

Pupil premium strategy statement – Sacred Heart 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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	186
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	54% (55% FSM)
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
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	<i>Natalie Brodie</i>
Pupil premium lead	<i>Natalie Brodie and Dawn Cooper</i>
Governor / Trustee lead	<i>Martin Jackson</i>

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£131,805
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	0
Total budget for this academic year	£1,332,786.78

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, our goal is to ensure that every pupil, regardless of their background or the challenges they may face, makes strong progress and achieves high levels of success across all subject areas. Our pupil premium strategy is specifically designed to support disadvantaged pupils in reaching this aim, including those who are already achieving at a high level.

We recognise the unique challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, including those with a social worker or young carers, and our efforts are aimed at meeting their needs, whether or not they are considered disadvantaged.

Central to our approach is high-quality teaching, particularly in areas where disadvantaged pupils require the most support. Research shows that this is the most effective way to narrow the attainment gap and will also benefit non-disadvantaged pupils at our school. We are committed to ensuring that the progress of disadvantaged pupils goes hand-in-hand with the continued success and improvement of non-disadvantaged pupils.

Our approach is tailored to address both common and individual challenges, based on thorough diagnostic assessment rather than assumptions. We have adopted a range of complementary strategies to support pupils in excelling. To ensure these are successful, we will:

- Provide challenging work for disadvantaged pupils
- Intervene early when a need is identified
- Foster a whole-school approach where all staff take responsibility for the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and raise expectations for what they can achieve.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate some reading difficulties and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils. These are evident from Reception through to KS2 and in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils than their peers.
2	Internal assessments indicate that maths attainment among disadvantaged pupils is significantly below that of non-disadvantaged pupils. On entry to Reception class in the last 2 years, 100% of our disadvantaged pupils arrive below age-related expectations. This gap improved over time. On average using internal assessments show that there is an academic gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged pupils.
3	Internal and assessments indicate that English attainment among disadvantaged pupils is significantly below that of non-disadvantaged pupils. On entry to Reception class in the last 3 years, 90-100% of reception pupils arrive below ARE. This gap improves over time. On average using internal assessments show that there is an academic gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged pupils.
4	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, notably due to a lack of enrichment opportunities in family settings. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment. Teacher referrals for support remain relatively high. Around half of the pupils on the SEN register with SEMH needs are disadvantaged pupils and currently require additional support with social and emotional needs.
5	Our attendance data over the last 2 years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been marginally lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. The attendance gap this year between pp and non pp pupils is 1.2%. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively impacting disadvantaged pupils' progress.

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 maths attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	The attainment gap between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium pupils remains evident across all subjects and requires continued targeted support to ensure outcomes for disadvantaged pupils improve and the gap is securely closed.
Improved reading attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2.	
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by summer 2026 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observationsa significant increase in participation in enrichment activities including homework club, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high attendance by summer 2026 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the overall unauthorised absence rate for all pupils being no more than 2%, and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced by 2%.the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 5% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 2% lower than their peers.

Activity This Year:

We intend to allocate our pupil premium funding this year to address the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, with a particular focus on improving literacy through Read Write Inc phonics, providing tailored support through extra interventions, and prioritising extracurricular opportunities, including sports through our partnership with Birmingham City Football Club.

Teaching (CPD, Recruitment and Retention) (£4000)

Standardised diagnostic assessments

Assessments will be used to accurately identify gaps in learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy, enabling targeted support for disadvantaged pupils.

Evidence: Diagnostic assessment supports precise intervention and improved outcomes.

Challenges addressed: 1, 2, 3

Embedding dialogic teaching across the curriculum

Staff will receive ongoing training to develop high-quality classroom talk that extends vocabulary, reasoning, and comprehension, supported through WalkThrus and Read Write Inc.

Evidence: Oral language approaches have a strong impact on attainment for disadvantaged pupils.

Challenges addressed: 3

Enhanced phonics through Read Write Inc and Fast track phonics

A structured, DfE-validated phonics programme will ensure consistent, high-quality teaching to improve early reading and fluency, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Evidence: Phonics has a strong evidence base for improving reading outcomes.

Challenges addressed: 1, 3

Professional development in maths

Teachers will be trained in line with DfE and EEF guidance to embed effective, evidence-based maths teaching across the school.

Evidence: EEF guidance supports improved consistency and attainment in maths.

Challenges addressed: 2

Social and emotional learning support

Targeted provision will support pupils' emotional wellbeing and readiness to learn through the Happy Mind programme, counselling, and family support services.

Evidence: Social and emotional interventions are linked to improved behaviour and academic outcomes.

Challenges addressed: 3

Targeted Academic Support

One-to-one and small-group tuition

Targeted tuition will be delivered to close gaps in reading and maths for disadvantaged pupils.

Evidence: Small-group and one-to-one tuition has a strong impact on progress.

Challenges addressed: 1, 2, 3

Additional phonics intervention

Extra phonics sessions will support pupils requiring further practice to achieve secure reading skills. (including daily fast track phonics for those who require it)

Evidence: Targeted phonics intervention supports accelerated progress.

Challenges addressed: 3

Oral language and vocabulary development

Structured programmes will develop listening, narrative skills, and vocabulary for disadvantaged pupils. For example we are trialling Voice 21.

Evidence: Oral language interventions improve communication and comprehension.

Challenges addressed: 3

Wider Strategies

Behaviour training

Whole-staff training (termly) on the behaviour policy will promote positive behaviour and inclusion.

Evidence: Behaviour interventions improve learning environments and pupil outcomes.

Challenges addressed: 4

Attendance and engagement

Targeted attendance strategies will strengthen engagement with families and reduce persistent absence, supported by external agencies and enrichment opportunities.

Evidence: DfE guidance highlights the impact of strong attendance systems.

Challenges addressed: 5

Extra-curricular opportunities

Partnership work will increase participation in sport, supporting wellbeing, confidence, and engagement.

Evidence: Physical activity supports social development and self-esteem.

Challenges addressed: 4, 5

Breakfast Club supports PP (Pupil Premium) pupils by giving them a calm, welcoming start to the school day with a healthy breakfast. This helps ensure they are not hungry in lessons, which can improve focus, behaviour, and learning. Breakfast Club also provides a safe space for social interaction, building confidence and positive routines and helps remove barriers to attendance by supporting families who may need early-morning childcare.

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

In reviewing the performance of disadvantaged pupils at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School for the 2024-2025 academic year, we have drawn on a range of data sources, including national assessment data, as well as our own internal summative and formative assessments.

The data demonstrated that disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 made progress, closing the academic gap with their non-disadvantaged peers (between academic year 2023-2024 to summer 2025). This was especially evident in reading, where targeted interventions and small-group tutoring, had a measurable impact.

However, despite this progress, there remains a gap in overall attendance between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. While we saw a rise in attendance across both groups, the gap remains a priority for further focus. Evidence from Term 1 of 2025 suggests that there are still barriers to consistent attendance for disadvantaged pupils but this has significantly improved, impacting their overall progress. (see data below)

Wider Issues: Attendance, Behaviour, and Wellbeing

In addition to academic performance, we have also assessed wider factors impacting the success of disadvantaged pupils, including attendance, behaviour, and wellbeing.

The data demonstrated that:

- Attendance for disadvantaged pupils showed some improvement, but it continues to fall below (albeit much smaller gap) that of their non-disadvantaged peers. This remains an area for targeted intervention.
- Behaviour and wellbeing measures improved, particularly with the introduction of social-emotional learning practices, family engagement sessions, and increased extracurricular opportunities, such as the partnership with Birmingham City Football Club for sports and extra-curricular clubs.

Effectiveness of Strategies

Our evaluation of the approaches delivered in the previous academic year indicates that several strategies had a particularly positive impact:

- The **Read Write Inc phonics programme** helped close gaps in early reading skills, particularly for disadvantaged pupils who had previously struggled with phonics and reading comprehension.
- The **targeted interventions** through small-group and one-to-one tuition for pupils who needed additional support were successful in boosting performance in both reading and maths. Introduction of fast track phonics.
- **Increased provision of extracurricular activities** (e.g., sports and after-school clubs) had a notably positive impact on the social skills, self-esteem, and overall wellbeing of disadvantaged learners. These opportunities were also extended through family

engagement meetings, fostering stronger home-school partnerships and encouraging parental involvement in pupils' learning journeys. This now includes a designated Homework club for KS1 and KS2 disadvantaged learners.

However, there were areas where further focus is needed:

- **Attendance:** Despite improvements, the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in terms of attendance persists and remains a key area for intervention.

PP attendance increased by 3.1 % from 2023–24 to 2024–25.

The attendance gap narrowed by 1.7 %, showing strong progress.

PP attendance is:

- In line with FSM pupils
- Higher than national PP averages
- Still slightly below non-PP pupils, but the gap is closing (2.9% difference last year compared to 1.2% this year)

Pupil Premium attendance improved significantly from 90.6% in 2023–24 to 93.7% in 2024–25. This reduced the attendance gap between PP and non-PP pupils from 2.9% to 1.2%. PP attendance is now above the national PP average, reflecting the positive impact of targeted attendance strategies.

- **Behaviour and wellbeing:** Although support approaches have been effective, ongoing support for pupils dealing with external challenges (such as family circumstances) will be a priority moving forward.

Progress Towards Intended Outcomes

Based on the evidence above, the performance of our disadvantaged pupils **exceeded** expectations in many areas, particularly in terms of closing the attendance gap. However, we acknowledge that there are still gaps in academic outcomes that require further attention. At present, we are **on course** to achieve the outcomes we set out to achieve by 2025, with a continued focus on ensuring these pupils have access to the additional support they need to succeed.

Our evaluation of last year's strategies has shown a positive impact, with notable improvements in both academic performance and extracurricular engagement. Moving forward, we will continue to refine our approach, focusing on narrowing the attainment gap and supporting the wellbeing of disadvantaged pupils to ensure they continue to thrive academically and socially.