

Pupil premium strategy statement

St Mary's RC Primary, a Voluntary Academy

School overview

| Detail | Data |
|--|---|
| Number of pupils in school | 94 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year) | 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 |
| Date this statement was published | December 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | June 2026 |
| Statement authorised by | E Lloyd, Head Teacher |
| Pupil premium lead | E Lloyd, Head Teacher |
| Governor / Trustee lead | K Heakin, Lead for disadvantaged pupils |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|--|------------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £ 142, 410 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable) | £ 0 |
| Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i> | £ 142, 410 |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

We believe that all children, regardless of background and personal challenges faced, have the right to experience an education that they can access and where success can be fulfilled. We strive to make equity a reality where a wide range of educational opportunities enable all children to thrive and make strong progress in their learning.

All pupils should develop confidence in their own abilities, their readiness for learning through building positive attitudes and having higher expectations of themselves and others. All pupils should have aspirations for their future and strive to achieve more.

We aim to support our disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils by ensuring that our children receive high quality first teaching, interventions and enriching opportunities which consolidate, review, challenge and extend learning, raising attainment across the core subjects. We intend to provide targeted support in reading, writing and maths, through a combination of whole school approaches and specific interventions to address the gaps that are evident from EEF research for pupils who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Our prime focus is for our pupils to secure a better understanding of phonics, reading skills with particular emphasis on reading fluency and comprehension, leading to improved outcomes in all areas. Many of our disadvantaged pupils need support with social development, oracy and self-regulation in order to fully access the curriculum.

Persistent absence is an area which needs to be tackled so that regular attendance for some children rapidly improves. With further support, we will encourage our pupils to develop positive behaviours for learning, cultivate a love for learning alongside their peers, and the curiosity to discover more about the world they live in, develop their independence and learn more about their roles and responsibilities as citizens in our world.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the work that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|---|
| 1 | Assessments, observations and discussions with pupils indicate low starting points for disadvantaged pupils in Reception class, particularly in speech and language skills and oral development. Gaps in language development and understanding of vocabulary across a range of subjects are evident from Reception through to KS2. |
| 2 | Many of our disadvantaged pupils have difficulty grasping phonics skills which impacts on their development as fluent readers throughout school, including into KS2. |
| 3 | A high percentage of our disadvantaged pupils are also on the SEN register so providing high quality first teaching to enable full access to the curriculum is vital. |
| 4 | Many of our disadvantaged pupils experience social, behavioural and emotional difficulties, including with self-regulation and self-esteem, and experience a lack of enrichment opportunities which affects attainment and aspirations. EYFS pupils enter with low starting points in PSED skills. |
| 5 | Assessment results indicate that unstable staffing, compounded with the effects of the long shadow of Covid, have had an impact on the education and wellbeing of our disadvantaged pupils, leading to pupils falling further behind age related expectations throughout school in reading, writing and maths. |
| 6 | Attendance data indicates that more of our disadvantaged pupils experience persistent absence than non-disadvantaged pupils, with persistent absence rates for disadvantaged pupils being 4.7% higher than non-disadvantaged pupils last year. Assessments and observations show that absenteeism is negatively impacting pupil 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 |
|--|---|
| Improved oral language skills, improved understanding and use of vocabulary throughout school. | Assessments, observations and discussions indicate that oral language skills have improved from EYFS to Y6. Classroom environments, book scrutiny and pupil voice show a dedicated focus on vocabulary development. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Improved phonics understanding and reading attainment across KS1 and improved reading attainment for disadvantaged pupils by the end of KS2. | Phonics outcomes in Y1 show that pupils are in line with the national average. KS2 reading outcomes by 2027/2028 show improved data with disadvantaged pupils data being broadly in line with national average for reading. |
| Good progress is made by disadvantaged pupils also on the SEND register and more of these pupils achieve age related expectations through high quality first teaching and interventions. | Through application of EEF's 5 a day, a higher number of SEND pupils have met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths. Assessments show that SEND pupils have made good rates of progress across core subjects. |
| To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in school. | Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by: • Embedding of Thrive approach throughout school from EYFS to Y6; • Improvement in behaviour and readiness for learning across school; • Staff, pupil and parent voice; • Increased participation in enrichment activities among disadvantaged pupils; • Increased participation and parental involvement in school events. |
| More pupils achieve age-related expectations in core subjects. | Outcomes for reading, writing, GPS and maths have significantly improved by 2027/2028 in all year groups. |
| To achieve and sustain improved attendance rates for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and decrease the amount of persistent absence from school. | Sustained high attendance by 2027/2028 demonstrated by: • Reducing the persistent absence gap between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils by at least 50%; • Increasing attendance rates for persistently absence pupils by between 10%-15%. |

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: £ 31 777

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Formative assessments NTS to be delivered termly £1512 | Teachers should provide high quality instruction, including the use of formative assessment strategies in order to provide effective feedback. | 1, 3, 5 |
| Insight Assessment Tracker £1300 | educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/guidance-reports/feedback | 1, 3, 5 |
| Focus on curriculum development using Kapow for foundation subjects £1491 | Insight, Welcomm Program, Lancashire EYFS Pupil Tracker | 1, 3, 5 |
| Focus on curriculum development using Pathways to Read and Pathways to Write from Y1 – Y6. £6500 | Progressive development vocabulary, reading and writing skills through the mastery approach | 3, 5 |
| Fund teacher release time for subject leadership and attend Romero subject leadership meetings & Attend local cluster to improve subject knowledge £5000 | Evidence indicates that high quality teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment, including for disadvantaged pupils. | 3, 5 |
| SLT to continue with rigorous monitoring including assessment, book looks and lesson observations. £10442. | Effective professional development is likely to provide teachers with the techniques they require to improve practice. Mechanisms include building knowledge, motivating staff, developing teaching techniques and embedding practice. Peer to peer support via | 1, 3, 5 |

| | | |
|---|--|------------|
| Further develop tracking system for Wellcomm | coaching. Effective Professional Development – Guidance Report | 1, 2 |
| Strengthen phonics | | |
| Whole staff training for RWI Phonics due to staff turnover in past 12mths. New KS1 staff to go to updated RWI training sessions on development days. | Systematic phonics approaches explicitly teach pupils a comprehensive set of letter sound relationships through an organised sequence. Strong evidence that phonics programmes can impact word reading. (Improving Literacy in KS1 Guidance Report). | 1, 2, 3, 5 |
| RWI leader to go to RWI leadership training Book development day £2232 | Evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with lower prior attainment may particularly benefit from being explicitly taught reading comprehension strategies. Modelling and supported practice. Improving Literacy in KS2 through Pathways to Read (listed above). | 2, 3, 5 |
| Research and improve the delivery of reading comprehension in KS2 Accelerated reading program to be embedded across KS2. £1500 Library service £1800 | The EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit highlights that approaches supporting reading comprehension can, on average, deliver an additional 6 months progress. The first EEF-funded efficacy trial of AR found pupils who received the programme made three months of additional progress in reading comprehension. | 2, 5 |

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

Budgeted cost: £36 422

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| Timetable thrive practitioners to deliver | There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and | 1, 4, 5 |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Thrive on a regular basis throughout the week with targeted children. £5085</p> <p>Thrive training for staff x 2 £300</p> <p>Staff to continue to use the Thrive assessment tool to assess children regularly. £531</p> | <p>emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life. Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools Guidance Report</p> | |
| <p>Purchase and develop SEND assessments. £1115</p> <p>Continue to use wellcomm assessment tools in EYFS £51</p> <p>SENCO to identify early SALT needs and make referrals as needed. £1600</p> | <p>Targeted deployment where teaching assistants are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals has a higher impact.</p> <p>Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF Improving Literacy in KS1</p> <p>Oral language interventions can be used to provide additional support to pupils who are behind their peers in oral language development (targeted support to help pupils catch up with their peers) Oral Language Interventions EEF</p> | <p>1, 2, 3, 5</p> <p>1</p> <p>1, 5</p> |
| <p>Additional 1-1 phonics sessions with most experienced phonic TAs. TAs to be coached to deliver effective support. £2620</p> <p>RWI Training portal subscription to keep staff up to date £3180</p> <p>Additional teacher employed for Year 5 to allow the Y5/6 class to remain split for 3 half terms.</p> | <p>Targeted deployment where teaching assistants are trained to deliver an intervention to small groups or individuals has a higher impact.</p> <p>Teaching Assistant Interventions EEF Improving Literacy in KS1</p> <p>Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching / work effectively with teaching assistants. SEN in Mainstream Schools – Summary of Recommendations</p> | <p>1, 2, 5</p> <p>1, 2</p> <p>3, 4, 5</p> |

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|--|--|-------------------------|
| <p>£19800</p> <p>Training and resources for TA's involved in running nurture, rainbows, forest school, thrive & SALT N/A</p> <p>Upgrading and renovating thrive and nurture spaces. £250</p> | | <p>4, 5</p> <p>4, 5</p> |
| <p>Time allocated to monitor attendance weekly. £ 1590</p> <p>LA Support with attendance N/A</p> | <p>An important part of whole school strategies is therefore the school's engagement with families to ensure that social and emotional skills that are taught and practised at school are reinforced in the home environment. Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools – Guidance Report Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning – EEF</p> | 6 |

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

Budgeted cost: £79 656

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <p>Ensure toast is available for all pupils when they start school in the morning. £1000</p> | <p>The EEF 'Magic Breakfast' research showed that pupil behaviour and attainment improved for schools that ran a breakfast club. Improving Behaviour in Schools - EEF</p> | 4, 5, 6 |
| <p>Subsidised visits and visitors to school. £500</p> | <p>Arts participation approaches can have a positive impact on academic outcomes in other areas of the curriculum. Arts Participation EEF</p> | 4, 6 |
| <p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfEs Working together to improve attendance.</p> | <p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfEs Working together to improve attendance 2024.</p> | 6 |

| | | |
|--|---|------------|
| | Why school attendance matters and what we're doing to improve it 2025. | |
| Family support worker £34576 | An important part of whole school strategies is therefore the school's engagement with families to ensure that social and emotional skills that are taught and practised at school are reinforced in the home environment. Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools – Guidance Report Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning – EEF | 4, 6 |
| Extra TA in Y5 Class to support high needs £26320 | Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching / work effectively with teaching assistants. SEN in Mainstream Schools – Summary of Recommendations | 3, 4, 5 |
| Extra TA across EYFS and KS1 to support high needs £16000 | Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching / work effectively with teaching assistants. SEN in Mainstream Schools – Summary of Recommendations | 1, 2, 4, 5 |
| Positive Handling training £1260 | Positive handling training teaches staff de-escalation and safe physical intervention techniques to manage challenging behaviour, preventing harm to children, other pupils, and themselves, ensuring legal compliance, and protecting school reputation by focusing on dignity, emotional regulation, and minimising restrictive practices. | 4 |

Total budgeted cost: £147 855

Part B: Review of the previous academic year 24-25

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments.

74% of St Mary's pupils are disadvantaged due to the high levels of deprivation in the local area. In addition to the barriers facing the children due to deprivation, the school has also experienced some very turbulent times and significant staffing instability has also affected most recent data.

Wellcomm Program is well embedded in EYFS, speech and language needs and targets are identified early and interventions are in place and recorded. The EEF's ShREC approach supports high quality interactions.

The SENCO liaises with Lancashire SALT team regularly and children under SALT have daily intervention with TAs.

GLD has risen once more after dropping the previous year, however work will continue to raise it further. 63% (2023) 54.5% (2024) 60% (2025)

Phonics data has decreased since last year by 16 percentage points and there is a tightened emphasis on this area in this next strategic plan. Staff are regularly trained, coached and supported with particular attention to staff new to the keystage. KS1 TA has been coached to deliver 1-1 RWI Phonics to those identified. Children are assessed at least half termly and children learning set 1 sounds are assessed more regularly to ensure progress is not stilted through lack of action and ensure they move groups quickly. Children take home reading books that closely link to the book and sounds they have learnt that week. Assessments are carefully monitored and staff are allocated with groups based on their individual strengths.

Reading results for Y6 pupils has taken a drop since 2024 by 5 percentage points and leaders know that this is an area of great concern. (Staffing instability within the school has played a hugely unexpected part of this).

SEND assessments continue to be incorporated into assessment cycles. Along with regular pupil progress meetings, this has enabled teachers to carefully plan intervention that supports closing the gaps.

Acorn inclusion team have been involved in supporting SEND children particularly with SEMH needs in Y5 class. An additional adult was employed to support the year 5 children's high needs. The Year 5 pupils remained separated until the second half of the Spring term and were then merged carefully together again. An additional teacher was in post throughout this period from the start of the academic year.

Head Start assessments continue to evidence the secure teaching practice, these

assessments are regularly evaluated and show children are making steady progress. We felt this could be strengthened further so researched alternative ways to support the teaching of reading, fluency and comprehension to start this new cycle.

During the last academic year, due to a change in SLT we moved towards NTS assessment which provide a more detailed reporting system – these will continue to be used moving forward. Excel trackers have been created and used since summer 2024 which enable teachers to carefully track scores and progress across all areas of the curriculum. However, this does not help teachers to easily analyse groups of pupils and compare groups within their class. We are therefore moving to Insight Tracker which will be more informative again.

An additional TA has participated in Thrive training. She has been supported by Acorn with the management of Thrive assessments and managing of groups. The TA has been able to provide tailored Thrive and Nurture sessions to support the most vulnerable children. Children have been provided with a range of enrichment opportunities including sports clubs, topic days, opportunities to perform and visits from an Olympic athlete!

Attendance figures have improved over the year with persistent absence also improving. Attendance will continue to be a feature in our next cycle due to the instability of these figures and the need to work closely with our families to continue to drive improvements in the area. From September 2024 additional strategies strengthened the approach to attendance including; weekly monitoring, increased communication, home visits, celebration of good attendance, updated website and newsletter, close partnerships with the local authority and Academy Trust.

The family support worker works in collaboration with the attendance team to support absent children by carrying out home visits. We have also drawn on school data and observations to assess wider issues impacting disadvantaged pupils' performance, including attendance, behaviour and wellbeing.

Based on all the information above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils did not meet expectations, however, we are confident that we can achieve the outcomes we set out to achieve by 2027/28, as stated in the Intended Outcomes section above due to our more stable staffing and the much improved work that is continuing within St Mary's over this period of time.

Our evaluation of the approaches delivered last academic year indicates that when intervention is carried out consistently, it can not only raise confidence and enthusiasm for learning but the success breeds future success for those individual pupils also. It is essential that all leaders insist on quality first teaching throughout school and that time is protected to deliver essential interventions to best support our pupils.

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

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

| Programme | Provider |
|-----------|----------|
| N/A | |
| | |

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

| |
|---|
| <i>For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year</i> |
| N/A |
| The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils |
| N/A |

Further information (optional)

Additional activity

Our pupil premium strategy will be supplemented by additional activity that is not being funded by pupil premium. That will include:

- Embedding more effective practice around feedback. [EEF evidence on feedback](#) demonstrates significant benefits, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Embedding more effective practice around recognition and reward. [EEF improving behaviour in schools](#).
- 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.
- Offering a careers related learning curriculum where pupils are exposed to key skills required to undertake a wide variety of careers and aspirations of our pupils are raised.

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

In planning our new pupil premium strategy, we evaluated why activity undertaken in previous years had not had the degree of impact that we had expected.

We triangulated evidence from multiple sources of data including assessments, engagement in class book scrutiny, and conversations with parents, students and teachers, in order to identify the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils.

We used the [EEF's implementation guidance](#) to help us develop our strategy, particularly the 'explore' phase to help us diagnose 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.