St Mary's Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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 the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Number of pupils in school	176
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	12.1%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3-year plans are recommended)**	2025/2026 to 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Janet McKinlay, Headteacher
Pupil Premium Lead	Clare Cook Assistant Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Roy Davies

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£33,300
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£33,300

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, our aim is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to reduce barriers created because of socio-economic background and to support disadvantaged pupils of all abilities to achieve across all areas and aspects of learning.

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

Our first priority is to ensure that teaching is of the highest possible standard with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation suggests that this has the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Strategies that are designed to improve disadvantaged pupils' attainment will also have a positive impact on non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment.

Evidence also indicates that small group and one-to-one interventions can be a powerful tool for supporting pupils. High-quality teaching should reduce the need for extra support, but some pupils will require structured, targeted interventions to make progress.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, and not influenced by the fact that some children are disadvantaged which could lead to unfounded assumptions about capability.

The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils thrive. Our end goals are to:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are appropriately challenged in each lesson so they move their learning on incrementally
- provide disadvantaged pupils with sufficient support and opportunities to unlock their potential.
- act early to intervene in order to match provision to need
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and ensure that disadvantaged children make at least expected progress in line with national expectations.
- Prioritise the cultivation of robust professional relationships with pupils, fostering a secure and enjoyable learning environment.
- Collaborate with pupils and families where attendance is poor.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	According to EYFS and KS1 evaluations and observations, vulnerable and poor children's oral language abilities seem to be less developed than those of their peers who are not disadvantaged.
2	Our assessments and observations suggest that writing attainment for our disadvantaged pupils is below that of their peers.
3	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families indicate that the social and emotional growth and wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged pupils continue to be an issue due to a lack of enrichment opportunities and wider experiences beyond the classroom. This has resulted in knowledge gaps leading to some pupils falling further behind age-related expectations.
4	Our attendance data over the last 3 years shows that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has not been flagged up because the criteria have not been met. The attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged in 2022 – 2023 was 3.16%. Attendance data over the year 2023 – 2024 indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils was only 1.16% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils which demonstrates the strategies put in place and interventions had a positive impact. The school is performing relatively well in regard to pupil premium children's attendance based on our attendance and absence results from the start of the academic year 2024 to 2025, up to Wednesday 13 August 2025, compared to 20 similar schools. The attendance of our pupils eligible for free school meals was **95.6%**, which is more than 19 out of 20 similar schools. This demonstrates a clear upward trajectory. However, data at the beginning of this academic, suggests a gap between the percentage of children persistently absent (whole school) compared to the percentage of pupil premium children who are persistently absent 10.7% (whole school) compared to 21.7% (Pupil Premium) Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress for this particular group. There will be a renewed focus on this vulnerable group.

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
Enhanced vocabulary and oral language proficiency among disadvantaged pupils	Evaluations and observations show that disadvantaged students' speech and language has improved. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons and ongoing formative assessment. Pupils will share their thoughts and understanding of the content taught, which will raise self-esteem. There will be an increase in personal capacity for self-regulation and motivation for learning. The work to promote these skills will need to continue.
Improved reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	80% of KS2 disadvantaged pupils will met the expected standard in reading in 2025/26. (60% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in 2024/25.) KS2 reading outcomes in 2025/26 will show that 100% of disadvantaged pupils who have no special educational needs have met the expected standard. By the summer of 2027, pupils will fulfil their potential academically. KS2 reading outcomes in 2026/27 will show that 100% of disadvantaged pupils who have no special educational needs met the expected standard.
Improved writing attainment for disadvantaged pupils.	60% of KS2 disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in writing in 2024/25. KS2 writing outcomes in 2025/26 will show that 80% of disadvantaged pupils who have no special educational needs will have met the expected standard. By the summer 2027, pupils will fulfil their potential academically.
Improved maths attainment for disadvantaged pupils.	60% of KS2 disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in maths in 2024/25. KS2 maths outcomes in maths in 2025/26 will show that 80% of disadvantaged pupils who have no special educational needs will have met the expected standard. By the summer 2027, most pupils will fulfil their potential academically.
Improved attainment in all areas of the curriculum.	All children will demonstrate good progress in foundation subjects by demonstrating that they have remembered a substantial part of their learning in each year group. By the summer 2027, pupils will fulfil their potential academically.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing in 2025/26 and 2026/27 and 2027/28 will be demonstrated by: • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • participation in enrichment activities by disadvantaged pupils • A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.

	• A reduction in pupil referrals for support. • Pupils including those in receipt of pupil premium have their needs identified early and addressed through school support
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly those who are persistently absent with a focus on our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance from 2025/26 and 2026/27 and 2027/28 will be demonstrated by: • the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers will continue to de-crease. • the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent will significantly reduce for disadvantaged children • whole school attendance for 2024/25 was 96.7% com-pared to 95.6% for disadvantaged children. The gap be-tween disadvantaged pupils and their peers will be less than 1% by the end of 2025/26

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: **£16,775**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments and membership of CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education) for 'The Power of Reading' resources. Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments and additional materials to support writing outcomes Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly. Training and continued support through external consultants and providers –	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-assessing-learning-in-the-new-academic-year-part-1 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-assessing-learning-in-the-new-academic-year-part-2	1, 2

Cambridge University, Cheshire East Pathways, Hope University	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/assessment-feedback https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/measuring-up-helping-teachers-to-assess-better	
Embedding dialogic activities across the school curriculum. These can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding, and support recall and retrieve content taught. (Link to School Impact Plan) We will purchase resources and fund ongoing teacher training and release time. Support sourced from Dr Neil Phillipson (Associate@ Oracy Cambridge He will be supporting the school to develop oracy, and particularly dialogue and helping to create a more dialogic culture in the school as a whole. He is providing INSET on **dialogic teaching and learning**. Plus a 'Bottom-up' approach by training groups of pupils along with an interested teacher to be '**dialogue leaders**' in school.	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 the use of vocabulary, articulation of ideas and spoken expression and reading: *https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions* https://voice21.org/eef-on-oral-language-interventions/ *"Overall, studies of oral language interventions consistently show positive impact on learning, including on oral language skills and reading comprehension. On average, pupils who participate in oral language interventions make approximately five months' additional progress over the course of a year."* Articulating what pupils have learned and how this could be implemented in their work helps pupils consolidate their learning in core subjects. It will also improve self-esteem and reduce anxiety which can effect attendance	1, 2, 3, 4
High standard of maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE and EEF guidance. Engagement with Maths hub on oracy and talk token strategies We will continue to fund teacher release time to embed key elements of guidance in school and to access	The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6140b7008fa8f503ba3dc8d1/Maths_guidance_KS_1_and_2.pdf	1, 3

Maths Hub resources and CPD (including Teaching for Mastery training). The school has received a place on the EYFS lesson study sessions at Sandbach Primary Academy. The school will work with Alistair Scott, our Work Group Lead from Cheshire & Wirral Maths Hub for the up-coming academic year as part of the '**Subject Leader Core'** sessions	https://www.ncetm.org.uk/classroom-resources/exemplification-of-ready-to-progress-criteria/ The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/maths-ks-2-3 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mastery-learning	
Writing Hub partnership to improve the standard of writing for our disadvantaged pupils. Release time for S Hughes, our Year 6 teacher who is leading the Writing Partnership Hub across the Trust.	The EEF guidance is based on a range of practical, evidence-based recommendations https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2	
Improve the quality of social and emotional (SEL) learning. SEL approaches will be embedded into routine educational practices and supported by professional development and training for staff. Use of Ten Ten resources – a Relationships and Health Education curriculum programme. ELSA trained staff to support vulnerable pupils. Timetable of nurture and social and emotional support sessions. Promotion and utilisation of the Nurture/intervention hub – The Haven. Engagement with mental health awareness projects such as 'Hello Yellow'.	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): https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/	3

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

Budgeted cost: **£8542**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Reading Book Parcel Sacks for our disadvantaged pupils. Additional books for the library to improve listening, narrative and vocabulary skills for disadvantaged pupils who have relatively low spoken language skills. Use of a Passion for Learning volunteer Use of Mrs Jill Hinton, school readers programme.	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment in all areas of the curriculum: *https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions*	1, 2, 3
Use of teaching assistants to deliver structured intervention programs and purchase of additional resources to support further learning.	Teaching assistants can have a positive impact on learner outcomes. Targeted deployment, where teaching assistants are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals, has a higher impact. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions	1, 2, 3, 4
Additional reading and phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics and reading interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics	2
Careful timetabling of the learning hub	Nurture and intervention targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining	3, 4

	pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition | Toolkit Strand | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF	

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

Budgeted cost: **£7983**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's advice: **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance** This will involve releasing staff to support pupils with the use of the revamped library, the learning hub and Charlie, the Pet Therapy Dog. Use of the Education Welfare Management Web: http://www.educationwelfaremanagement.co.uk to support those struggling to attend. Fortnightly sessions with office staff to monitor attendance and identify those who may need support	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.	4
Development of parental engagement among disadvantaged and vulnerable learners through enhanced communication channels. Example: Phonics meeting on Monday 6th October at 3pm. Discussion with parents on how the school teaches Phonics, our approach to reading and the phonics screening check for year 1.	Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement	3, 4

Termly pupil progress meetings to ensure clear focus for PP children. Monitoring PP attainment through formation assessment weekly.	**Using pupil premium | EEF** Stresses the importance of focus on attainment of PP children.	1, 2, 3, 4
Emotional wellbeing support from our specially trained staff through social and emotional learning and individual and small group nurture sessions Coach Gary leads two weekly sports sessions for Pupil Premium children only to improve their self -esteem and mental health.	Improving pupils' wellbeing through nurture ensures they are in a good place and ready to learn. **Social and emotional learning | EEF**	3
Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.	All

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Our internal assessments during 2024/25 supported by statutory assessment suggested that the performance of disadvantaged pupils was above national at the end of KS2 in reading, writing and maths (school 60%, national 47%) Internal data showed the performance of pupil premium pupils at the end of KS1 was above their peers in reading and maths. 50 % of pupil premium pupils reached expected in writing.

100% of disadvantaged pupils passed the Phonics Screening Check in year 1 and 50% passed in year 2 in June 2025.

Overall, 60% of all disadvantaged children achieved Age Related Expectation in Reading, Writing and Maths combined at the end of 2024/25.

60% of children achieved Age Related Expectation in Reading, Writing and Maths.

Our assessment of the reasons for these outcomes points to quality first teaching. Pupils were able to benefit from our pupil premium funded approaches to teaching and targeted interventions.

Whole school attendance for 2024/25 was 96.7% compared to 95.6% for disadvantaged children. The gap has narrowed over the last three years.

Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils met expectations, and we are at present on course to achieve the outcomes we set out to achieve by 2027/28, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above.

Our evaluation of the approaches delivered last academic year indicates that our resolution to maintain a high-quality curriculum and quality first teaching has been successful alongside all the above strategies we have put in place.

We have reviewed our strategy plan and made changes to how we intend to use some of our budget this academic year. The Further Information section below provides more details about our planning, implementation, and evaluation processes.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
ELSA	Cheshire East
Dyslexia	British Dyslexia association
Power Maths	Pearson Education
The Power of Reading	CLPD
Purple Mash	2Simple Ltd
TT Rockstars	Maths Circle
Essential Letters and Sounds	Oxford University Press
KAPOW	Kapow Primary

Further information (optional)

Additional activity

Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activity that is funded by pupil premium. That will include:

- offering a wide range of high-quality extracurricular activities to boost wellbeing, behaviour, attendance, and aspiration. Activities will focus on building life skills such as confidence, resilience, and socialising. Disadvantaged pupils will be encouraged and supported to participate.

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

In planning our new pupil premium strategy, we assessed the impact of previous strategies including why they may not have had the desired impact. Alongside this we have used data, book looks, information gathered from formative assessment, general observations and conversations with all involved to gain a comprehensive picture of barriers preventing our children from achieving.

We looked at a number of reports, studies and research papers about effective use of pupil premium, the impact of disadvantage on education outcomes and how to address challenges to learning presented by socio-economic disadvantage.

We used the EEF's implementation guidance to help us develop our strategy and help us identify specific pupil needs and work out which activities and approaches are likely to work in our school. We will continue to use it through the implementation of activities.

We have put a robust evaluation framework in place for the duration of our three-year approach and will adjust our plan over time to secure better outcomes for pupils.