

Pupil premium strategy statement

Before completing this template, you should read the using pupil premium guide and the appropriate example statement available [on the pupil premium page](#).

Before publishing your completed statement, you should delete the instructions (text in italics) in this template, including this text box.

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 the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

| Detail | Data |
|---|---|
| School name | St Mark's Catholic Primary |
| Number of pupils in school | 202 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 18.8% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended) | 2023-26 Academic year review 2024-25 |
| Date this statement was published | July 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | July 2026 |
| Statement authorised by | Dr M Keller & FGB |
| Pupil premium lead | Dr M Keller |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Mrs C McKenna /Mr D English |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|--|-------------------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £58,907.24 |
| 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 | £58,907.24 |

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| If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year | |
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Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

You may want to include information on:

- *What are your ultimate objectives for your disadvantaged pupils?*
- *How does your current pupil premium strategy plan work towards achieving those objectives?*
- *What are the key principles of your strategy plan?*

At St Mark's, we have uncompromisingly high expectations for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Our core principle is that disadvantage should not be a barrier to achievement, and we are determined that our pupils achieve outcomes that are at least in line with national expectations.

Our strategy is tightly aligned with our School Improvement Plan. We focus on three key areas: improving outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics, strengthening attendance, and supporting pupils' personal development and wellbeing.

We start with high-quality teaching, as we know this has the greatest impact. We ensure that our curriculum is carefully sequenced, knowledge-rich and ambitious for all learners. There is a strong emphasis on reading as the gateway to the curriculum, alongside writing and maths, so that pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed across all subjects.

We use rigorous assessment systems to identify need early. Through pupil progress meetings, ongoing formative assessment and diagnostic tools, we identify precise gaps in learning. This allows us to respond quickly and provide targeted support.

Our pupil premium funding is structured using the EEF tiered approach. Firstly, we prioritise high-quality teaching. Secondly, we provide targeted academic support, including one-to-one and small group interventions in reading, writing and maths, as well as structured programmes such as phonics and language development. These are delivered by trained staff and are regularly reviewed for impact.

Thirdly, we invest in wider strategies, particularly around attendance, behaviour and wellbeing. Attendance is a key priority for us. We work closely with families to remove barriers and ensure pupils attend regularly. Alongside this, we provide targeted SEMH support, including Thrive, to help pupils develop resilience, self-regulation and readiness to learn.

We also ensure that disadvantaged pupils have full access to a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including trips, clubs and wider experiences. This is crucial in developing their cultural capital and confidence.

Leaders monitor the impact of our strategy closely. We regularly review data, evaluate interventions and adapt our approach where needed. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points, particularly in reading, and are increasingly engaged in all aspects of school life.

Our approach is strategic, evidence-informed and responsive. We know our pupils well, we act quickly to address barriers, and we ensure that funding is used effectively to secure both strong academic outcomes and positive personal development.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|---|
| 1, | <p>Gaps in early reading and phonics.</p> <p>At St Mark’s School in Ipswich, some Pupil Premium pupils arrive with gaps in early reading and phonics, particularly in their understanding of sounds, blending, and letter–sound correspondences. These gaps can slow progress in decoding and reading fluency, affecting confidence and comprehension. Targeted phonics teaching and timely intervention are therefore used to help pupils quickly close these gaps and ensure they keep up with age-related expectations in reading.</p> |
| 2 | <p>High proportion of disadvantaged pupils with SEND</p> <p>A high proportion of disadvantaged pupils also have SEND, which can create additional barriers to learning, particularly in reading, writing, and communication. These pupils may require more personalised support, adapted resources, and carefully structured teaching to access the curriculum effectively. As a result, provision focuses on early identification, targeted intervention, and consistent in-class support to ensure pupils make progress in line with their individual starting points and needs.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Speech, language and communication needs</p> <p>A number of disadvantaged pupils have speech, language and communication needs, which can affect their ability to understand language, follow instructions, and express themselves clearly. This can also create barriers to learning across the curriculum, including early reading development and classroom engagement. Targeted support, consistent modelling of language, and structured interventions are used to develop communication skills and improve pupils’ confidence and progress over time.</p> |

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| 4 | <p>Social, emotional and mental health needs</p> <p>There has been an increase in the number of disadvantaged pupils at our school presenting with social, emotional and mental health needs in recent years, which can affect their ability to regulate emotions, build positive relationships, and engage consistently in learning. This may impact concentration, behaviour, and resilience in the classroom. In response, targeted pastoral support, structured interventions, and consistent regulation strategies are used to promote wellbeing and improve pupils' readiness to learn.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Gaps in reading, writing and maths</p> <p>Some disadvantaged pupils continue to have gaps in reading, writing and maths, particularly in basic skills such as fluency, spelling, number facts, and problem-solving. These gaps can limit access to the wider curriculum and slow overall progress. Targeted support, high-quality first teaching, and structured interventions are used to address misconceptions and secure key knowledge so that pupils can make accelerated progress towards age-related expectations.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Limited access to enrichment opportunities</p> <p>Some disadvantaged pupils have more limited access to wider enrichment opportunities outside of school, which can reduce their exposure to experiences that support cultural capital, language development, and broader life skills. This can impact confidence, aspirations, and engagement with learning. To address this, enrichment activities are intentionally planned and made accessible within school to ensure all pupils can benefit from a broad range of experiences.</p> |

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 attainment | Disadvantaged pupils regularly access a broad range of enrichment opportunities that they may not experience outside of school, helping to build confidence, develop language and knowledge, and raise aspirations. |
| Phonics | At least 80% of disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard, demonstrating secure progress in key skills and effective use of targeted support and high-quality teaching to close gaps. |
| Communication | Disadvantaged pupils show improved oral language and vocabulary, enabling them to communicate ideas more clearly, engage more |

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| | confidently in discussion, and access learning across the curriculum more effectively |
| Attendance | Pupil Premium attendance improves and moves closer to the 95% target, supporting better continuity in learning and engagement across the curriculum. |
| Wellbeing | Pupil Premium pupils show improved engagement and confidence in learning, participating more actively in lessons and demonstrating greater resilience and willingness to take part. |
| Enrichment | All Pupil Premium pupils are encouraged and supported to access a wide range of wider opportunities, helping to broaden experiences, build confidence, and raise aspirations. |

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: £18,000

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| DBV interventions | EEF: structured interventions effective | 2,5 |
| Language Link & Lightning Squad | EEF: targeted support improves outcomes | 1,3,5 |

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

Budgeted cost: £15000

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Interventions in RWM | EEF: +4 months progress | 1,5 |
| 1:1 tuition | EEF: highly effective | 2,5 |
| Phonics support | EEF: strong evidence | 1 |
| Speech & language | EEF: high impact | 3,4 |

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

Budgeted Costs £26,000

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Thrive | EEF: improves Social Emotional Learning | 4 |
| Outdoor learning | EEF: supports engagement | 4,6 |
| Enrichment | EEF: arts participation benefits | 6 |
| Wraparound | EEF: parental engagement impact | 4,6 |

Total budgeted cost: £ £58,500

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

The school has evaluated the performance of disadvantaged pupils using national and internal assessment data, triangulated with wider contextual evidence including attendance, behaviour and wellbeing. Outcomes have been compared with national and local data for both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, as well as within-school comparisons.

Attainment data shows a sustained upward trend over time, with the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils narrowing. In some cohorts, disadvantaged pupils are now performing in line with or above their peers at the expected standard, despite a higher proportion with SEND and additional needs.

Progress and attainment

Internal progress data (Summer 2025 to Spring 2026) shows that the majority of disadvantaged pupils made at least expected progress in Reading, Writing and Maths, with a significant proportion exceeding expected progress.

Attainment in combined R/W/M shows consistent improvement:

- 2024–25: 65.7% at ARE
- 2023–24: 53.8% at ARE
- 2022–23: 47.4% at ARE

This demonstrates sustained improvement and narrowing gaps over time

Barriers to learning

A small number of pupils' outcomes have been affected by contextual factors, including:

- Long-term medical need/hospitalisation (2 pupils)
- New arrivals without prior data (3 pupils)
- Attendance below expected levels (1 pupil)
- Pupils with complex SEND, including EHCP applications in progress (2 pupils)
- Pupils newly accessing interventions (4 pupils)

These factors have impacted individual progress but do not alter the overall positive cohort trajectory.

Impact of the strategy

The Pupil Premium strategy has had a positive impact overall, particularly in improving attainment trends and strengthening progress outcomes over time.

Key areas of impact include:

- Improved attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths
- Narrowing of the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils
- Stronger rates of expected and above-expected progress
- More precise identification of need through improved assessment systems

Teaching, curriculum and wider provision

Disadvantaged pupils benefit from consistently high-quality teaching supported by adaptive practice and an enhanced curriculum offer, including PE (PE Quality Mark – Distinction), MFL (Golden Linguamarke), specialist music provision, and outdoor learning.

Assessment is strengthened through external tools (FFT, NoMoreMarking, Maths.co.uk), improving accuracy and targeting of support. Reading provision has been further strengthened through an Operational Reading Group, supported by external expertise.

A broad enrichment offer (20+ lunchtime clubs, 10+ after-school clubs, and external physical activity provision) supports engagement, wellbeing and personal development.

Monitoring and funding

Pupil Premium spending is systematically tracked through a live dashboard, reviewed by senior leaders and the Chair of Governors to ensure accountability, targeted use of funding, and evaluation of impact.

Overall effectiveness

The Pupil Premium strategy is effective. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving over time, with narrowing gaps and increasing proportions achieving expected standards. While a small number of pupils are affected by significant contextual barriers, overall progress is strong and the trajectory remains positive.

The school is well placed to continue improving outcomes through sustained focus on high-quality teaching, targeted intervention and precise assessment.