

# St. Mark's C.E. Primary School – Pupil premium strategy statement

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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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

## School overview

Detail	Data
School name	St Mark's Primary
Number of pupils in school	<del>421</del> <b>416</b>
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	<del>15% (62 pupils)</del> <b>12% (54 pupils)</b>
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	from 2024-25 to 2026-27
Date this revised statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Mr A Bright, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Mrs P Cambers, INCO
Governor / Trustee lead	Mrs L McGaw Chair of Governors

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	<del>£91,102</del> <b>£91,265</b>
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b>	£91,102 <b>£91,265</b>

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

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### Statement of intent

At St. Mark's C.E. Primary School, we are determined to afford all children every opportunity to <b>flourish together</b> . We see our role in this as bound in the mission of the
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school, and empowering to us, as educators working in a Christian community, in securing social justice.

As detailed in the Education Endowment Fund's (EEF) Guide to Pupil Premium and the DfE's Using Pupil Premium: Guidance Report, we acknowledge the importance of ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning in every classroom is of the highest possible standard, as this is a fundamental mechanism by which attainment and wellbeing can be raised for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant.

It is our aim that every child in receipt of funding makes the best possible progress and that the 'attainment gap' between those in receipt of the grant and those not in receipt of the grant, continues to decrease.

Therefore, our strategy places the high expectations we have for all pupils in receipt of the grant at its heart. The cornerstone of this, is ensuring that every teacher receives the highest quality continuous professional development, that the latest evidence-informed methods for raising attainment are implemented within each classroom and that every adult working with children is equipped to best support children's academic and emotional development, upholding the same high expectations, with accountability for progress distributed between senior leaders and teachers.

Investing in Teaching Assistants (TAs) to ensure our disadvantaged children have access to timely, well-structured intervention and support so we can address areas of need, forms part of this strategy. We seek to employ principles of effective TA use (as outlined in EEF guidance) as it is essential that TAs, as a valuable resource, are used most effectively to secure the very best outcomes for our disadvantaged children as well as the whole school. Part of the funding has been used to increase Teaching Assistants' working day by 10 minutes each in order to allow for time to meet with teaching colleagues to plan how best to meet the needs of pupils, as well as to provide increased opportunities for targeted intervention.

Additionally, the Pupil Premium Grant is used to partially fund a skilled Higher Level Teaching Assistant to oversee our Speech and Language Therapy provision. This is particularly relevant to our disadvantaged children as we have identified this group has having proportionately high SEND and language difficulties.

Similarly, the we have identified that over ~~37%~~ **51%** of children in receipt of the grant are on our SEND register. It is therefore vital that we continue to improve and invest in our provision for those with SEND. As part of this, we are investing in a new assessment framework and software to support target setting for children with SEND, CPD to support high-quality adaptive teaching and in closer monitoring of provision and progress pupils with SEND.

With regards to ensuring that our curriculum and interventions can best meet the needs of learners in receipt of the grant, where schemes of learning are used, we ensure they are evidence-based and of high quality to ensure maximum impact.

Prioritising the acquisition of both early reading skills and reading fluency is of vital importance to closing the attainment gap. We use the government accredited scheme, 'Little Wandle' to teach Phonics. 'Keep Up' daily phonics, which is part of the effective wave 1 delivery model of Little Wandle forms part of this. We continue to invest in the Reading Plus intervention scheme, delivering targeted support to children identified as requiring additional fluency and comprehension practise.

Additionally, we have identified that many of our children who are eligible for Pupil Premium Funding have a variety of social and emotional needs. A key element of our use of Pupil Premium Funding is to address these needs so that children are ready to access learning and grow emotionally, socially and academically. The highly-skilled and valued adults running our Social and Emotional Literacy support groups are able to offer their services to those children who attract additional funding alongside benefiting the school more widely. The school also shows its commitment to the wellbeing of the whole school community by investing resources in the Trick Box programme and school-wide CPD focused on promoting the mental health of our pupils, to fully integrate our emphasis on mental wellbeing as an integral part of whole-school practice.

Finally, we recognise the importance of helping to meet children's basic needs, and support their families, so that they can access the curriculum equitably. The school invests in enabling access to school trips (residential costs), extended services, enrichment activities and uniform grants to support our disadvantaged families, on a case-by-case basis.

Our processes and procedures are reviewed annually to ensure the effective spending of the grant. We use the services of an Educational Consultant employed by the Trust to provide an extra layer of scrutiny, experience and advice.

## Challenges

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

<b>Challenge number</b>	<b>Detail of challenge</b>
1	A significant proportion of children in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant have a Social and/or Emotional Need.

	<i>29 children (44%) of children receive or have received support from ELSA and nurture.</i>
2	Outcomes across year groups in the core areas of maths, writing and reading are proportionately low and there is a higher attainment gap than nationally.  <i>End of year whole-school data (<del>2024</del>) (2025) shows that <del>25%</del> <b>28%</b> of children in receipt of Pupil Premium are meeting expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics combined, compared with <del>57%</del> <b>39%</b> of children not in receipt of the grant.</i>
3	<del>10</del> <b>8</b> children ( <del>16</del> <b>15%</b> ) of pupils have identified speech and language difficulties and receive support from the NHS, our school-based SALT or within the classroom by Teaching Assistants and Teachers.
4	<del>37%</del> <b>51%</b> of disadvantaged children have a Special Educational Need or Disability  (compared to 17% of disadvantaged children nationally).
5	<del>22%</del> <b>15%</b> of disadvantaged children are classed as persistently absent.

## Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current (3 Year) strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
<i>Maintain decreased gap in average attainment in phonics</i>	Attainment in line with national trends (14%) or better
<del>Bring in line</del> <b>Maintain reduction in gap between</b> combined attainment of disadvantaged pupils with non-disadvantaged groups <b>and work to further reduce the gap</b>	Attainment gap <b>at least</b> in line with national trends (22%) or better GDS attainment within the group in line with national or better
<i>Increased attendance of disadvantaged children</i>	Attendance in line with non-disadvantaged pupils at a target of 95%
<i>Support mental health and wellbeing of pupils</i>	Children being signed off from Nurture/ ELSA support  Children able to use strategies to support themselves to be more resilient
<i>Provide extended services and enrichment to disadvantaged children</i>	Children have the same opportunities to access clubs and services as their peers

## Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

As stipulated in the DfE's 'Pupil Premium 2024 to 2025: conditions of grant', academies must spend their grant 'in line with the 'menu of approaches' set by the Department for Education (DfE). The menu of approaches is in the [using pupil premium](#) guidance. The menu aligns with the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF's) evidence-informed tiered approach, which helps schools allocate spending across 3 key areas:

- developing high-quality teaching, for example through professional development and recruitment and retention
- providing targeted academic support, such as one-to-one or small group tuition
- tackling non-academic barriers to academic success, such as difficulties with attendance, behaviour and social and emotional wellbeing

The document states that 'the EEF recommends that approaches which support and promote high-quality teaching in academies should be a top priority for pupil premium spending.'

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £7000

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Evidence that supports this approach</b>	<b>Challenge number(s) addressed</b>
Provide CPD to support high-quality adaptive teaching	CPD which raises the quality of teaching and classroom practice can have a significant impact on rising attainment for all pupils.	2, 4
Dedicated time for teachers to monitor progress and attainment and plan for improvement in attainment of pupils in receipt of the grant.	Distributed accountability for the progress and attainment of children in receipt of the grant, leads to higher expectations for progress and higher attainment.	2, 4
Dedicated time for senior leaders and curriculum leads to	High quality mentoring and coaching for teachers, leads to better outcomes for pupil progress.	2, 4

monitor the progress and attainment of pupils in receipt of the grant and to mentor and coach teachers to plan for measures to raise attainment.		
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### Targeted academic support (for example structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: ~~£80,602~~ **£80,767**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Funding nurture group and ELSA provision, including <del>training new ELSA</del> regular supervision for ELSA staff</i>	EEF notes effective social and emotional learning (SEL) can lead to gains of 4 months academic improvement	1, 5
<i>Reading Plus intervention</i>	Pupils need support and regular practise to acquire fluency and improve comprehension (DfE Reading Framework 2023).	2, 3, 4
<i>Embedding targeted use of intervention by Teaching Assistants deployed by class teachers</i>	This includes small group support outside the classroom for targeted intervention activities.	2
<i>Staffing of Wave 1 quality delivery of Little Wandle</i>	Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) and is important to the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.	2, 3, 4
<i>Targeted support for speech and language</i>	SALT provision is required in children's IEPs. Funding some of this through Pupil Premium enables children to have quick, onsite school access to the therapy they require.	3

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

Budgeted cost: £3500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<i>Provide extended services and enrichment</i>	Much educational research demonstrates that meeting children's basic needs is essential for the emotional, social and academic development of the child.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<i>Half termly attendance monitoring meetings with a focus on disadvantaged Persistent Absence support</i>	EEF evidence suggested that on top of universal provisions, it may be necessary to employ a more personalised approach to support attendance and engagement.	5
<i>To embed mental health support across the school through continuation of Sandwell strategies.</i>	EEF research suggests that SEL support can have a 4 month positive impact on children's learning over a year.	1, 5
<i>To provide targeted support and advice for families, liaising with external service providers on their behalf.</i>	To reduce rates of absence, holistic support for families is essential.	1, 5

**Total budgeted cost: £91,102-£91, 265**

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

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### Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2023-2024 **2024-2025** academic year.

### **Decrease gap in average attainment in phonics**

*Attainment in line with national trends (14%) or better*

Disadvantaged pupil attainment was 88% achieving the required standard, compared to 90% of non-disadvantaged. A gap of only 2%, much better than the 14% national gap. Continue to monitor in future cohorts. **At the end of 2024-25 59% of disadvantaged pupils' met the required standard in the national phonics screen, or 4 of the 7 children in receipt of the PP Grant. Two of these children have identified SEN needs and are currently receiving a high level of intervention. One of these children missed the required standard by 1 mark and he has now met the required standard. With 89% of the non-disadvantaged cohort meeting the required standard, this is a gap of 30% so this is an area of focus for this coming year and we have increased intervention for targeted children.**

### **Increased attendance of disadvantaged children**

*Attendance in line with non-disadvantaged pupils at a target of 95%*

In 2023/24, attendance within the disadvantaged group was 93.8%, this is 1.2% below the target figure. At less than 8% PA, this is significantly better than the national figure and is evidence that this target can be replaced but continued to be monitored.

**In 24-25 the attendance of disadvantaged pupils was 90.9% which is 4.1% below the target figure and so is still an area of focus. The percentage of children who are disadvantaged who are classed as persistently absent fell by 7% in 24-25, showing the impact of working with specific families of children in this group.**

### **Bring in line combined attainment of disadvantaged pupils with non-disadvantaged groups**

*Attainment gap in line with national trends (22%) or better*

Significant SEND needs within this group also impact attainment outcomes. Several disadvantaged pupils with SEND needs were disapplied from KS2 SATs.

Of the 7 disadvantaged pupils, 3 achieved EXS in reading, writing and maths combined.

**The attainment gap across the school which takes into account all standardised assessment data in end of year assessments, has fallen to only 11% in 24-25. When comparing the attainment of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children without any identified SEN, the attainment of disadvantaged children across the school is actually 2% higher than the non-disadvantaged cohort. This highlights how significant it is for us to focus on raising the attainment of children with identified SEN. A proportion of these children are working significantly outside of their year group curriculum which does increase the challenge of narrowing the gap.**

**Looking at end of Ks2 attainment in national tests, the gap in attainment remains high at 25%. Of the 11 disadvantaged pupils, 4 achieved the EXS in reading, writing and maths combined.**

*GDS attainment within the group in line with national or better*

~~2024 National GDS combined attainment for disadvantaged pupils was 3% (compared to 10% for non-disadvantaged).~~

~~St Mark's GDS was as follows: reading 3%, writing 0%, maths 1.6% but these pupils have greater than expected progress, having all be EXS in KS1.~~

**2025 National GDS combined attainment for disadvantaged pupils was 4% (compared to 11% for non-disadvantaged). St Mark's GDS for disadvantaged was Reading 9%, writing 0% and maths 0% .**

### **Support mental health and wellbeing of pupils**

*Children being signed off from Nurture/ ELSA support*

*Children able to use strategies to support themselves to be more resilient*

We have continued to teach Trick Box techniques as well as a whole school focus on the Colour Monster books, to enable pupils to better understand, identify and talk about their feelings. Our new Regulation and Engagement policy focuses on relational practice and restorative approaches.

~~Our Nurture and ELSA provisions run a full timetable of provision for pupils. and we are investing in an additional member of staff to be trained as an ELSA.~~

### **Provide extended services and enrichment to disadvantaged children**

*Children have the same opportunities to access clubs and services as their peers*

*Increased confidence and swimming competence*

We continue to fund ~~swimming~~, trips, music and sport tuition, clothing and wrap-round care and other necessitous items through Pupil Premium funding.

## **Externally provided programmes**

*Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England*

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Provider</b>
White Rose Maths	Trinity Mat
Literary Curriculum	The Literacy Tree

Little Wandle Phonics	Little Wandle
Reading Plus	Reading Solutions UK

## Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	These three children have access to ELSA/ Nurture as required – a half-termly check-in during the year, with weekly check-ins while parent on active deployment.
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	These children have access to these services, offering emotional support to pupils whose parent(s) are on active deployment.

## Further information

*The Inclusion Coordinator, supported by with the Headteacher has responsibility for Disadvantaged pupil support, monitoring and initiatives.*

*A review of all data and strategies has taken place since September. This has included:*

- 1) Collect data regarding individual disadvantaged children to a) identify needs of these individuals and b) evaluate and account for funding directed towards them*
- 2) Review and update of the 3-year Pupil Premium Plan*
- 3) Regular reporting to Governors as an agenda item at all committee meetings*
- 4) Evaluation of need- including evaluating intervention programmes to meet the intended outcomes and co-ordinating their implementation.*

*Priorities:*

- 1) Promote and embed high expectations for attainment and progress for children in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant.*

- 2) *Distribute accountability and ownership for this progress between senior leaders and teachers, through CPD and directed time to plan and monitor progress.*
- 3) *Deliver high-quality, evidence-informed CPD to teachers to ensure quality first adaptive teaching meets the needs of learners in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant.*
- 4) *Plan and implement high-quality targeted interventions as needed to aim to ensure children make good progress and to continue to close the attainment gap.*
- 5) *Focus on effective deployment of Teaching Assistants and on delivering high-quality CPD for Teaching Assistants, to maximise the impact they have on pupil outcomes.*