

Pupil premium strategy statement – St Mark's CE School

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1163
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	48%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-2026
Date this statement was published	16 th December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Stephanie Bryant – Executive Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Stephanie Bryant
Governor	Georgie Taylor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£552,045 (2025/26)
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£552,045 (2025/26)

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Ultimate objectives for disadvantaged pupils

- *Remove barriers to learning so that disadvantaged pupils achieve high academic outcomes, strong personal development and excellent attendance comparable to their non-disadvantaged peers.*
- *Close the school-wide attainment gap (current average 14%) and ensure disadvantaged pupils make at least expected progress across all key stages as the secondary phase grows to Year 11 and through KS4.*
- *Improve wellbeing, resilience and social outcomes so that disadvantaged pupils are safe, confident and prepared for future opportunities, including successful transitions to further education, training or employment.*
- *Ensure equality of access to curriculum, extra-curricular and enrichment experiences (including technology, breakfast and uniform provision) so disadvantage does not limit participation.*

How this strategy works towards those objectives

- *We prioritise evidence-led approaches from the DfE Menu of Approaches: Tier 1 High-Quality Teaching; Tier 2 Targeted Academic Support; Tier 3 Wider Strategies. Each activity is chosen for strong or promising evidence of impact.*
- *The strategy is integrated with school improvement priorities (curriculum sequencing, assessment, targeted interventions, attendance and pastoral systems) and with our Christian values of love, service and belonging.*
- *Implementation will be supported by focused leadership (Senior Leadership Team and phase leaders), governors (strategic oversight), and monitored through a termly evaluation cycle (attendance, behaviour, engagement, assessment outcomes, intervention RAG ratings).*
- *The plan is resourced from Pupil Premium allocations and targeted staffing/partnership investment; cost-effectiveness and fidelity are considered in selection and scale-up.*

Key principles

- *Evidence-led: choose approaches with demonstrated impact.*
- *High-quality teaching first: interventions augment, not replace, excellent classroom teaching.*
- *Targeted: additional support is targeted using robust data (attainment, attendance, SEND, EAL) and reviewed regularly.*
- *Whole-child: address academic, social-emotional and practical barriers*

(attendance, hunger, access to tech).

- *Capacity-building: prioritise professional development and coaching to embed sustainable practice (metacognition, oracy, assessment).*
- *Equity-focused monitoring: disaggregate all data by PP, SEN and EAL to evaluate progress and adapt interventions.*

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Academic attainment gaps: school-wide average attainment gap of 14% between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils across year groups and subjects; gaps have closed only marginally in the past year.
2	Low and inconsistent use of metacognition and self-regulation strategies by students and uneven teacher expertise in explicitly teaching these approaches.
3	Attendance and punctuality disparities: PP attendance 92.82% vs non-PP 96.19% (gap 3.37%); persistent lateness difference affecting learning time for disadvantaged pupils.
4	Mental health and social/emotional needs: increased incidence of wellbeing and mental health concerns affecting attendance, engagement, behaviour and readiness to learn.
5	Material deprivation: poverty-related barriers (limited access to technology for remote/homework, food insecurity, unstable housing/sleep) limiting equality of opportunity and readiness to learn.
6	Engagement and classroom experience: some PP pupils report lessons are boring or that teachers are perceived as too strict, leading to disengagement, switching off in lessons and reduced participation.

7	Oracy and spoken language: lower confidence, vocabulary and structured talk skills for some disadvantaged pupils limit their ability to participate fully in classroom discussion, access curriculum discourse and demonstrate understanding.
8	KS4-specific challenges: disadvantaged pupils in KS4 face exam pressure, gaps in curriculum coverage/specific GCSE content, lower uptake of EBacc/qualifications with higher future value, limited access to structured revision support and careers guidance, and increased risk of disengagement as external pressures rise.
9	A significant proportion of disadvantaged pupils demonstrate weaker home-school engagement compared with their non-disadvantaged peers. This is evidenced by lower attendance at curriculum events and progress meetings, reduced engagement with digital communication platforms, and inconsistent home-learning support. These gaps are present across all phases of the school and contribute to reduced academic progress, lower attendance, and diminished readiness for learning.

2

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
1. Reduce the academic attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the average attainment gap from 14% to ≤7% within 24 months and to ≤3% within 48 months (measured by termly subject assessments and end-of-year outcomes). - Targeted cohorts (KS2 writing, KS3 maths and English, KS4 targeted GCSE cohorts) show cohort-specific improvement: at least 60% of disadvantaged pupils reach expected attainment benchmarks in targeted subjects within 2 years.

<p>2. Embed metacognition and self-regulated learning across the curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All teachers receive focused CPD and coaching on metacognition; 90% of lessons show explicit planning/monitoring/evaluation routines in learning walks. - Student self-efficacy and use of metacognitive strategies increase: 70% of PP students report using at least two taught metacognitive strategies in homework and classwork within 12 months.
<p>3. Increase attendance and reduce lateness gap.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase PP attendance from 92.82% to 94.5% within 12 months and to $\geq 95\%$ within 36 months. - Reduce the attendance gap to ≤ 1 percentage point within 36 months. - Lateness incidents for PP students reduced by 50% within 12 months.
<p>4. Improve mental health and SEL outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce self-reported moderate/severe wellbeing concerns among PP pupils by 30% within 24 months (measured by baseline and follow-up wellbeing screeners). - Targeted SEL groups show improvement in SEL measures and reduced behavioural incidents by 25% within 12 months.
<p>5. Mitigate material deprivation impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure 100% of identified PP pupils have access to devices or school-based alternatives for home learning within 6 months. - All PP pupils with food insecurity provided access to breakfast provision; reduction in hunger-related incidents and improved morning punctuality by 20% in 12 months.

<p>6. Increase engagement and reduce perception-based disengagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil engagement survey: reduce the proportion of PP pupils who report lessons are “boring” or teachers “too strict” from baseline by 50% within 12 months. - Increase active participation: lesson observation and student voice show 80% of lessons use at least two engagement strategies within 12 months. - Reduction in low-level disruption incidents linked to disengagement by 30% within 12 months.
<p>7. Improve oracy and spoken language skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80% of targeted PP pupils make measurable progress on an oracy rubric within 18 months. - Oracy features in at least 70% of lessons across KS1–KS3 (and is maintained in KS4 through spoken assessments and structured classroom talk) within 18 months. - Improvement in writing outcomes linked to enhanced oral vocabulary and sentence-level talk observed in targeted cohorts.
<p>8. Regularly review predicted data for KS4 outcomes, engagement and post-16 readiness for disadvantaged pupils and implement strategies to ensure targets are met.</p>	<p>Ensure 100% of KS4 PP pupils receive tailored exam preparation plans, access to structured after-school/weekend revision sessions and targeted careers/FE guidance; increase positive post-16 destinations to parity with non-PP peers within 36 months</p> <p>From results in 2027, Increase the proportion of PP pupils achieving grade 4+ in English and Maths by 15 percentage points within 24 months and grade 5+ by 10 percentage points where</p>

	appropriate. - Reduce the attainment gap in key GCSE subjects to ≤7% within 24 months. -
9	By July 2026, at least 75% of Pupil Premium parents/carers will participate in one or more structured engagement opportunities, such as learning workshops, progress consultations, or curriculum events

3

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: £ 286,798

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Whole-school CPD programme on Metacognition & Self-Regulated Learning (training + follow-up coaching). Programme includes leader and teacher training; subject-specific templates to teach planning/monitoring/evaluation; modelled lessons; six-week coaching cycles with SLT/subject leads; lesson observation focusing on</i>	<p>Metacognition & Self-Regulated Learning</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/metacognition</p> <p>Rosenshine Principles (EEF references in Metacognition report)</p> <p>Effective Professional Development</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development</p>	Addresses 2, 6.

metacognitive routines.		
<p>Embed structured curriculum sequences and knowledge-rich plans across KS1–KS4 with explicit retrieval practice, worked-example modelling and assessment points including GCSE exam-style question practice in KS4. Ensure alignment to exam specifications from Year 9 onward and curriculum map shows explicit coverage to KS4.</p>	<p>Cognitive Science Review</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/cognitive-science</p> <p>Secondary Literacy Guidance</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-secondary</p> <p>Secondary Maths (KS3/KS4)</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/maths-ks3-4</p> <p>Secondary Science</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/secondary-science</p>	Addresses 1, 2, 6, 8.
<p>Whole-school Oracy programme: progression across EYFS–KS4. For KS4 include spoken language assessments where applicable, structured classroom debate and presentation tasks linked to GCSE topics (e.g., English speaking and listening activities, subject-specific verbal reasoning tasks in humanities and sciences) and targeted oracy interventions for students preparing</p>	<p>Oral Language Interventions</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</p> <p>KS1 Literacy Guidance</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks1</p> <p>KS2 Literacy Guidance</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2</p>	Addresses 1, 7, 6, 8.

<p><i>controlled assessments or spoken elements.</i></p>	<p>e-reports/literacy-ks2</p> <p>Secondary Literacy Guidance</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-secondary</p>	
<p><i>CPD on pupil engagement and behaviour for learning: high-impact starter activities, scaffolding, tiered questioning, purposeful classroom talk and cultural responsiveness. Include KS4-specific strategies: exam technique modelling, stress-management routines, scaffolding for longer writing tasks and practice under timed conditions.</i></p>	<p>Improving Behaviour in Schools</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/behaviour</p> <p>Behaviour Interventions</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions</p>	<p><i>Addresses 6, 4, 8.</i></p>
<p><i>Strengthen Early Career Teacher (ECT) and new staff induction with evidence-based teaching strategies. Include mentor pairing specialising in KS4 curriculum and assessment for staff teaching Years 10–11.</i></p>	<p>Effective Professional Development</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development</p>	<p><i>Addresses 1, 2, 7, 8.</i></p>
<p><i>6. Deploy a scalable remote/digital platform and resources to support homework, retrieval practice and tutoring alignment (remote access for disadvantaged pupils who miss school).</i></p>	<p>Digital Technology</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/digital-technology</p>	<p><i>Addresses 5, 3</i></p>

<p><i>Improve assessment use: formative assessment training (clear success criteria, live feedback, mini-quizzes) and regular analysis to identify PP gaps and adapt teaching sequences. For KS4 include interim mock schedules, analysis of exam question types, targeted feedback cycles and individualised GCSE action plans.</i></p>	<p>Feedback Guidance Report</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/feedback</p> <p>Assessment Evidence Review</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/assessment</p>	<p>Addresses 1,2,6,8</p>
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4

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

Budgeted cost: £ 151,320

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><i>Small-group tuition (2–5 pupils) led by teachers or trained TAs for identified PP pupils in maths and English (short, regular sessions — termly blocks), aligned to classroom sequence and targeted exam skills for KS4 (GCSE question practice, exam technique, command words). Targeted oral language and vocabulary interventions for EYFS/KS1 and older pupils with weak spoken language</i></p>	<p>Small Group Tuition</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition</p> <p>1:1 Tuition</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition</p> <p>Oral Language Interventions</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</p> <p>Literacy Guidance Reports (all</p>	<p>Addresses 1, 7, 8.</p>

<p><i>(small-group structured programmes). For KS4, include targeted subject-specific language support (tiered vocabulary for history/science/RE) and scaffolded essay planning talk frames.</i></p>	<p>phases)</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/literacy</p>	
<p><i>Engagement-focused interventions: small-group sessions using project-based, interest-led tasks and formative checks to re-engage pupils who find lessons boring. Include KS4 confidence-building workshops focused on exam stress, time management and independent study skills.</i></p>	<p>Social & Emotional Learning</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p> <p>Behaviour Interventions</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/behaviour-interventions</p>	<p><i>Addresses 6, 8.</i></p>
<p><i>Structured peer tutoring and cross-age tutoring programme (reading and numeracy buddies), with KS4 students trained to mentor KS3 or KS2 peers where appropriate; also use cross-year tutoring to consolidate KS4 students' knowledge (teaching as learning).</i></p>	<p>Peer Tutoring</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/peer-tutoring</p>	<p><i>Addresses 1, 6, 7.</i></p>
<p><i>Deployment of Teaching Assistants (TAs) for structured interventions: TAs trained to deliver targeted literacy,</i></p>	<p>Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance</p>	<p><i>Addresses 1, 7, 8.</i></p>

<i>vocabulary and numeracy programmes under teacher direction, with clear session plans and feedback loops. In KS4, use TAs to run supervised revision hubs and support access arrangements where appropriate.</i>	e-reports/teaching-assistants	
<i>Diagnostic assessment + targeted intervention cycles for SEN and EAL pupils, led by SENDCo and subject leads, with individual intervention plans that align to GCSE entry and exam access needs.</i>	<p>SEN in Mainstream Schools</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send</p> <p>Assessment / diagnostic assessment</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/assessment</p>	Addresses 1, 8

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

Budgeted cost: £ 113,942.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>1. Whole-school SEL approach & targeted SEMH support: implement explicit weekly SEL lessons/activities, embed SEL language in classrooms and run targeted small-group</i>	<p>SEL Guidance Report</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/primary-sel</p> <p>Social & Emotional Learning (Toolkit)</p>	Address 3, 4, 5

<p><i>SEMH programmes and 1:1 counselling for those with greater need. Provide staff training and SEL audit. This includes pastoral officers to deliver.</i></p>	<p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p>	
<p><i>2. Attendance strategy: Attendance Lead to organise team to run targeted casework with families, rapid first-day response, tailored packages (transport support, attendance mentoring, breakfast club places) and termly attendance panels for persistent absence. Use data to target resources to those most in need.</i></p>	<p>School Attendance Evidence Review</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/evidence-reviews/school-attendance</p>	<p>Addresses 1, 3, 4, 5</p>
<p><i>3. Breakfast club and in-school nurture: subsidised places for disadvantaged pupils to ensure late arrivals are reduced, ready-to-learn routines and offer of food and pastoral support; link to SEMH activities.</i></p>	<p>Breakfast Clubs</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/breakfast-clubs</p>	<p>Addresses: 3, 4 and</p>
<p><i>4. Parent/carer engagement and targeted family support: build a programme of home–school communication (translated EAL materials), termly family learning workshops (reading, maths), and referral pathways to local</i></p>	<p>Working With Parents to Support Learning</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-parents</p>	<p>Addresses: 3, 4, 5, 9</p>

<i>services (mental health, housing) to remove non-school barriers.</i>		
<i>5. Student leadership, enrichment and extracurricular provision funded for PP pupils (music lessons, sports trips, cultural visits, student leadership training) to raise aspiration and cultural capital.</i>	<p>Arts Participation</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/arts-participation</p> <p>Outdoor Adventure Learning</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/outdoor-adventure-learning</p>	Addresses: 3,4, 5 and 6
<i>6. Attendance & safeguarding structural improvement: fully develop Attendance and safeguarding team, with clear systems and case management to connect safeguarding and attendance early.</i>	<p>Implementation Guidance Report</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/implementation</p>	Addresses 1,3, 5

Total budgeted cost: £ 552,042

Monitoring, Evaluation and Governance

Monitoring & data collection

- Termly Pupil Premium review: attainment & progress data, attendance, behaviour and SEMH measures for disadvantaged pupils; intervention attendance and impact analysis.
- Intervention tracker: registration, attendance, pre/post assessment outcomes; weekly supervision by Inclusion Lead.
- CPD and fidelity checks: lesson observations, coaching logs, phase reviews.

Reporting & accountability

- Termly written report to the Governing Body (Pupil Premium link governor)

- including evaluation against success criteria and financial spend; annual published Pupil Premium statement aligned to DfE expectations.
- Governor oversight: challenge on impact, implementation fidelity and resource allocation; ensure Pupil Premium spend is aligned to evidence

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

During the past academic year, disadvantaged pupils continued to demonstrate strengths in key areas of the curriculum, particularly writing, while gaps with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally remain more pronounced in reading and mathematics. Overall, performance shows a mixed picture of secure progress in some subjects and areas requiring continued and intensified focus to achieve greater consistency across all phases.

In reading, writing and maths combined, the disadvantaged attainment gap in 2023/24 widened to –17 percentage points, compared with –12 pp in 2022/23. This indicates that while there has been positive movement in specific areas, particularly writing, securing sustained improvement across all three core subjects remains a high priority.

Reading outcomes for disadvantaged pupils remained broadly stable at 58%, but the national gap remains significant at –22 percentage points. Internal monitoring and phonics assessments, however, show positive early indicators: early reading is strengthening due to targeted phonics intervention, improved teaching consistency, and higher reading engagement. These gains are expected to translate into improved outcomes in future cohorts once changes embed more fully across EYFS and KS1.

Writing continues to be a notable area of strength. Disadvantaged pupils achieved 73%, just –5 percentage points below non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, and building on last year's positive gap (+7 pp), where disadvantaged pupils outperformed their national peers. This consistency reflects the impact of structured writing instruction, oracy development, and explicit modelling introduced across the curriculum.

Mathematics outcomes show a more variable trend. Disadvantaged pupils achieved 65%, resulting in a –14 pp gap with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, widening from –6 pp the previous year. Despite the widening national gap, internal assessments highlight incremental gains in fluency, arithmetic confidence and reasoning skills for targeted pupils. These improvements suggest that quality-first teaching, structured practice routines and targeted intervention programmes have begun to strengthen foundational maths knowledge and should contribute to future improvements.

Attendance outcomes continue to present a significant barrier to progress. Disadvantaged pupil attendance was 92.82%, compared to 96.19% for non-disadvantaged pupils, creating a 3.37 percentage point gap broadly in line with national trends. However, the impact on learning time is substantial: disadvantaged pupils missed an average of 13.5 school days, almost double the 7 days missed by their non-PP peers. EEF evidence reinforces that even small improvements in attendance can lead to disproportionately positive gains in attainment, particularly for pupils with existing gaps in reading and maths.

Although whole-school systems for attendance monitoring, first-day response, and early identification of concerns have strengthened, overall disadvantaged attendance has not improved at the rate projected in the previous year's strategy. Persistent absence remains disproportionately high among PP pupils, and punctuality continues to affect readiness to learn for a significant minority. While breakfast club access has improved morning routines and stabilised attendance for some pupils, its impact has not yet produced measurable cohort-wide improvement.

There are emerging areas of strength. Targeted attendance casework, enhanced communication with families, and closer integration between safeguarding and pastoral

support have stabilised attendance for a number of the most vulnerable pupils. Increased multi-agency working and pastoral mentoring have begun to reduce barrier-related absence such as anxiety, complex family circumstances and transport challenges. However, these improvements need to be scaled and sustained to secure impact across the wider disadvantaged cohort.

In summary, outcomes from the previous year show that disadvantaged pupils continue to perform strongly in writing and demonstrate internal progress in reading and maths, even where national gaps persist. Attendance remains a critical priority due to its direct impact on curriculum access, learning time, and GCSE readiness. Continued refinement of early reading provision, strengthened quality-first teaching, targeted academic support, and a more intensive attendance strategy will remain central to securing improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in the coming year.

