

## St. Mary's RC Primary School - Pupil premium strategy statement (2023-2026)

*This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding for the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 academic year to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils. It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in these academic years and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.*

### School Overview

Detail	Data
School name	St. Mary's RC Primary School
Number of pupils in school	217
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	24%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2023/2024 to 2024/25
Date this statement was published	December 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2024
Statement authorised by	Mrs Carmel Ruane (Head Teacher)
Pupil premium lead	Mrs Carmel Ruane
Governor / Trustee lead	Mrs Pam Kelleher (Vice Chair)

### Funding overview

#### Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£60,670
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£4,267
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b>	<b>£64,937</b>

## Statement of intent

We aim for every child to experience success academically, and also to be happy and develop socially, as well-balanced adults of the future, who can make a positive contribution to the world they live in.

High quality teaching is at the heart of all we do, and we will focus on areas where our disadvantaged pupils require the most support. We have found previously that strategies put in place to benefit disadvantaged pupils often benefits most of our pupils. Strategies to close the disadvantaged attainment gap should at the same time benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school.

After Covid, we continue to focus on closing gaps in all children's learning as part of our wider school plans for educational recovery. We will ensure all pupils who need 'recovery' in terms of their academic achievement have extra targeted support with provision matched to their needs. We are also very aware that some pupils still also need 'emotional recovery'.

As a school we will make sure that we take an evidence based approach to the use of our Pupil Premium funding and ensure that we:

- review, monitor and adapt our systems and processes to ensure we act early to intervene at the point where needs are identified
- work hard to close the attainment and progress gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups in school
- adopt a whole school approach where all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupil outcomes
- ensure provision matches need, ensure all our children are challenged appropriately and given access to a broad range of experiences that will further develop strengths and aspirations.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. We are a fully inclusive school and believe every child deserves the very best and we will always strive to remove any barriers to this success. The aim is that the approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	A significant proportion of children start in our Nursery or Reception class with under-developed speech, language and communication skills which is impacting their ability to fully access all learning.

2	<p>A significant proportion of children have identified gaps in learning, preventing them from achieving age related expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children identified by national criteria as Disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Children identified in school as vulnerable.</li> <li>• Children who have joined us as in-year transfers.</li> <li>• Children who continue to be impacted following the covid-19 pandemic for a range of reasons</li> </ul>
3	<p>Since the Covid pandemic, many children's standard of writing has dipped for a range of reasons (writing is a harder subject to do with online learning, many children did not engage with online writing (and reading) activities in home learning, and the loss of daily practice for a sustained period of time) A significant number of children now have less well developed language/vocabulary, which comes from reading less which affects their standard of written work.</p>
4	<p>Following the Covid pandemic, an increasing number of our children present with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) issues which have an impact on all aspects of school life, including progress, attainment, attendance and behaviour. This is preventing many of our children from being fully ready to learn.</p>
5	<p>In response to the needs of many of our children, we aim to provide a wide range of opportunities for all our children to experience, which many may not ordinarily get the opportunities to experience, especially our most disadvantaged children. We will provide a strong 'Cultural Capital/enrichment' curriculum to benefit our children (access to a wide range of trips, visits, theme days, the arts and music opportunities)</p>
6	<p>Persistent absence and low attendance remains high among a significant minority of our children, most of whom are 'disadvantaged'.</p> <p>2022-2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil Premium Attendance 2022 was 92% (95% non-pp), 6.3% Authorised absence (3.6% non-pp), 2.3% unauthorised (1.4% non-pp)</li> <li>- Pupil Premium persistent absence in 2022 was 29% (14% non-pp) and was 16.5% in 2023</li> </ul> <p>Attendance data is tracked termly and actions to tackle PA are in place, including working with the Education Welfare Team. It is monitored termly by the school's attendance officer with written reports to SLT and Governors</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
1 Improved speech, language and communication skills across Early Years and Key Stage One, with a focus on developing a wider range of vocabulary in Key Stage 2 (both oral and written)	<p>Improved language and communication skills as evidenced in Welcomm assessments, initially to assess/bench mark all children - then a particular focus on those disadvantaged children and those with lower scores.</p> <p>Evidenced in children's speech and communication and also in their writing.</p> <p>Evidence of improved engagement in lessons and formative assessments.</p>

<p>2 For all pupils to make at least expected progress (and some to make accelerated progress) in learning, through a range of targeted strategies designed to support and meet changing needs in order to narrow the gap.</p>	<p>Internal assessments and statutory assessments show the vast majority of children are making at least expected progress and the gap is narrowing for those children who have fallen behind, including Pupil Premium (PP) children.</p> <p>Evidence that internal interventions have had a positive impact for PP children and non PP children</p> <p>Analysis of interventions will show that they have had a positive impact on the children's learning and have supported accelerated learning.</p>
<p>3 Improved standards in writing across the school and accelerated progress for those who have fallen behind</p>	<p>Writing data (which is internally and externally moderated) will show an improvement in standards across the school and accelerated progress for a sizeable number of children who had fallen behind expected standards.</p> <p>Strategies put in place to improve the school writing curriculum are showing impact and our new improved curriculum is providing appropriate challenge for all pupils</p>
<p>4 Continued additional support for our pupils and families with identified social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) in order to ensure that the needs are reduced, removed or alleviated.</p>	<p>Increased access to short and long-term nurture interventions and approaches across school. Provision will be closely matched to need.</p> <p>Analysis of nurture intervention and support will show that they have had a positive impact on the children's emotional, health and well-being.</p> <p>Pupils will be ready to learn and develop good behaviours for learning and will develop strategies to be able to regulate their emotions and behaviour inside and outside the classroom</p> <p>Positive feedback from children and parents about the behind the scenes support we offer eg Early Help support through our school based family worker or Pastoral/SLT</p>
<p>5 Continued opportunities for experiential learning including visits to school and educational trips to enrich and enhance curriculum learning for all children</p>	<p>100% of children will access stimulating and engaging learning through a range of visits/visitors and an engaging programme of enrichment opportunities across the year.</p> <p>Targeted opportunities to develop areas of interest or where children have been identified as having a talent.</p> <p>Evidence through pupil voice and book looks will show a high level of engagement, progress and enjoyment.</p>

6 To continue to raise overall attendance rates across the school and to increase attendance rates for those children with Persistent Absence (disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children)	<p>Strategies put in place in line with DfE's Improving School attendance will show positive impact.</p> <p>The overall attendance rate can be seen to have improved following Covid. We will set a target of 96% overall attendance for all pupils each year which is back in line with pre Covid overall attendance. Children eligible for PP will have improved attendance. The number of PP children classed as being persistently absent will reduce from 29% (2022) and 15% (2023) to 8% or less by the end of the academic year 2023-2024 and will be even lower the following year.</p>
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### 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: £ 41,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>A wide range of general staff CPD (REAL Trust) and a commitment to staff time to access high quality CPD for teachers and TAs across school.</p> <p>A commitment to a range of school improvement and support packages including PEIA and Right to Succeed (including 'Voice 21')</p> <p>Part of Year 4 EEF Pilot Programme 'Plan to, Plan for'</p> <p>A commitment to developing some of our highly skilled teachers further (NPQLM) to then develop our staff internally</p>	<p>Evidence of relevant staff attending a range of Continuing Professional Development and ongoing internal CPD/sharing of good practice</p> <p>Whole school self-evaluation and action planning; School priorities and personal and professional appraisal targets and objectives.</p>	1,2,3,4,5

<p>A review and replanning of our writing curriculum including purchasing of new resources for teaching writing. Targeted teacher CPD (Pilot programme and PEIA) for our writing lead teachers to then disseminate to all staff</p> <p>Review of teaching of reading and promoting reading for pleasure which should then feed into improved writing</p>	<p>A new writing curriculum in place (and being regularly reviewed) which shows impact in data and children's enjoyment (pupil voice feedback)</p> <p>New resources purchased including new reading books to enhance the learning experience in reading/writing (Phonics audit to take place in Feb 2024)</p>	1,2,3
<p>To ensure high quality support is provided for all children and targeted where most needed, and especially for our disadvantaged children (academic and pastoral support where needed).</p>	<p>Every class to have almost full time Teaching Assistant support and additional quality support provided for our most vulnerable pupils</p> <p>Additional staff appointed this year (2023-24) for EYFS as many children have joined us with complex needs</p> <p>DHT teaching commitment this year is as additional targeted support for Key stage 1 to close gaps for our younger children before they widen further</p> <p>Additional interactive whiteboards in intervention rooms to facilitate interventions</p>	1,2,3,4

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

Budgeted cost: £30,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<p>Continued investment in Wellcomm/ELKLAN to track progress of all children and will identify areas of concern in language, communication and interaction.</p> <p>Identified team of staff to support the delivery and interventions (Wellcomm interventions and Blanks level questioning following assessment and identification).</p> <p>Assistant Head/SENCo has responsibility for Speech, Language and Communication evaluation and further planning/support</p>	<p>Research into the use and impact of wellcomm is highly favourable amongst many primary schools. Where it is used as a screen and a targeted approach it can have a positive impact on children's speech, language and communication skills. It also allows a school to gather much more accurate evidence when making a referral to speech and language services.</p> <p>EEF - Teaching and Learning Toolkit identifies this type of intervention, specifically oral language intervention, to have an impact of +6 months.</p> <p><a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions</a></p>	1
<p>Continued investment in a range of digital learning platforms such as LBQ and DG to be used as interventions and catch up programmes for vulnerable children</p> <p>Continued investment in class sets of ipads to be used especially for catch up/interventions</p>	<p>These programmes provide initial assessments for each pupil followed by an individualised programme and further assessments for the purpose of measuring progress and setting further individualised targets.</p> <p>All interventions are tracked through termly progress meetings and reviewed/amended based on evidence of progress</p>	2,3
<p>Provide targeted, structured interventions to individual/small groups of children across the whole school (including academic and social/emotional interventions)</p> <p>Commitment to having appropriate staffing to deliver these interventions</p>	<p>Interventions to be monitored and evaluated by SLT (DHT/AHT/SENCo's) and evaluated with staff in termly progress meetings</p> <p>See timetabling of support staff to meet needs through interventions</p> <p>EEF - Using digital technology to improve learning - <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/digital">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/digital</a></p>	2,3
<p>Provision of high quality boosters/catch up after school sessions for key areas in school (Year 2/Year 6) led by qualified teachers</p>	<p>Quality targeted catch up interventions delivered by qualified teachers in small groups should provide clear evidence of accelerated progress.</p>	2,3

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

Budgeted cost: £ 24,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>We have a whole school approach to children's wellbeing and promoting positive mental health for every child</p> <p>Vulnerable children to be highlighted and supported through a range of appropriate interventions: Nurture sessions, Social/wellbeing sessions, Wellbeing Dominoes and Lego Therapy sessions.</p> <p>Targeted, planned, and responsive interventions based on immediate and long term need – well trained Support staff (all completed training with EP Service in 2022-23)</p> <p>We employ our own School Based Family Support Worker who leads on Early Help etc but also leads on the provision and management of Pastoral support and interventions</p>	<p>Both targeted interventions and universal approaches can have positive overall effects:</p> <p>EEF Improving social and emotional learning in Primary Schools</p> <p>Behaviour Intervention / Teaching and Learning Toolkit/EEF</p> <p>Evidence seen within school of children's improved mental health and better ability to access learning</p>	3
<p>All children in school are given the opportunity to participate in activities which enhance and broaden the curriculum and their learning experiences.</p>	<p>EEF Enrichment Research shows that pupils taking part in extracurricular activities have a greater sense of self-worth, develop stronger social skills and become more resilient learners. It is also widely accepted that a person's level of cultural capital is a huge indicator of how well they are able to succeed academically and engage in wider society. Therefore providing this opportunity for PP children increases their experiences which would lead to academic improvement.</p>	4,5



<p>We subsidise all trips across the school (£20 per child each year)</p> <p>We also provide and subsidise visitors into school to enhance learning experiences for all children</p> <p>For pupil premium children, we subsidise trips further, music lessons and school meals where needed, plus any further support based on need</p>	<p>All our children have a range of positive cultural experiences and no vulnerable child is at a disadvantage based on costs</p>	4, 5
<p>Attendance to improve for the whole school with a particular focus on those with persistent absence (Pupil premium /non Pupil premium)</p> <p>Following the DfE's Improving School Attendance advice, use of the Educational Welfare Service to provide additional support with improving attendance across school and to scrutinise attendance data and inform intervention strategies.</p> <p>Staff time and appropriate training</p>	<p>Evidence and approaches gathered from the document entitled 'Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities.</p> <p>Previous experiences of supporting our families with short-term strategies have shown to improve attendance rates. For longer term approaches we use the Early Help process.</p>	6
<p>Contingency fund for acute issues.</p>	<p>Based on previous experiences, especially during the current financial crisis, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified.</p>	4,5

**Total budgeted cost: £ 96,000 (Pupil premium funding £64,937)**

## Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

To provide support as and where needed for those pupils struggling to readjust back to normal school life with a focus on those most needy (PP or non PP)

To support all children to improve physical and mental health following the impact of the ongoing pandemic

Following the Covid pandemic, we have worked extremely hard to ease our children back into 'normal' life. Our pupils are happy to be here and enjoy the stability of a safe and happy school. This is evidenced through pupil and parental surveys and quotes from our recent ofsted inspection (Nov 2021 and section 48 Inspection Nov 2022)

Section 48 Inspection Nov 2022:

- *This is a highly inclusive school which offers an outstanding level of care to vulnerable pupils and families including those with special educational needs, this being a central feature to the strong sense of family and community.*
- *The pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour, including their enthusiastic approach in their role as ambassadors, is a major strength of the school deserving recognition and credit.*
- *St. Mary's is a school which provides for the pupils a high level of care, which allows them to flourish as confident and happy learners.*
- *This outstanding support is well-structured and is enhanced by the strong relationships with outside agencies and the year-round availability of the Family Support Worker.*
- *The pupils talk fondly of the warm learning culture and the sense of fun. 'This school is warm-hearted, comforting and safe' is the view of one pupil.*
- *Parents hold the school in very high regard, particularly the pastoral support for pupils and families and the pivotal role of the headteacher. They feel valued and acknowledge the school's open-door policy and warm welcome. 'My child has blossomed here;' was the view of one parent, and another stated, 'I've never known a school like it, it's wonderful'.*

Ofsted Inspection Nov 2021:

- *Pupils are safe and happy at St Mary's. They are keen to come to school and to be first in line to enter their classrooms. Pupils are greeted each morning by staff who genuinely care about them. Parents and carers describe the school as a big family.*
- *Leaders carefully consider pupils' wider development. Leaders' plans are rooted in the Catholic ethos of the school*
- *Leaders work closely with families and a range of external agencies to help keep pupils safe.*

- *The school's safeguarding team provides pupils with additional support when they need it. This includes support for mental health. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when using technology.*
- *Pupils enjoy their playtimes. They climb on the trim trail and play ball games in the multi-use games area. This supports them to keep physically healthy. Typically, pupils behave well at playtimes. If their play becomes too boisterous, well-trained adults help them to make the right choices. Pupils appreciate this support. They said that teachers deal with any behavioural incidents, including bullying, 'very well'.*

#### To support families struggling with attendance (especially those previous persistent poor attendance)

We have worked hard since Covid to support those families struggling with attendance and this has been due to a range of reasons. Whole school attendance has risen from 93% in 2022 to 95% in 2023/24. Pupil Premium attendance is at 93.4% and non Pupil Premium attendance is 95.3%. Persistent absence stands at 16.5% (Dec 2023). We are working closely with families who have persistent absence with the aim to improve this further. We have also reintroduced Fixed Penalty Notices in 2023 for unauthorised absences in term time.

Overall whole school attendance has improved over the past 2 years and now stands at 95%.

#### To support all pupils, PP and non PP, where the gaps are largest to catch up academically

Our Pupil Premium numbers were previously quite low with approx. 3 or 4 children per class and so trends were difficult to see. However, the numbers are rising, and the Year 6 cohort for 2023 had 33% classed as 'disadvantaged' and so the data here is reliable and positive:

70% achieved expected in Reading (60% of PP reached expected and 2 PP children achieved Greater Depth)

67% achieved expected in Maths (50% of PP reached expected and 1 PP child achieved Greater Depth))

41% achieved expected in writing (30% of PP reached expected)

74% achieved expected in GPS (70% of PP reached expected and 2 PP children achieved Greater Depth)

Progress measures: Based on the expected progress from Year 2 to the end of Year 6 - ALL Pupil Premium children made expected progress in Reading, Writing and Maths and 30% made accelerated progress in Reading and 10% accelerated progress in Maths.

To improve spelling for children throughout school, both PP and non PP children and ensure the gap is reduced by measuring attainment.

Spelling has clearly improved throughout school; this is evident in internal data and the way pupils are applying this in day to day learning. This has been monitored and shared with governors through our ongoing SIP feedback. GPS data is consistently high in Year 6 and the spelling element is equally as strong at the punctuation and grammar element.

Our youngest children to be supported to develop basic social and language skills they have not acquired during the disrupted two years of education – gaps closed through quality interventions

- In 2022/23 we introduced Wellcomm assessment system and initially screened all the Year 6 children as the data was required for transition.
- Children were assessed during Autumn term and interventions were quickly put in place for a small number of children scoring below their age band, including referrals to SALT.
- All children throughout the school were then assessed in Spring 2023. Those children already under Speech and language therapy scored lower than their given age. Overall the data was positive, showing early signs of improvement, and ELKLAN strategies and interventions are used for any children who required support.
- In Autumn 2023, the new Nursery and Reception children were screened. In Nursery (20 children), only 11 children (55%) scored green within their correct age band. 9 children (45%) scored below their age range and have been placed into interventions. Of these 9 children, several children were significantly below – with some scoring 2 ½ years below their age, and some scoring 1 ½ / 2 years below their actual age. Interventions are in place and reassessments are due to take place in the next few weeks. Referrals to SALT have been made, with other potential referrals in the coming term.
- In Reception there are 8 (30) children who have not achieved the age related expectations and are therefore in intervention groups. Again, this has led to several referrals to SALT. After a reassessment, there could potentially be a number of further children who will need a referral for additional support.
- This is very concerning and shows that many children are now joining our school with very little language and communication skills. This remains a major focus and we will continue to use provide any necessary support to these children, whether they are Pupil Premium or not.

We have also drawn on school data and observations to assess wider issues impacting disadvantaged pupils' performance, including attendance, behaviour and wellbeing.

We are confident that there is strong evidence of impact for our disadvantaged pupils over the past 2 years

Based on previous Pupil Premium spending and impact, we will continue with many of the same interventions and strategies but after reviewing our strategy plan we have made some changes to how we intend to use some of our budget this academic year.

