Pupil premium strategy statement – 2026-27

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	65
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	36%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2026/27
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
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	£34,830
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	0
Total budget for this academic year	£34,830

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.

The Pupil Premium Strategy is closely aligned with the School Development Plan and the school's self-evaluation priorities. The key areas of early reading and literacy, consistent implementation of Read Write Inc., mathematical fluency and improved attendance reflect the priorities identified through school self-evaluation. The Pupil Premium Strategy provides a targeted approach to addressing these priorities for disadvantaged pupils, with progress and impact reviewed through assessment, monitoring, pupil progress meetings and governor oversight.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	**Early reading, phonics, literacy, vocabulary and writing** Disadvantaged pupils continue to present with gaps in vocabulary, communication, language, phonics and early literacy which can affect their ability to develop reading fluency and writing skills and to access the wider curriculum confidently. The 2025/26 Year 1 Phonics Screening Check outcome demonstrates that early reading remains a key area for development. The school will therefore continue to strengthen early reading through the consistent implementation of Read Write Inc., alongside targeted support and a strong focus on vocabulary, handwriting, spelling and transcription.
2	**Attainment and gaps in prior learning** Some disadvantaged pupils, particularly those who join the school from other settings, have gaps in prior learning and differing experiences of curriculum coverage, routines and expectations. This can affect their progress towards age-related expectations, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. The school will use accurate assessment of individual starting points, consistent teaching approaches and targeted intervention to address identified gaps and accelerate progress. Given the small size and complexity of the cohort, individual pupil starting points and progress will be considered alongside whole-school and national data when evaluating impact.
3	**SEMH, wellbeing, relationships and readiness to learn** Some disadvantaged pupils experience social, emotional and mental health needs which can create barriers to engagement, relationships, attendance and readiness to learn. Pupils may require additional support to develop confidence, resilience, emotional regulation and positive relationships with peers and adults. The school recognises the importance of strong, trusted relationships and a nurturing environment in enabling pupils to feel safe and engage successfully in learning. Targeted provision includes the Children's Coach, Drawing and Talking, Forest School, supported play, restorative approaches and individualised SEMH support.
4	**Attendance and persistent absence** Attendance remains a significant barrier for disadvantaged pupils and reduces their access to learning and wider school experiences. In 2025/26, attendance for Pupil Premium pupils was 85.1%, compared with 93.8% for non-Pupil Premium pupils, and persistent absence was 47.8%. Some attendance difficulties are linked to complex family circumstances and individual barriers. The school will continue to strengthen early identification, weekly monitoring, Attendance Support Plans, parental

	engagement and partnership with external agencies where appropriate. The aim is to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence while working with families to understand and address the underlying barriers.
5	**Broaden cultural experiences, knowledge and aspirations for disadvantaged pupils.** Some disadvantaged pupils have had fewer opportunities to develop broad general knowledge and experiences beyond their immediate environment. This can affect their ability to make connections across the curriculum, participate confidently in conversations and understand the range of opportunities available to them in the future. The school will continue to broaden pupils' experiences through a rich curriculum, Forest School, enrichment opportunities, visits, pupil voice and opportunities to encounter people, places and experiences beyond their immediate context. The focus is on building knowledge, confidence and aspirations rather than assuming that disadvantaged pupils lack ambition.
6	**Individual complexity and differing starting points** The school operates within a highly complex context, with approximately 54% of pupils identified as SEND and over 47% of these pupils with an EHCP, alongside significant levels of disadvantage, absence and persistent absence. This complexity is also reflected within the disadvantaged cohort: 19 of the 31 disadvantaged pupils have identified SEND needs, including 9 pupils with an EHCP. This significantly influences how progress and the impact of Pupil Premium provision are evaluated. The small size of the school means that individual pupils can have a substantial impact on cohort-level percentages and outcomes. Many pupils also join the school from different settings, meaning that staff need to establish individual starting points and respond to a wide range of academic, social, emotional and additional needs. The school's inclusive approach is a strength, and provision is therefore designed to respond to individual barriers while maintaining high expectations and access to a broad curriculum for all pupils.

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
Strengthen early reading, literacy and writing for disadvantaged pupils.	• At least 70% of disadvantaged pupils achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, in line with the school's SDP target. • At least 80% of disadvantaged pupils who do not meet the expected standard in Year 1 achieve the expected standard by the end of Year 2.

	• Disadvantaged pupils receiving Read Write Inc. support demonstrate measurable progress from their individual baseline in regular half-termly RWI assessments. Pupils not making expected progress are identified and their grouping or support is reviewed. • Reading fluency is assessed at baseline and reviewed at least termly. Evidence records progress in accuracy, fluency and comprehension against each pupil's starting point. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils working at or above age-related expectations in reading increases. • SDP reading reference points are monitored alongside disadvantaged pupil outcomes: at least 45% at the expected standard in KS1 reading and 70% at the expected standard in KS2 reading. • Assessment and work scrutiny show improved application of phonics, spelling, handwriting and transcription skills in pupils' independent reading and writing across the curriculum.
Accelerate mathematical fluency and attainment for disadvantaged pupils.	• At least 70% of disadvantaged pupils achieve the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined at KS2, in line with the SDP target. • At least 74% of disadvantaged pupils achieve the expected standard in KS2 mathematics. • The school achieves an average Multiplication Tables Check score of 22, with disadvantaged pupils' scores reviewed individually and targeted support provided where gaps remain. • Baseline and subsequent assessment show measurable improvement for disadvantaged pupils in number sense, place value, number bonds, arithmetic and multiplicative reasoning. • Targeted pupils make progress towards age-related expectations from their assessed starting points. Progress is reviewed termly through formative and summative assessment, pupil progress meetings and work scrutiny. • Pupils joining the school during the year have a baseline assessment completed promptly; identified gaps in prior learning and subsequent progress are recorded and reviewed at the next termly pupil progress meeting.

Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils.	• Overall attendance for disadvantaged pupils improves towards the school's whole-school target of at least 96%. • Persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils reduces from the 2025/26 baseline of 47.8% to an agreed end-of-year target of 28% by July 2027. Progress towards this target is reviewed termly, with additional support and intervention provided where pupils are not on track. • Attendance for disadvantaged pupils is checked weekly. Pupils at risk of persistent absence are identified promptly, with actions and follow-up recorded. • Attendance Support Plans are in place for identified pupils and reviewed with families at agreed intervals. Reviews record whether attendance has improved and what further action is required. There is evidence of increased parental engagement in attendance support, including improved communication and partnership working. • Termly reporting compares disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged attendance and persistent absence, including the size of the attendance gap and changes in pupil numbers. • Attendance progress is reviewed against clear termly milestones: **Autumn:** Disadvantaged pupils at risk of persistent absence are identified, individual attendance baselines established and support plans implemented. **Spring:** Attendance trajectories and the impact of support plans are reviewed. Where improvement is limited, actions are adapted in partnership with families. **Summer:** The school evaluates the annual improvement in disadvantaged attendance, the reduction in persistent absence and the narrowing of the gap with non-disadvantaged pupils. • Attendance data, including disadvantaged attendance, persistent absence and the attendance gap, is reported to governors termly. Governors review progress against milestones, challenge where improvement is limited and monitor the impact of actions taken. • Attendance data is reviewed alongside SEND information and individual circumstances. The impact of support is evidenced through pupil attendance

	trajectories and anonymised examples of sustained improvement. • The school uses Attendance Ambassadors, pupil voice, assemblies and celebration to promote a positive culture of attendance and punctuality. • Where appropriate, external agencies are engaged promptly to support pupils and families experiencing complex barriers to attendance. • Attendance data demonstrates improved access to learning for disadvantaged pupils, with individual cases showing sustained improvement where targeted intervention has been provided.
Strengthen SEMH, wellbeing and a sense of belonging for disadvantaged pupils	• Disadvantaged pupils identified as requiring SEMH support have access to an appropriate named trusted adult, with provision matched to their individual needs. • Identified disadvantaged pupils access targeted provision such as Children's Coaching, Drawing and Talking and/or Forest School, where appropriate, with participation and impact monitored. • Pupils receiving targeted SEMH support demonstrate improved confidence, emotional regulation, resilience and readiness to learn, evidenced through pupil voice, staff observations and individual reviews. • Pupil voice demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils feel safe, listened to, valued and supported by adults in school, with pupils able to identify adults they can talk to when they are worried or experiencing difficulties. • Disadvantaged pupils demonstrate improved relationships, social interaction and ability to manage disagreements, supported through adult-moderated play, restorative approaches and targeted friendship work where required. • Where SEMH needs are contributing to poor attendance or engagement, individual support plans link SEMH provision with attendance and learning, and progress is reviewed regularly with families. • Families of disadvantaged pupils receiving targeted support report positive communication and partnership with school, with barriers identified and addressed collaboratively wherever possible.

	• Behaviour, attendance and engagement data for individual pupils receiving SEMH support shows positive movement from their starting point, recognising that progress may be individual and non-linear. • For disadvantaged pupils with SEND, including those with EHCPs, progress is evaluated against individual starting points, relevant SEND support targets and EHCP outcomes, recognising that improvements in communication, emotional regulation, independence, relationships and engagement may represent significant progress. • The school evaluates the impact of SEMH provision for disadvantaged pupils with complex needs by considering individual pupil journeys and the difference that targeted support, reasonable adjustments and additional provision make to their ability to access learning and participate in school life. • Staff use a consistent understanding of individual pupils' SEMH needs and starting points to ensure that support is early, proportionate and responsive, particularly for pupils experiencing significant change, mobility or complex circumstances. • The impact of SEMH provision is reviewed termly through a combination of pupil voice, parent feedback, staff observations, attendance, behaviour, engagement and progress towards individual targets, ensuring that provision is adapted where it is not having the intended impact.
Broaden cultural experiences, knowledge and aspirations for disadvantaged pupils.	• Participation of disadvantaged pupils in planned enrichment, Forest School, visits and wider curriculum experiences is recorded and reviewed termly. • Any barriers preventing disadvantaged pupils from participating are identified, with actions recorded to improve access. • Pupil voice is gathered termly and shows whether pupils can talk with increasing confidence about experiences, learning, interests and future aspirations. • Curriculum assessment, pupil discussions and work demonstrate development in relevant vocabulary, knowledge and understanding over time.

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: **£8,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Consistent implementation of Read Write Inc. across the school, with staff training, monitoring and targeted support to ensure that phonics teaching is delivered with fidelity. Alongside this, staff will strengthen handwriting, spelling, transcription and vocabulary so that disadvantaged pupils can apply their literacy skills confidently across the curriculum.	The EEF identifies systematic phonics as an approach with a strong evidence base for improving reading outcomes. Evidence also supports the importance of high-quality teaching, assessment and targeted support for pupils who are falling behind.	1, 2, 6
Assessment and diagnostic practice will be used to identify individual gaps in learning and ensure that teaching and intervention are matched to pupils' starting points. This is particularly important given the small school context and the number of pupils who join from other settings.	EEF guidance on diagnostic assessment highlights its role in identifying areas for development for individual pupils and informing teaching and intervention.	1, 2, 6
Oral language and vocabulary development will continue through explicit teaching of vocabulary, structured discussion, questioning and opportunities for pupils to articulate and consolidate their understanding.	The EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit identifies oral language interventions, including approaches involving high-quality interaction and discussion, as having a positive impact on learning, particularly in reading.	1, 5

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

Budgeted cost: **£17,830**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
PPG catch-up LSA to deliver targeted Read Write Inc. and literacy interventions for disadvantaged pupils identified through assessment as requiring additional phonics and early reading support. Intervention will be closely linked to classroom teaching and regularly assessed.	The EEF identifies phonics as having a strong evidence base and highlights the value of targeted support for pupils who require additional phonics teaching. Small-group tuition is also identified by the EEF as an effective approach when targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps.	1, 2, 6
Targeted mathematics support through small-group or individual intervention for disadvantaged pupils with identified gaps in number sense, arithmetic and multiplicative reasoning. Provision will be informed by regular assessment and linked closely to classroom teaching.	The EEF evidence base for small-group tuition supports targeted intervention where pupils have identified gaps in knowledge and understanding.	2, 6
Targeted support for pupils who join the school with gaps in prior learning, using diagnostic assessment to establish starting points and identify specific areas requiring accelerated support.	EEF evidence supports the use of targeted tuition and diagnostic assessment to identify and address specific learning needs.	2, 6

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

Budgeted cost: **£9000.** Funding contributes towards the additional adult capacity required to deliver targeted SEMH, wellbeing, enrichment and attendance support for disadvantaged pupils. This includes the Children's Coach, Drawing and Talking provision, Forest School staffing and attendance staffing/monitoring.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed

Children's Coach provision to provide disadvantaged pupils with access to a trusted adult and targeted individual or small-group support. The Children's Coach will work with pupils to develop confidence, resilience, emotional regulation, positive relationships and readiness to learn, while working in partnership with families where appropriate.	EEF evidence on social and emotional learning identifies positive effects on pupils' social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour and academic outcomes. The approach is particularly relevant where SEMH needs are creating barriers to engagement and learning.	3, 4, 6
Drawing and Talking therapy for identified disadvantaged pupils requiring additional emotional support. Sessions will provide pupils with a structured opportunity to explore emotions, develop self-awareness and build strategies to support their wellbeing and engagement with school.	The provision sits within the school's wider SEMH strategy. Impact will be evaluated through pupil voice, staff observations, engagement, behaviour and individual pupil outcomes rather than attributing a specific effect solely to the intervention.	3, 4
Forest School provision, including a contribution towards staffing, to provide disadvantaged pupils with opportunities to develop confidence, resilience, communication, cooperation and positive relationships through outdoor and experiential learning.	The provision supports the school's wider social and emotional approach and provides additional opportunities for engagement, relationships and personal development. Impact will be evaluated through pupil voice, observations, engagement and individual pupil progress.	3, 5, 6
Attendance staffing and family engagement, including staffing time to monitor attendance, communicate with families, coordinate Attendance Support Plans and identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.	EEF evidence on attendance emphasises the importance of understanding individual barriers, effective communication with families, robust monitoring and targeted support.	4, 6
Attendance tracking and analysis through CPOMS to ensure that concerns are identified promptly and that attendance information can be considered alongside pastoral, safeguarding and SEMH information.	The EEF attendance evidence highlights the importance of effective monitoring and identifying the underlying causes of absence so that support can be appropriately targeted.	3, 4, 6

Pupil voice, Attendance Ambassadors, assemblies and celebration to develop a positive culture around attendance and belonging and to ensure disadvantaged pupils understand the importance of regular attendance.	The school's attendance approach is informed by DfE attendance guidance and the principle of combining whole-school approaches with targeted support for pupils experiencing barriers to attendance.	3, 4

Total budgeted cost: £34,830

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

During 2025/26, St Mary's C of E Primary School used its Pupil Premium funding to address identified barriers to learning, with a particular focus on early literacy and vocabulary, academic attainment, attendance, engagement, SEMH and cultural capital. The impact of the strategy was mixed. Targeted provision, including quality-first teaching, phonics and academic interventions, SEMH support and attendance work, was responsive to pupils' individual starting points and needs.

Pupil voice indicated that children were happy to attend school and valued the support and relationships provided by adults, while parents were also positive about their children's experience of school. Previous phonics intervention demonstrated strong recovery by Year 2; however, the 2025/26 Year 1 phonics outcome of 0% and the KS2 combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics outcome of 33% indicate that early reading and attainment remain key areas for development.

Attendance also remains a significant barrier, with Pupil Premium attendance at 85.1% compared with 93.8% for non-Pupil Premium pupils and persistent absence at 47.8%. The school recognises that the cohort includes a high proportion of pupils with SEND and significant pupil mobility, meaning that individual starting points and needs must be considered when evaluating impact.

For 2026/27, the school will strengthen early reading and writing through consistent implementation of Read Write Inc., accelerate mathematical fluency and attainment, continue to prioritise attendance and the reduction of persistent absence, and further strengthen SEMH provision to support disadvantaged pupils' wellbeing, relationships, engagement and readiness to learn.

Evaluation will also include evidence of:

- Progress towards individual learning targets, including EHCP outcomes and SEND support targets.
- Development in communication, language, reading, writing and mathematical skills, where these are relevant to individual pupils.
- Increased independence, confidence, engagement and readiness to learn.
- Improvements in attendance, participation, relationships, wellbeing and sense of belonging.
- The effectiveness of targeted interventions, reasonable adjustments and additional support in reducing barriers to learning.
- Pupil progress will be reviewed termly by teachers and leaders, using assessment information alongside observations, pupil voice, parent feedback

and evidence of progress towards individual targets. Where progress is limited, provision will be reviewed and adapted. This will ensure that the school can demonstrate the difference its provision makes to disadvantaged pupils, including those with complex needs, medical needs or interrupted learning.