

Pupil premium strategy statement – 2025-26

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

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	St Mary's C of E Primary School
Number of pupils in school	58
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	35.8%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025/26 to 2026/27
Date this statement was published	September 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Sean Tobin
Pupil premium lead	Theresa Walker
Governor / Trustee lead	Robin Taverner

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£34,385
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£34,385

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

When making decisions about using Pupil Premium funding it is important to consider the context of the school and the subsequent challenges faced. Challenges are varied and there is no “one size fits all”. We carefully consider the needs of our pupils and families when allocating spending. It is also fundamental to ensure that all staff are involved in the analysis of data and identification of pupils, so that they are fully aware of strengths and areas for development across the school.

Principles

- We ensure that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all the pupils
- We ensure that appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, this includes ensuring that the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils are adequately assessed and addressed
- In making provision for socially disadvantaged pupils, we recognise that not all pupils who receive free school meals will be socially disadvantaged
- We also recognise that not all pupils who are socially disadvantaged are registered or qualify for free school meals. We reserve the right to allocate the Pupil Premium funding to support any pupil or groups of pupils the school has legitimately identified as being socially disadvantaged.
- Pupil premium funding will be allocated following a needs analysis which will identify priority classes, groups or individuals. Limited funding and resources means that not all children receiving free school meals will be in receipt of pupil premium interventions at one time.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Literacy/vocabulary deficit and Early Reading and Writing: Assessments and observations show that all pupils, including those eligible for Pupil Premium, start school with notable gaps in vocabulary, communication, language, and phonics skills. These challenges limit their ability to fully engage with certain areas of the curriculum.
2	Curiosity of learning: Research, assessments, and observations indicate that some disadvantaged pupils show reduced curiosity when they begin KS1. To support their development, the early KS1 curriculum should reflect the Early Years approach, emphasising play-based learning, rich interactions, and a gradual shift from guided writing to independent sentence construction.
3	KS2 outcomes: Disadvantaged, non-SEND pupils currently perform below the national average in reading, writing, and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. There is a need to raise the average scaled scores in all three subjects so that outcomes for this group are at least in line with national figures for all pupils by July 2026. This will help ensure equitable academic outcomes and better readiness for secondary education.
4	Lower Cultural Capital: Conversations and observations suggest that some disadvantaged pupils possess limited general knowledge about the world. As a result, they may struggle to envision future aspirations or understand the steps needed to achieve them. This is not due to a lack of ambition, but rather a consequence of fewer life experiences to date
5	Attendance data for the 2024/25 academic year showed that only 20% of our Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) children achieved good attendance (95%+), compared with 60% of their non-disadvantaged peers. This significant gap highlights the need for targeted support to improve attendance among disadvantaged pupils to ensure they have equal access to learning opportunities and can make strong progress.

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
To close the vocabulary and early literacy gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary-rich environments and teaching strategies are embedded across EYFS and KS1, with

<p>for disadvantaged pupils through high-quality teaching of communication, language, phonics, and early writing, ensuring they are well-prepared to access the full curriculum.</p>	<p>evidence seen in learning walks, pupil work, and lesson observations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 80% of disadvantaged pupils (Non-SEND) meet or exceed expected standards in the PSC (Phonics Screening Check) and early writing by the end of Year 1. • Regular, targeted interventions for pupils with the greatest gaps lead to measurable improvement in language acquisition and writing fluency.
<p>To nurture and sustain the curiosity and engagement of disadvantaged pupils in the early KS1 phase by adopting a play-based, interactive curriculum that builds gradually towards independent writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early KS1 curriculum is adapted to reflect the Early Years approach, incorporating play-based learning and rich interactions. • Increased engagement and enthusiasm for learning observed among disadvantaged pupils during lessons and activities, recorded through teacher observations and pupil feedback. • Improved progression in writing skills, from guided activities to independent sentence construction, demonstrated through regular formative assessments. • Positive responses from pupils and parents regarding the learning environment and opportunities to explore and express curiosity. • Reduction in the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in writing attainment by the end of KS1.
<p>To increase the average scaled score for disadvantaged, non-SEND pupils in reading, writing, and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 so that it is in line with or above national averages for all pupils by July 2026.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gap between disadvantaged, non-SEND pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers (both in-school and nationally) in reading, writing, and maths narrows to less than 3 scaled score points. • At least 75% of disadvantaged, non-SEND pupils meet the expected standard in RWM combined, with a 25% increase from the previous academic year. • Internal assessment points throughout the year show a clear upward trajectory, with targeted pupils consistently on track to meet or exceed expected standards.
<p>To broaden the cultural experiences and general knowledge of disadvantaged pupils, enabling them to develop stronger aspirations and a clearer understanding of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in pupils' general knowledge and understanding, measured through regular formative assessments, pupil discussions, and observation. • Increased pupil confidence in articulating future aspirations and the steps required to achieve them, demonstrated through pupil voice sessions and targeted interviews.

<p>the steps needed to achieve their future goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from pupils and families about the impact of enrichment activities on pupils' motivation and engagement. • Narrowing of the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in knowledge-based curriculum areas by the end of the year.
<p>To improve attendance rates for Pupil Premium (non-SEND) pupils so that the percentage achieving good attendance (95%+) significantly increases, narrowing the gap with non-disadvantaged peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 50% of Pupil Premium (non-SEND) pupils achieve good attendance (95%+) by the end of the 2025/26 academic year. • The attendance gap between Pupil Premium pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers reduces from 40% to less than 15%. • Persistent absence (attendance below 90%) among Pupil Premium pupils decreases by at least 20%. • Regular monitoring and timely interventions lead to a consistent upward trend in attendance for disadvantaged pupils, demonstrated in termly attendance reports. • Positive feedback from families and pupils involved in attendance support programs indicating increased engagement and understanding of attendance importance.

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: **£10000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly.</p>	<p>When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups: Diagnostic assessment EEF</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

<p>Support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend vocabulary. We will purchase resources and fund ongoing teacher training and release time.</p>	<p>There is a strong evidence base that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high-quality classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading: Oral language interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>PPG LSA to support children with SEMH needs to access school</p>	<p>There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers): Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools EEF</p>	<p>4</p>

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

Budgeted cost: **£23,425**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>One to one and small group tuition for pupils in need of additional support, delivered in addition to, and linked with, normal lessons. Tutoring will be implemented with the help of DfE's guide: Tutoring: guidance for education settings</p>	<p>Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind: One to one tuition Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF Small group tuition Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support.</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: Phonics Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	<p>2</p>

LSA to support with RWM in Key Stage 2 to address barriers to learning	Small group tuition Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	3
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: **£960**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole staff training on behaviour management and anti-bullying approaches with the aim of developing our school ethos and improving behaviour across school.	Both targeted interventions and universal approaches can have positive overall effects: Behaviour interventions Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF	4
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's guidance on working together to improve school attendance . This will involve training and release time for staff to develop and implement new procedures and appointing attendance/support officers to improve attendance.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.	5
Tracking and analysis of attendance on CPOMS	EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) Evidence: Effective monitoring and targeted pastoral support are shown to have a positive impact on attendance and attainment. "Robust data systems" help identify and address underlying causes of poor attendance. (Source: EEF - Attendance Interventions Rapid Evidence Review) DfE Pupil Premium Guidance (2023): "Schools can spend their Pupil Premium on whole-school	All

	approaches, targeted support for specific groups, or more intensive support for individual pupils where appropriate." (Source: Gov.uk Pupil Premium Overview)	
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Total budgeted cost: £34,385

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Many children enter Early Years and Key Stage 1 with underdeveloped language skills, which restricts phonic acquisition and slows rates of progress. This directly affects the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. Reading fluency remains underdeveloped, as pupils are not consistently exposed to a wide range of high-quality texts at home or through regular library visits. Opportunities to read for pleasure and build a love of books outside school are therefore limited. We will continue to develop this in 2025/26.

In 2024/25 0% of disadvantaged pupils reached the EXS score of 32 in the PSC – both of these pupils have SEND.

However, 2024/25 100% of disadvantaged pupils passed the year 2 PSC – scored 40/40.

For some pupils, attendance is below national expectations. Absence leads to missed learning opportunities, widening gaps in knowledge and skills, and has a disproportionate impact on progress and attainment, particularly in reading, writing, and mathematics.

While targeted interventions and whole-school approaches have led to improvements in resilience, confidence, and self-esteem for disadvantaged pupils, the nature of our school intake means that SEMH will continue to be an ongoing barrier to learning. Many pupils join us with complex needs, lower starting points in self-regulation, and limited life experiences, which impact their confidence and aspirations. As a result, despite improvements, SEMH remains a priority area to address, as it directly affects pupils' ability to engage fully with learning and make accelerated progress.