St Thomas' Catholic Primary School Pupil premium strategy statement – 2025-26

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	182 YR-6 + 22 YN = 204
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	11%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement for 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	Geraldine Leahy, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Geraldine Leahy, Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Sarah Eakins

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£30,300
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£30,300

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is that all pupils, regardless of their background, reach their full potential, attaining well and achieving good outcomes. We want them to value their education and be ambitious to learn and do well. This includes challenging our high attainers and those who have additional needs to do their very best.

We aim for our pupils to be the 'best that they can be right now': to read fluently and widely; to be able to express themselves articulately oral and in written form; to have an understanding mathematical concepts and use this knowledge and skill to reason in their maths; to participate in engaging activities and experiences to support their self-regulation; to compete as part of a team; to learn a musical instrument; to have opportunities to be a school leader.

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

We want all our children to strive to meet our school values of

- perseverance
- service
- forgiveness
- kindness
- thankfulness
- respect

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in diagnostic assessment and pupil progress meetings (every 6 weeks). The approaches we use complement each other to support pupils to achieve. To ensure effectiveness we will:

- ensure that quality first teaching is at the heart of our curriculum delivery
- act early to intervene where support is needed
- ensure challenge is appropriate and targeted
- work as a united team where responsibility is shared
- address other barriers e.g. attendance, aspiration, executive function, self-esteem

Challenges

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

<table>
<tr><th>Challenge number</th><th>Detail of challenge</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Below typical language and communication skills in entry to school inhibit the progress of a large number of pupil premium eligible pupils in all areas of the curriculum. This is often compounded by the lack of engagement of some pupil premium's parents in education; for example, these children do not experience stories or books or read at home very often with an adult outside of school and do not receive parental support with home learning.</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils suggest disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with phonics and reading than their peers. This negatively impacts their development as readers and writers.</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Internal and external assessments indicate that maths attainment among disadvantaged pupils is significantly below that of non-disadvantaged pupils.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Our assessments, wellbeing survey and other curriculum area surveys, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, notably due to housing problems and a lack of enrichment opportunities. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Our attendance data over the last 3 years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been between 1 - 3% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils.
<table>
<tr><td></td><td>School</td><td>National</td><td>School</td><td>National</td><td>School</td><td>National</td></tr>
<tr><td>%</td><td colspan="2">2022-23</td><td colspan="2">2023-24</td><td colspan="2">2024-25</td></tr>
<tr><td>overall</td><td>94.7</td><td>92.3</td><td>96.0</td><td>93.1</td><td>96.3</td><td>93.7</td></tr>
<tr><td>pp</td><td>91.5</td><td>89.1</td><td>94.9</td><td>89.4</td><td>95.8</td><td>91.4</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Parental engagement and a lack of financial resources to provide children with broad opportunities and life experiences.</td></tr>
</table>

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	The communication, language and literacy skills of pp children on exit from YR to be in line with their peers – a result of a language rich environment.
2	Year 1 phonics outcomes show that disadvantaged pupils have made accelerated progress from their starting points. KS2 reading and writing outcomes to show that disadvantaged pupils will have made accelerated progress from their starting points.
3	KS2 maths outcomes to show that disadvantaged pupils will have made accelerated progress from their starting points.
4	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by demonstrated by: • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. • greater awareness of self-regulation through physical and mental wellbeing activities and experiences to support a higher level of attainment
5	Increased attendance rates of pp children across the school and a reduced gap between pp and non-pp children relating to their attendance. The outcomes will be measured via the attendance data and the attainment and progress data.
6	pp parents will engage more positively with the school and children will be given opportunities to take part in experiences appropriate for their age and in line with their peers

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: **£ 300**

CPD will this year be focused on training provided in-house and through KCSP CPD rather than through the STLS (Kent Specialist Teaching and Learning Service).

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ensure teaching in all subjects is of the highest quality and pp pupils make most progress as a result of quality first teaching.	DEF report: supporting the attainment of disadvantaged children: articulating success and good practice. Nov. 2015 identifies QFT as the key to ensuring pp children make progress. Subject Leaders are supported with CPD across the MAT via network and moderation meetings. This forms part of CPD for the rest of the staff.	1, 2, 3,
Purchase of GL Assessment tests.	When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups: Diagnostic assessment | EEF	
Staff development and quality professional development	The school provides quality professional development with a collaborative approach for all staff in line with needs of the school and career pathways. The EEF guidance report on Effective Professional Development sets out key strategies which are used.	
Oracy development which is vital for supporting primary literacy. Oracy skills are also foundation to reading and writing and are integral to the raising of standards.	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 reading:	1, 2, 5

Oracy subject lead to work in conjunction with English subject lead. Develop skills from EYFS to end of KS2 Oracy will be linked with the tier 3 vocabulary and etymology work done so that children have a deep understanding of the concepts they are learning within all curriculum areas.	Oral language interventions | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF "Good speech, language and communication skills are essential for doing well at school, but this is not being recognised or acted upon widely. There is good evidence that language interventions directly improve school attainment." (English-Speaking Union, 2023)	
Purchase of further resources to support a DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils. Little Wandle Books for reading fluency – new set for KS2	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils: Phonics | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	2
Enhancement of our maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE and EEF guidance. We will fund teacher release time to embed key elements of guidance in school and to access Maths Hub resources and CPD (including Teaching for Mastery training) (EYFS & KS1 completed) KS2	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: Mathematics_guidance: key stages 1_and 2 The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3	3
Improve the quality of social and emotional (SEL) learning. We will train additional members of staff in the ELSA assistants.	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): Improving_Social_and_Emotional_Learning in Primary Schools | EEF	4
English Subject Lead to be in the library one lunchtime session per week to support pp children (and others) in choosing books. For this	https://voice21.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Voice21-Impact-Report-2024-web.pdf	1, 4, 6

session to include a 'Reading Time' element.		

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

Budgeted cost: **£22,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
One to one and small group tuition for pupils in need of additional support, delivered in addition to, and linked with, normal lessons. Tutoring will be implemented with the help of DfE's guide: Tutoring: guidance for education settings	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind: One to one tuition | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF Small group tuition | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	1, 2, 3
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support. This will be delivered in collaboration with our MAT English hub. Release time for English & Phonics Lead to track phonics data and monitor T & L.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: Phonics | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	2
Continue to implement the Voice 21 Programme with a view to improving listening, narrative and vocabulary skills for disadvantaged pupils who have relatively weak spoken language skills. Listening skills are firmly embedded and reflecting and responding skills will be focused on as the next step in the skills ladder. Link the skills progression to the wider listen and respond focus within prayer and liturgy in school.	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: Oral language interventions | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	1

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

Budgeted cost: £8,000

A higher proportion of the grant has been allocated to pupil wellbeing as we recognise that not all pupils who are disadvantaged have free school meals. We ensure that any child who has been identified as vulnerable or 'disadvantaged' has their needs accurately assessed and identified for targeted support.

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole staff training on our school ethos and improving behavior across the school, using restorative practices.	Both targeted interventions and universal approaches can have positive overall effects: Behaviour interventions | Teaching and Learning Toolkit | EEF	4
Real life, hands on and practical experiences to inspire and motivate learners to engage with the curriculum (e.g. forest school, Eco-Afternoons, visiting local Care Homes)	The Sutton Trust recommends that schools' pupil premium money could be used for enrichment experiences. 'Creating Cultural Capital (2015)'	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
Disadvantaged children to have funded trips and visit places including residential trips. To ensure the curriculum is balanced and carefully sequences and the creative curriculum allows opportunities for cultural development. (Art Exhibition, peripatetic music lessons, Music Concert, cultural partnerships etc) Build self-esteem, confidence and positive behavioural attitudes through school initiatives and ethos. Daily story time in every class with disadvantaged children being provided with the book to 'follow-on', read independently, share with parents/carers	https://learningoutsidetheclassroomblog.org/2018/ 05/08/disadvantaged-children-are-missing-out-onlife-changing-residential-experiences/ EEF -Improving School behaviour Guidance Report Improving Behaviour in Schools: Evidence Review Published: December 2019 Authors: Darren Moore1 , Simon BenhamClarke2 , Ralphy Kenchington2 , Chris Boyle1 ,Tamsin Ford2 , Rachel Hayes2 and Morwenna Rogers2 , Jacqueline Minton2 1 Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter 2 University of Exeter Medical School EEF – Arts Education Review	1, 2, 4, 5, 6

Extended school places to be provided		
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's guidance on working together to improve school attendance. This will involve training and release time for staff to develop and implement new procedures.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.	5
ELSA for vulnerable children to support emotional wellbeing	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/primary-sel	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,6

Total budgeted cost: £ 30,300

Part B: Review of the previous academic year 2024-25

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Intended outcome	Success criteria	Evaluation
Increased progress in phonics	*90% of Y1 pupils to pass the phonics screen*	*92% overall* *100% for pupil premium*
Increased progress in reading.	*Aiming for 90% to achieve expected standard by the end of KS2*	*89% overall* *75% for pupil premium*
Increased progress in writing	*Aiming for 75% to achieve the expected standard by the end of KS2.*	*79% overall* *75% for pupil premium*
Increased progress in maths	*Aiming for 90% to achieve expected standard by the end of KS2*	*93%* *75% for pupil premium*
Develop programmes to support mental health and well-being (ELSA)	*Emotional wellbeing of targeted pupils increases which results in improved attendance, engagement and progress from starting points.*	*ELSA has supported children from EYFS, KS1 and KS2 this year* *12 children supported overall*
Improve attendance	*Ensure attendance for disadvantaged pupils is equal to or above 96%*	*Whole school annual attendance 96.3%* *Pupil premium 95.3%*
Engagement with the curriculum and extra-curriculum activities	*100% of targeted pupils engage in learning and 100% take part in extra-curricular activities.*	*Music Lessons, Multisports and Art Club* *100% attended one or more of the above clubs.*