

Pupil premium strategy statement – St. George’s Cathedral Catholic Primary 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	154
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	41%
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	19-12-25
Date on which it will be reviewed	Oct '26
Statement authorised by	Louise Chabvuka
Pupil premium lead	Lloyd Welsh
Governor / Trustee lead	Xanthe Hagan

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£99,590
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>	£99,590

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

The Pupil Premium is additional funding provided to schools based on the number of pupils who have been eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the past six years. It is designed to reduce the inequalities between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. Funding is also allocated for children who have been in continuous care for more than six months and for children of service personnel.

At St. George's Cathedral Catholic Primary School, we hold high aspirations for every child, aiming for all pupils to reach their full academic and social potential, regardless of background or challenges. Our Pupil Premium strategy is designed to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve this goal, including those who are already high attainers.

We recognise that vulnerable children may face barriers such as limited home support, weaker language and communication skills, low confidence, behaviour difficulties, and issues with attendance or punctuality. Complex family circumstances can also impact their ability to thrive, and these challenges vary across age groups. The actions outlined in this statement aim to meet the needs of all vulnerable children, whether disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is central to our approach, focusing on areas where disadvantaged pupils need the most support. This has the greatest impact on closing attainment gaps while benefiting all pupils. Our intended outcomes also include sustaining and improving attainment for non-disadvantaged pupils alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our strategy is responsive to both common challenges and individual needs, based on robust diagnostic assessment rather than assumptions. The approaches we adopt work together to help pupils excel. To ensure effectiveness, we will:

- Challenge disadvantaged pupils through ambitious work
- Intervene early when needs are identified
- Provide opportunities enrichment opportunities both in and out of school
- Embed a whole-school approach where all staff take responsibility for outcomes and raise expectations of what disadvantaged pupils can achieve.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Language Development: A significant proportion of pupils receiving Pupil Premium (50%) speak English as an additional language, which can impact access to the curriculum and communication skills.
2	Limited Access to Enrichment: Some pupils have restricted opportunities for extra-curricular activities, educational visits, and physical activities, resulting in a narrower experience of life beyond school.
3	Special Educational Needs: Around 25% of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium are on the SEN register. Many of these pupils experience speech, language, and communication difficulties, alongside challenges in developing social skills.
4	Behaviour and Emotional Needs: A number of pupils have specific social and emotional needs that affect their ability to engage fully with learning.
5	Low Attainment and Learning Gaps: Disadvantaged pupils often have gaps in knowledge, misconceptions, and limited vocabulary. They may struggle to retain and recall prior learning, which impacts progress and attainment.
6	Phonics/ Early Reading support: Disadvantaged pupils often begin school with lower levels of language development and phonics knowledge, which can limit their ability to access the wider curriculum. Many also experience restricted opportunities for reading at home, often due to a lack of resources or parental confidence.

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
We aim to improve oral language skills and broaden vocabulary for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding, ensuring they develop strong communication abilities to support learning across the curriculum.	Assessment data and classroom observations indicate notable progress in oral language development among disadvantaged pupils. This improvement is confirmed through a range of evidence sources, pupil engagement in lessons, book scrutiny, and ongoing formative assessment.
We aim to raise attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), ensuring they achieve a strong foundation in all prime areas of learning and are well-prepared for Key Stage 1.	EYFS GLD outcomes for 2025–2026 indicate that the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard is broadly in line with national figures.

<p>We aim to increase Year 1 phonics attainment for all pupils, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners by the end of Year 1.</p>	<p>Success will be measured by an increase in the percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, aiming for outcomes at least in line with national averages. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, will demonstrate improved decoding and blending skills, as evidenced through formative assessments and phonics tracking data.</p>
<p>We aim to raise Key Stage 1 attainment for disadvantaged pupils, ensuring strong outcomes by the end of Year 2 across core subjects.</p>	<p>Year 2 outcomes in 2025-2026 show that the percentage of disadvantaged pupils who met the expected standard is either in line or above national results. Analysis of interventions will show that interventions have had a positive impact on the disadvantaged children's learning and have helped accelerate their progress.</p>
<p>To promote and maintain improved wellbeing for all pupils, with a particular focus on supporting disadvantaged learners.</p>	<p>We aim to sustain high levels of pupil wellbeing, evidenced through qualitative data gathered from pupil voice, surveys, and teacher observations. This will be complemented by a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, with a particular focus on ensuring disadvantaged pupils engage fully in these opportunities.</p>
<p>To promote and maintain improved wellbeing for all pupils, with a particular focus on supporting disadvantaged learners.</p>	<p>This will be measured by positive trends in pupil voice surveys, reduced incidents of behaviour concerns, and improved attendance and punctuality. Additional indicators will include increased engagement in learning, participation in wellbeing initiatives, and access to pastoral support. Disadvantaged pupils will report feeling supported and show progress in social and emotional development, as evidenced through observations</p>
<p>We aim to provide pupils with a wide range of experiences that help them make meaningful connections in their learning, supported by an engaging, broad, and varied curriculum.</p>	<p>Success will be evident through pupils demonstrating the ability to make meaningful connections across different areas of learning, supported by engagement in a broad and varied curriculum. This will be measured by increased pupil participation in enrichment activities, educational trips, and after-school clubs, alongside positive feedback from pupil voice surveys and evidence of cross-curricular links in work scrutiny. Disadvantaged pupils will have equitable access to all experiences, ensuring they benefit fully from the opportunities provided.</p>

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: £ 24,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Speech and Language interventions are delivered through a collaborative approach involving two teaching assistants (TAs) and a qualified Speech and Language Therapist. The therapist assesses and addresses speech, language, and communication needs, providing tailored strategies and programmes. These interventions are implemented by the TAs under the guidance of the therapist to ensure consistency and impact.</p>	<p>Research strongly supports oral language interventions—such as dialogic activities and high-quality classroom discussions—as cost-effective strategies that deliver significant improvements in reading outcomes.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Provide Little Wandles phonics training for staff who are new to the school or new to the phase. The Phonics Lead will evaluate the effectiveness of phonics teaching across</p>	<p>Phonics-based approaches are strongly supported by evidence, showing a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading—particularly for disadvantaged pupils. While these strategies significantly improve decoding skills, it is important to note that they do not always lead to improvements in reading comprehension.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</p>	<p>1, 6</p>

<p>Nursery to Year 2 and plan targeted actions for improvement. The Phonics Lead and teaching assistants will deliver 'keep-up' and 'catch-up' phonics interventions across EYFS and KS1, as well as for pupils new to English, and will monitor the impact of these interventions.</p>		
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 65,590

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Deliver additional synthetic phonics sessions for disadvantaged pupils requiring further support (LWLS 'Keep Up' and 'Catch Up').</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics</p>	<p>1, 6</p>
<p>Purchase and implement targeted programmes to improve listening, narrative, and vocabulary skills (e.g. Wellcomm, and Colourful Semantics) in EYFS and KS1.</p>	<p>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:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Small group interventions in writing including Colourful Semantics.</p>	<p>Evidence shows small group tuition can accelerate progress for pupils working below expected standards.</p>	<p>1</p>

Small group interventions for pupils not yet at the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths, including Year 6 SATs Booster Groups.	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition And in small groups: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition/	1,5
Maths fluency groups and Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) preparation.	EEF evidence supports frequent, short, structured practice in fluency skills to secure foundational maths understanding.	5

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

Budgeted cost: £ 11,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Staff training on Zones of Regulation with the aim of enhancing behaviour support across school	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).	4
Targeted SEMH groups to support wellbeing and behaviour regulation.		3,4
Fund school trips, curriculum enrichment (including music tuition and clubs), including provision for higher attainers.	Evidence highlights the positive link between enrichment opportunities, cultural capital, and pupil motivation and engagement.	2
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.	1-6

Total budgeted cost: £99,590

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

ELG

	EYFSP GLD (England 68%)
Disadvantaged	40%
Others	80%

Many pupils enter our school with very low starting points. Targeted support for disadvantaged pupils begins immediately upon entry; however, despite this early intervention, which sees the gap close, this group remains significantly behind their peers by the end of the EYFS.

Phonics

	Meeting Phonics Threshold in Yr 1	Meeting Phonics Threshold by Yr 2
Disadvantaged	83%	100%
Other	64%	89%

Disadvantaged pupils are outperforming their peers in Year 1 phonics, and by Year 2, 100% have successfully passed the phonics screening check. This achievement ensures that all pupils secure the essential skill of decoding, a critical foundation for becoming fluent, confident, and lifelong readers.

KS2

	Pupils	Reading		Writing (TA)		Maths		RWM		GPS	
		No.	Exp+	HS	Exp+	HS	Exp+	HS	Exp+	HS	Exp+
Disad	15	73%	27%	67%	7%	73%	7%	60%	0%	60%	7%
Other	10	70%	10%	70%	10%	70%	0%	50%	0%	60%	10%
Gap		+3%	+17%	-3%	-3%	+3%	+7%	+10%	-	-	-3%

The largest attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils occurs in Reception, particularly in Literacy. However, evidence shows that Pupil Premium funding effectively narrows this gap. By Year 2, disadvantaged pupils often outperform their non-disadvantaged peers, and this trend is sustained through Year 6. The longer pupils remain in our school, the greater the positive impact of our Pupil Premium strategy.

Pupil Absence

	Overall Absence	Persistent Absentees
Disadvantaged	4.8%	10%
Other	5.6%	15.7%

The school is proud of its strong attendance record, particularly among disadvantaged pupils, whose attendance is consistently higher than that of their peers and significantly above the local authority average. This success is supported by the use of Pupil Premium funding to ensure all pupils can access enrichment opportunities, including after-school clubs, residential trips, theatre experiences, and curriculum-related visits. These activities build essential Cultural Capital, broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. Participation in physical and cultural experiences also fosters resilience, self-confidence, and motivation, contributing to both academic and personal development.