PUPIL DEVELOPMENT GRANT STRATEGY STATEMENT 26-27

This statement details our school's use of the PDG for the 2026 to 2027 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	Eastern High School
Number of pupils in school	1104
Proportion (%) of PDG eligible pupils	49%
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	February 2027
Statement authorised by	K. Adams
PDG Lead	MC Stafford
Governor Lead	Gordon Plant

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount
PDG funding allocation this academic year	£735,650
Total budget for this academic year	£1,033,500

Part A: Strategy Plan

Statement of Intent

Our Vision is for our students to "Flourish in Life"

Our Purpose:

Eastern High provides highly effective teaching underpinned by positive relationships. We show resilience, respect and create a sense of belonging so that all in our community are able to Flourish in Life . As a campus we support our community members to access a range of education and learning. We deliver high quality teaching to meet the needs of all learners, supported by inclusive pastoral care, strong staff development and professionalism.

Our Values and ethos: *Resilience, Respect, Belonging*

As per our school development plan there will be a strategic focus on:

- **Improving and Sustaining Meaningful and Effective Learning 2026-2027**
- **Improving and Sustaining Emotional Health and Wellbeing within our School Community 2026-2027**

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.

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Intended outcome	Success criteria
Ensure all FSM pupils make the expected levels of progress.	Significantly improve on baseline Cap 9: 230. Improve the proportion of FSM pupils achieving Level 2 including English and Maths, from 7.05% by increasing the proportion of FSM pupils achieving their individual qualification targets.
FSM pupils attendance improves in line with targets	Reduce persistent absence among FSM pupils through early intervention, targeted pastoral support and parental engagement.
FSM exclusions reduce	Reduce exclusions and repeat exclusions. Reviews of exclusion data to identify patterns, evaluate the impact of interventions and improve pupils' behaviour, engagement and access to learning.
Relationships with families improve	Evidence improved engagement, earlier intervention and stronger relationships with families.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our PDG this academic year (26/27) to address the challenges listed above.

The School Improvement Plan prioritises the development of essential literacy and numeracy skills alongside continuing improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. High-quality Professional Learning and dedicated leadership capacity are supporting this work with a clear focus on improving outcomes for all learners. The recent appointment of an Assistant Head Teacher for Teaching and Learning will lead progress in these areas.

The school continues to invest in additional non-contact time for teaching staff, enabling effective planning, responsive teaching and feedback that responds to the diverse needs of all learners.

A continued focus remains on inclusion and reducing barriers to learning. The development of effective in-house alternative provision provides targeted support for pupils at risk of exclusion, while reducing use of fixed-term and permanent exclusion as well as minimising the number of pupils at risk of being young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET).

Pastoral provision continues to recognise the relationship between wellbeing, engagement and achievement. Special staff support pupils experiencing social and emotional barriers, developing self-regulation and supporting successful reintegration into mainstream learning. Staff receive Professional Learning in trauma-informed and restorative approaches to further strengthen positive relationships and a supportive school environment.

School attendance has continued to improve through strengthened attendance and wellbeing capacity. Targeted intervention using the Attendance Culture strategy currently being rolled-out across Cardiff schools, will underpin targeted interventions to support pupils and families experiencing barriers to regular attendance, with a particular focus on pupils at risk of persistent absenteeism and successful reintegration following extended periods away from school.

Funding for alternative provision continues to be used strategically to prevent exclusion, maintain engagement and improve outcomes, while also providing value through effective in-house provisions.

The school’s approach combines high challenge with high support, ensuring that resources are used strategically to improve outcomes, reduce exclusion and ensure pupils remain connected to their learning and develop positive relationships with staff in order to do so.

Learning and Teaching

Budgeted cost: £477,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach
Literacy / reading CPD	Literacy and reading remain a whole-school priority (SIP P2), with CPD focusing on developing consistent, evidence-informed practice, including internal training and Doug Lemov's Reading Reconsidered programme/ targeted literacy and continued use of the Accelerated Reader reading strategy, support the identification and development of pupils' reading needs. This work continues through INSET and CPD, with a clear focus on strengthening literacy and access to the wider curriculum.
Cardiff Council Attendance Initiative	Whole-school attendance and punctuality is a key school improvement priority (SIP P4), with a particular focus on reducing persistent absenteeism. The training will equip staff with consistent evidence-informed approaches to identify barriers, strengthen relationships and provide timely support for pupils at risk of persistent absence. This will support improved attendance, punctuality and access to learning for all pupils.
Specialist teachers within the Student Support Centre	Pupils accessing the Student Support Centre benefit from personalised timetables and targeted support to develop their social and emotional literacy. This provision strengthens self-regulation, supports engagement with learning and enables pupils to reintegrate successfully into mainstream education.
Increased teacher non-contact time	Additional non-contact time enables teachers to strengthen lesson planning, collaboration and responsive provision. This allows staff to better meet the diverse needs of learners, with high-quality teaching remaining central to improving outcomes for pupils eligible for pDG. The additional time also supports professional collaboration, staff wellbeing and morale.

Community Schools

Budgeted cost: 30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach
Interventions to support social & emotional development. E.g Talk About, Elsa, Cardiff City Foundation,	Targeted social and emotional interventions support pupils to develop self-awareness, emotional literacy and empathy, helping them to better understand and manage their emotions. This work develops practical self-regulation strategies that enable pupils to engage more successfully with learning and the wider school community. Support is tailored to pupils experiencing social and emotional barriers, helping them build positive relationships and overcome barriers to learning. All of which contributes positively to attendance, engagement and academic progress.
Enrichment Activities	Enrichment opportunities will be expanded to ensure all pupils have meaningful experiences beyond the classroom that develop confidence, resilience, teamwork, creativity and wider schools for life. Identified enrichment days throughout the year will provide opportunities for employer and career engagement, real-world projects and cultural or exposure experiences, with clear links to the Curriculum for Wales and the four purposes. Experiences will include opportunities to develop skills in authentic contexts and broaden pupils' understanding of future pathways, Welsh identity and the wider world. Planned reflection will enable pupils to recognise the skills they have developed, make connections to careers and consider how these experiences support their future.

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

Budgeted cost: £526,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach
Specialist staff within the pastoral team and attendance officers to support attendance.	There is a clear link between student attendance and academic achievement, both nationally and within our own school context. We are expanding our specialist pastoral team, including additional attendance capacity, to strengthen and support pupils who experience barriers to regular school attendance. This increased capacity will enable earlier identification of need, stronger safeguarding and more targeted work with pupils and families to understand and address barriers to engagement. Building the skills and capacity within our specialist team is essential to removing barriers to learning and ensuring an inclusive education for all pupils, particularly within the context of the community we serve.
Alternative Provision	Our Alternative Provision opportunities provide targeted support for pupils at risk of exclusion, helping them to remain engaged in education and maintain a pathway towards reintegration. Provision is matched to individual needs, with a focus on addressing barriers, strengthening relationships and developing the skills needed for sustained engagement in learning. This preventative approach supports reduced exclusion and improved outcomes.

Total budgeted cost: £1,033,500

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 to 2026 academic year.

2025 - 2026 Year 11 FSM cohort Cap 9 score was 250 (27.8 points per subject) equivalent to an E/F.

The number of A - C grades achieved by FSM pupils rose by 36% since 2019 but declined by 14% in 2024.

FSM attendance decreased to 76.2 at the end of Term 6, having been 79.5 in Term 5 and over 81% in all other terms, compared to 77.2 (End of term 6 23/24) and 79.1.% (End of term 6 24/25).

Activity	Impact	Budgeted cost
One extra non-contact lesson for teachers	Improved planning and collaboration are supporting more responsive teaching and improved learning experiences. Further CPD will strengthen whole-school approaches to literacy across the curriculum.	£240,000 equivalent to 3.5 FTE.
Librarian post	Targeted, small group provision supports pupils with social and emotional needs and ALN to engage with learning and make progress.	£30,000
Specialist teachers within EPLC	Targeted interventions strengthen emotional literacy, self-regulation, confidence and communication, supporting improved	£80,000

	engagement, attendance and academic progress.	
Interventions to support social & emotional development. E.g Talk About, Elsa, Cardiff City Foundation, Rewise, Jamie's farm	Enrichment experiences provide meaningful opportunities beyond the classroom, strengthening confidence relationships and wellbeing.	£15,000
Enrichment	Alternative provision provides a pathway to continued education for pupils at risk of exclusion, supporting engagement and reducing the need for permanent exclusion.	£15,000
Alternative Provision.	Strengthened pastoral support addresses barriers to attendance and wellbeing, supporting improved engagement, attendance and academic progress.	£100,000
Pastoral teams to support attendance.	Targeted counselling support helps pupils address underlying barriers, strengthen emotional wellbeing and reduce behaviours that can lead to exclusion.	£140,000
School Counsellor	Specialist support improves attendance, wellbeing and engagement, helping pupils overcome barriers to learning and achieve improved outcomes.	£5,000
Provide specialist staff within our Student Support Centre, family	Improved planning and collaboration are supporting more responsive teaching and improved learning	£210,000

liaison and House wellbeing teams.	experiences. Further CPD will strengthen whole-school approaches to literacy across the curriculum.	