

Pupil premium strategy statement

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	218
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	6%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024-2025
Date this statement was published	July 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2025
Statement authorised by	M J Hall
Pupil premium lead	K Moy
Governor / Trustee lead	D Brunwin

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£11897
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£2000
National Tutoring Programme	£1745
Pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£15642

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Thomas More School there is a very strong commitment, shared by staff and governors, to doing everything possible to remove any barriers that might hinder a pupil's development. We are highly ambitious, respond to what we know to be good practice and ensure that our vision for improvement is clear. We ensure that the funding is very carefully targeted at the types of activities that best meet the needs of our pupils, and robustly monitor, evaluate and amend them as necessary in order to achieve the optimum impact for those children.

There are other factors, other than an economic disadvantage, which may hinder a child's progress and attainment. These include: Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) emotional and behavioural difficulties. Analysis of internal data of individual pupils shows that these other factors do impact at times on the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils who also fall within one of these vulnerable groups (EAL/SEND.)

Our strategy is also integral to wider school plans for education recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, notably in its targeted support using the Recovery Funding for pupils whose education has been worst affected, including non-disadvantaged pupils.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. Our approach is informed by the training the school has undertaken using the Essex Disadvantaged Strategy and Trauma Perceptive Practice. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged
- 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 (whether or not through trauma)

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
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1	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among some disadvantaged pupils.
2	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils suggest disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with phonics than their peers. This negatively impacts their development as readers.
3	Internal and external assessments indicate that maths attainment among disadvantaged pupils is significantly below that of non-disadvantaged pupils. Over the last 3 years all of the pupils identified as disadvantaged have been below those not considered to be disadvantaged. (10%)
4	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families indicate that the education and wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged pupils continues to be affected by the impact of the partial school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to a greater extent than for other pupils. These findings are supported by national studies. This has resulted in significant knowledge gaps leading to pupils falling further behind age-related expectations, especially in writing and maths. This had a major impact on those children in the current Year 6.
5	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, notably due to lockdown. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment.
6	Our attendance data over the last year indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been between 10% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. Since the pandemic we have had 3 children persistently absent compared to 0 before Covid.

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 and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.

Improved reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	KS2 reading outcomes in 2024/25 will show that more than 75% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.
Improved maths attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2.	KS2 maths outcomes in 2024/25 will show that more than 75% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2024/25 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance by 2024/25 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall unauthorised absence rate for all pupils being no more than 3%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced by 10%. • the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 2% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 3% lower than their peers.

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: **£ 1000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments eg YARC, WELLCOMM Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly.	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction: Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress 	1, 2, 3, 4

Purchase of Educational Psychologist time (additional to LEA allocation) to assess children where necessary	Over the last 3 years usually at least one of these sessions has been with a disadvantaged pupil.	
Purchase of Unlocking Letters and sounds to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils.	Our Phonics approach has a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils: Phonics Toolkit Strand 	2
Enhancement of our maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE guidance. Teachers have been given time to embed key elements of guidance in school and to access Maths Hub resources and CPD (including Teaching for Mastery training) and Early Years Training	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: Maths guidance KS1 and2.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)	3
Improve the quality of social and emotional (SEL) learning. SEL approaches will be embedded into routine educational practices and supported by professional development and training for staff such as TTP and Mental Health Lead Training	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): EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	5

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

Budgeted cost: **£26,672**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Introduce a programme to improve listening, narrative and vocabulary skills for disadvantaged	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking,	1, 4

pupils and those affected by Covid	listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	
Rewriting a spelling and a handwriting programme to close gaps in attainment.	Targeted approaches using small intervention groups is effective. One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support.	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 Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2
Engaging school-led tutoring for pupils whose attainment is lower than expected. A significant proportion of the pupils who receive tutoring will be disadvantaged, including those who are high attainers.	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one: One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	4

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

Budgeted cost: £150

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole staff training on behaviour management and anti-bullying approaches with the aim of developing our school ethos and maintaining good behaviour across school.	Both targeted interventions and universal approaches can have positive overall effects: Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	5
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with	6

Improving School Attendance advice.	schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.	
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Total budgeted cost: £27,822.00

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2023-2024 academic year using key stage 1 and 2 performance data, phonics check results and our own internal assessments.

EYFS, KS1 and KS2 results at St Thomas More were significantly higher than the national average and all disadvantaged children reached the expected standard in English and mathematics in 2024.

Our observations and assessments demonstrated that pupil behaviour was very good last year, but challenges in relation to wellbeing and mental health remain significantly higher than before the pandemic. The impact on disadvantaged pupils has been particularly acute.

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year
The emotional wellbeing and academic achievement of service children is monitored by each teacher and reported to the SENCO when there is any concern. One service pupil has significant stress levels and this has been addressed by providing a Learning mentor for this pupil.
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
Teachers observed improvements in wellbeing.