average progress of -0.25. Within this category SEN E students achieved above the school's average progress score with a progress score of 0.62. SEN K underachieved at -0.15. Whilst both groups achieved a higher progress score than our non-SEN disadvantaged group (-0.38) we want to ensure that our SEN students collectively and consistently make progress in line with the school's average progress score.</p>
2	<p>Our assessments and data show that our higher attaining, male, disadvantaged students in maths and English underachieve in comparison to other disadvantaged groups in maths and English.</p> <p>Higher attainment, boys' progress score in maths is -0.81. They underachieved in relation to other PP groups. The average PP score in maths for all groups is -0.64. They have also underachieved significantly in comparison to the school's average progress score +0.53.</p> <p>Higher attaining boys' progress score in English is -0.48 They have underachieved in relation to other PP groups whose overall score is -0.03. They have also underachieved significantly in comparison to the school's average progress score +0.53.</p>
3	<p>Our assessments and data show that our higher attaining, disadvantaged students are achieving a lower progress score in the EBACC qualification, in comparison to and other PP groups.</p> <p>Higher attaining disadvantaged students scored an average EBACC progress score of -1.2. This is in middle attaining and lower attaining PP groups whose average PP progress score is -0.23 and 0.26 respectfully.</p>
4	<p>Our internal data collection shows trends that disadvantaged pupils do not engage with homework to the same level as non-disadvantaged pupils. This is particularly prevalent in maths, our lowest PP bucket measure.</p> <p>The introduction of SPARKs maths will provide us with clear metrics to track engagement with maths homework and intervene to narrow gaps where necessary.</p>

5	<p>Our internal measures show that while our pupil premium groups are represented fairly in our student leadership programme and compulsory enrichment programmes, fewer pupil premium students participate in voluntary wider enrichment activities as a proportion of the school population than non PP groups do.</p> <p>This is particularly relevant in optional trips, visits and STEM related activities.</p>
6	<p>Our sixth form retention data shows that disadvantaged pupils are less likely to continue on an academic pathway post 16 at Highlands School, than cohorts in previous years.</p> <p>In 2023 30% of our PP students chose to continue their post 16 studies at Highlands. This is a 20% drop in comparison to 2020.</p>
7	<p>Our school attendance data shows that disadvantaged pupils have cumulatively lower attendance than the whole school population.</p> <p>Figures at the end of the autumn term 2023 show PP student attendance is at 89.8% . Cumulative attendance for the whole school population stands at 94.23%.</p>

### 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
<p><b>Progress and attainment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To narrow the gap in progress and attainment by focussing particularly on boys in maths and English.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The gap in progress to reduce to below 0.30.</li> <li>The gap in attainment to reduce to below 10 point difference.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Attendance and suspensions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To close the gap in attendance.</li> <li>To continue a pattern of low suspension for disadvantaged pupils through alternative and preventative strategies.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reduction in the attendance gap compared to 2019 (pre Covid).</li> <li>Suspensions are as low for disadvantaged pupils as a proportion as for non-disadvantaged pupils.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Educational Entitlement</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase engagement in homework.</li> <li>To ensure disadvantaged pupils participate in a range of enrichment activities.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The gap between PP and non PP students engaging with their maths homework will narrow significantly.</li> <li>Representation of disadvantaged pupils in enrichment activities is proportionate to the school population.</li> </ol>

<b>Destinations</b> 1. Improved IAG support.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All disadvantaged pupils having additional career advisor appointments and a destination plan.</li> <li>2. A greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils progress to sixth form at Highlands.</li> </ol>
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### Activity 2024/2025

This details how we intended to spend our pupil premium **money 2024/25 academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

### Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 100,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>CPD - Rosenshine’s principles and cognitive science (THU)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Regular CPD which continues to build staff’s awareness of the principles of the science of learning and how to apply these in the classroom.</li> <li>● Production of the Highlands ‘toolkit’ which ensures consistency of practice by codifying and sharing best practice.</li> <li>● Embedding instructional/ reciprocal coaching</li> </ul>	The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice - Gov.uk (p.10, 68, 75, 76, 89).	1,2,3
<b>CPD - Monitoring (THU)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction of a responsive QA system (department reviews and ‘SLT walk the floor’) codelivered with external partners which identifies the provision for PP students and provides targeted feedback for teachers.</li> </ul>	The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice - Gov.uk (p.10, 68, 75, 76, 89).	1, 2, 3
<b>CPD – SEND provision in subjects (AHU)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To support the production of resources for SEN K students including an SEN K pupil profile allowing better access to the curriculum.</li> <li>● To appoint 4 SEN learning specialist to work with teachers to develop quality first teaching.</li> </ul>	SEND guidance report - EEF	1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils identified as below their reading age are put onto the Lexia program.</li> </ul>		
<b>Recruitment and retention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of our People offer which includes options for flexible working</li> <li>Continuation of an ECT lead to oversee PGCE placements 1 and 2 which will support our recruitment drive.</li> </ul>		1,2,3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 60,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>Information, Advice and Guidance (MLL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlands alumni network 'strands' to make clearer the opportunities to students interested in different fields</li> <li>Activation of the apprenticeship academy</li> <li>Appointment of a raising achievement lead in the the sixth form</li> <li>Increased opportunities for engagement with careers advisors including 1 to 1 meetings for all pupil premium students.</li> </ul>	Aspiration interventions - EEF. Research for education inspection framework.	6
<b>Classroom level, student specific support (MLL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing staff with timely data which is held in a purple folder. This supports responsive, targeted teachers in the classroom.</li> </ul>	The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice - Gov.uk (p.10, 78, 79) Potential for success - Sutton Trust.	1,2,3
<b>Form time reading</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils who are on or above their reading age, read novels of a sufficient level of challenge to improve their reading age.</li> </ul>	Literacy guidance - EEF	1, 2,3,4
<b>Academic Intervention and small group support at KS4 (MLL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted support delivered by teachers for disadvantaged pupils identified as performing significantly below expectations</li> </ul>	One to one tuition - EEF Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice - Gov.uk (p.52)	1, 2, 3, 4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundary interventions running during form time and PSHE</li> <li>Whole school revision school led by TDU in the main hall</li> </ul>	Potential for success - Sutton Trust.	
<b>Easter revision at KS4 (AHU)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To target gaps in learning prior to exams.</li> </ul>	Extending school time - EEF.	1, 2, 3, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £ 50,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>Universal - all students benefit</b>		
<b>Attendance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robust attendance procedures which tracks, monitors and intervenes with attendance on a weekly basis.</li> <li>Appointment of in-house EWO.</li> </ul>		7
<b>Behaviour policy (THU) - pastoral</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring consistency of approach and expectations, clearly articulated to pupils. A clear behaviour policy will ensure pupils are treated fairly and good behaviour in lessons will benefit all students.</li> </ul>	Behaviour Interventions - EEF Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice - Gov.uk (p.77, 78).	
<b>DARE Days (AHU)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing all students with clear opportunities to enhance their cultural capital and deepen their curriculum thinking.</li> </ul>	Potential for success - Sutton Trust	5
<b>Homework policy(THU)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To implement a new homework policy that gives students the opportunity to practise, review and retrieve work that they have learnt in lessons.</li> <li>Introduction of SPARKS maths and science which will provide us with the data and metrics to ensure better participation.</li> </ul>	Homework   EEF	4
<b>Ed-extra (AJE)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointment of an enrichment coordinator.</li> <li>Every student in year 7 participates in extracurricular activities on Wednesday afternoons. Students</li> </ul>	Potential for success - Sutton Trust	5

experience at least three different enrichment activities across each year designed to expose them to sports, music and STEM related pathways.		
<b>House system:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Building self-efficacy and instilling a sense of belonging in all pupils by utilising a house system whereby there are opportunities to develop friendships, contribute to the wider community, and participate in competitions.</li> </ul>	Marc Rowland (DfE)	5, 6
<b>Student leadership programme:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Appointment of a student leadership coordinator.</li> <li>● Annual opportunities to apply for a range of house leadership positions to support the school's strategic objectives. These are open to all students and we ensure representation by all student groups within any final selection</li> </ul>		5
<b>Enhanced CEIAG process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CEIAG policy which ensures all students regardless of background receive timely, targeted IAG, work experience, exposure to industry and our alumni network.</li> <li>● INTRODUCTION of UNIFROG</li> </ul>		6
<b>Whole school literacy (FSE) - academic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Whole school reading programme designed to improve reading fluency and expose students to a wider canon of literature.</li> <li>● Introduction of whole school debates exploring moral issues covered in the RE curriculum</li> </ul>	Literacy guidance - EEF	1, 3, 4, 5
<b>Duke of Edinburgh (SWA) - enrichment</b> Increasing the capacity of the award scheme and ensuring access by removing financial barriers.	Potential for success - Sutton Trust	6
<b>Financial hardship (MLL)- pastoral</b> Removing barriers to school and learning through provision of resources particularly focussed on necessities.		
<b>Study skills (SHU) - academic</b> To support exam pupils and parents through the organisation of webinars and revision booklets to support pupils' preparation for exams.	Parental engagement guidance report - EEF	1, 3, 4, 5
<b>Student voice cycle (MLL)</b> To gain a deeper understanding of the challenges facing all students at particular points in the year. Feedback from parents and students are used to drive year team improvement strategies.	Metacognition and self-regulated learning - EEF	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
<b>Targeted</b>		
<b>Brilliant Club</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Targeted PP intervention for year 10 students interested in science.</li> </ul>		

<b>Raising attainment resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Printed revision resources for all PP students made available in advance of assessments.</li> </ul>		1, 2, 3, 4
<b>Financial hardship fund (MLL)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removing barriers to school and learning through provision of resources particularly focussed on necessities.</li> </ul>		

**Total budgeted cost: £ 210,000**

## 2024/2025 PP impact report. Findings against the challenges we set ourselves

### Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge	Impact results summer 2025
1	<p>Our assessments and data suggest that pupils who are SEN K and disadvantaged do not make consistent progress.</p> <p>Disadvantaged SEN make up 14% of the disadvantaged group.</p> <p>From 2022-2023 pupils who were disadvantaged are p8 score was -0.6</p> <p>SEN had an average progress of -0.25. Within this category SEN E students achieved above the school's average progress score with a progress score of 0.62. SEN K underachieved at -0.15.</p> <p>Whilst both groups achieved a higher progress score than our non-SEN disadvantaged group (-0.38) we want to ensure that our SEN students collectively and consistently make progress in line with the school's average progress score.</p>	<p>At SEN level attainment data shows that both SEN groups are lower than non SEN groups</p> <p>SEN E A8- 44.75</p> <p>SEN K A8- 26.88</p> <p>Non SEN- 53.93</p> <p>However, in lieu of a progress measure we have compared progress against target grades</p> <p>PP SEN K 41% achieved their target grades. A 4% increase from last year</p> <p>Non PP SEN K 57% achieved their target grade. A 9% increase in comparison to last year</p> <p>PP SEN E 84% achieved their target grades last year. 7% higher than Non PP SEN E and 56% higher than the previous year</p>
2	<p>Our assessments and data show that our higher attaining, male, disadvantaged students in maths and English underachieve in comparison to other disadvantaged groups in maths and English.</p>	<p>There is no progress data this year however there has been an overall increase in PP disadvantage A8 from 45.9 in 2024 to 47.2 in 2025 (1.3).</p> <p>Within this the girls and boys (PP) are starkly different. The girls have an A8 of 58.36 which is</p>

	<p>Higher attainment, boys' progress score in maths is -0.81. They underachieved in relation to other PP groups. The average PP score in maths for all groups is -0.64. They have also underachieved significantly in comparison to the school's average progress score +0.53.</p> <p>Higher attaining boys' progress score in English is -0.48 They have underachieved in relation to other PP groups whose overall score is -0.03. They have also underachieved significantly in comparison to the school's average progress score +0.53.</p>	<p>higher than the overall non PP A8 at 57.11. PP boys are still lagging with A8 of 41.57</p> <p>PP A8 boys PP- 41.57 PP A8 girls PP- 58.36</p> <p>Difficult to determine who the higher attaining boys are in maths and English given no SATS data although the data team are looking into this</p>
3	<p>Our assessments and data show that our higher attaining, disadvantaged students are achieving a lower progress score in the EBACC qualification, in comparison to and other PP groups.</p> <p>Higher attaining disadvantaged students scored an average EBACC progress score of -1.2. This is in middle attaining and lower attaining PP groups whose average PP progress score is -0.23 and 0.26 respectfully.</p>	<p>There is no progress data this year however there has been an increase in the disadvantaged EBACC APS score from 4.22 (2024) to 4.56 (2025).</p> <p>PP Ebacc APS 4.56 Non PP Ebacc APS 5.46</p>
4	<p>Our internal data collection shows trends that disadvantaged pupils do not engage with homework to the same level as non-disadvantaged pupils. This is particularly prevalent in maths, our lowest PP bucket measure.</p> <p>The introduction of SPARKs maths will provide us with clear metrics to track engagement with maths homework and intervene to narrow gaps where necessary.</p>	<p>The level of engagement is lower in 2025 than 2024 measured by the number of hours of personalised maths practice went from 25,616 to 21,434. However this is because year 11 went from having Sparx as their homework all year to stopping it after christmas for past papers.</p> <p>Since introducing SPARX maths homework the level of homework being completed is immeasurably better than before it was introduced as there was no data collected on homework completion/engagement.</p> <p>We are in the process of alleging SPARX engagement data with our own contextual data so we can track SPARX PP engagement</p>
5	<p>Our internal measures show that while our pupil premium groups are represented fairly in our student leadership programme and compulsory enrichment programmes, fewer pupil premium students participate in voluntary wider enrichment activities as</p>	<p>House Captains and strand leads y11-13 for 2025-2026- 6 are PP</p> <p>Form Reps y7-13 for 2025-2026- 13 are PP</p>

	<p>a proportion of the school population than non PP groups do.</p> <p>This is particularly relevant in optional trips, visits and STEM related activities.</p>	<p>There are 166 students that are part of the house council this year ( reps, strand leads and captains)</p> <p>19 are PP out of 166 = 11%</p> <p>This compares with 16% last year</p>
6	<p>Our sixth form retention data shows that disadvantaged pupils are less likely to continue on an academic pathway post 16 at Highlands School, than cohorts in previous years.</p> <p>In 2023 30% of our PP students chose to continue their post 16 studies at Highlands. This is a 20% drop in comparison to 2020.</p>	<p>Of the 469 sixth form students 68 are entitled to FSM.</p> <p>Year 13 37 of 226 16.5%</p> <p>Year 12 31 of 243 12.75%</p> <p>In terms of our retention of PP 31 PP students are now studying in the sixth form which makes up 64% of our 24/25 year 11 cohort. We are now 16% ahead of where we were in 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 students are on a A level pathway</li> <li>• 7 students are on a mixed pathway</li> <li>• 5 students are on a</li> </ul>
7	<p>Our school attendance data shows that disadvantaged pupils have cumulatively lower attendance than the whole school population.</p>	<p>Figures for July 2025 show PP student attendance was at 92.1%. Cumulative attendance for the whole school population was at 94.8%.</p> <p>The gap between PP and non-PP attendance has remained at 2.7-2.8% for the last two years.</p>

## 2025/2026 PP impact report. Findings against the challenges we set ourselves

### Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge	Impact (Predicted grades - March 2026 for summer 2026)	Impact results Summer 2026
1	<p>Our assessments and data suggest that pupils who are SEN K and disadvantaged do not make consistent progress.</p> <p>Disadvantaged SEN make up 14% of the disadvantaged group.</p>		

	<p>From 2022-2023 pupils who were disadvantaged are p8 score was -0.6</p> <p>SEN had an average progress of -0.25. Within this category SEN E students achieved above the school's average progress score with a progress score of 0.62. SEN K underachieved at -0.15.</p> <p>Whilst both groups achieved a higher progress score than our non-SEN disadvantaged group (-0.38) we want to ensure that our SEN students collectively and consistently make progress in line with the school's average progress score.</p>		
2	<p>Our assessments and data show that our higher attaining, male, disadvantaged students in maths and English underachieve in comparison to other disadvantaged groups in maths and English.</p> <p>Higher attainment, boys' progress score in maths is -0.81. They underachieved in relation to other PP groups. The average PP score in maths for all groups is -0.64. They have also underachieved significantly in comparison to the school's average progress score +0.53.</p> <p>Higher attaining boys' progress score in English is -0.48 They have underachieved in relation to other PP groups whose overall score is -0.03. They have also underachieved significantly in comparison to the school's average progress score +0.53.</p>		
3	<p>Our assessments and data show that our higher attaining, disadvantaged students are achieving a lower progress score in</p>		

	<p>the EBACC qualification, in comparison to and other PP groups.</p> <p>Higher attaining disadvantaged students scored an average EBACC progress score of -1.2. This is in middle attaining and lower attaining PP groups whose average PP progress score is -0.23 and 0.26 respectively.</p>		
4	<p>Our internal data collection shows trends that disadvantaged pupils do not engage with homework to the same level as non-disadvantaged pupils. This is particularly prevalent in maths, our lowest PP bucket measure.</p> <p>The introduction of SPARKs maths will provide us with clear metrics to track engagement with maths homework and intervene to narrow gaps where necessary.</p>		
5	<p>Our internal measures show that while our pupil premium groups are represented fairly in our student leadership programme and compulsory enrichment programmes, fewer pupil premium students participate in voluntary wider enrichment activities as a proportion of the school population than non PP groups do.</p> <p>This is particularly relevant in optional trips, visits and STEM related activities.</p>		
6	<p>Our sixth form retention data shows that disadvantaged pupils are less likely to continue on an academic pathway post 16 at Highlands School, than cohorts in previous years.</p> <p>In 2023 30% of our PP students chose to continue their post 16</p>		•

	studies at Highlands. This is a 20% drop in comparison to 2020.		
7	<p>Our school attendance data shows that disadvantaged pupils have cumulatively lower attendance than the whole school population.</p> <p>Figures at the end of the autumn term show PP student attendance is at 89.8%. Cumulative attendance for the whole school population stands at 94.23%.</p>		