

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	193
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)	2024/2025
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	June 2025
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	£103,600.00
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 between 8-20% of pupils designated as disadvantaged work below their non disadvantaged peers (most notable in Year 5 maths with a 30% gap)
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 2 years, 100% of reception pupils arrive below ARE. This gap improves over time. On average using internal assessments show that between 9-21% of pupils designated as disadvantaged work below their non disadvantaged peers (most notable in Year 4 with a 29% gap)
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. 18 pupils (11 of whom are disadvantaged) 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 between 2-5% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. 24.5% of disadvantaged pupils have been 'persistently absent' compared to 7% of their peers during that period (term 1 2025). 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.	KS2 reading outcomes in summer 2025 show that more than 40% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard (aim 68%)
Improved reading attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of KS2.	KS2 maths outcomes in summer 2025 show (predicted) 39% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard - Aim to move to 70%
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by summer 2025 demonstrated by: ● qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations ● a 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 2025 demonstrated by: ● 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 3%. ● the percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 5% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 5% 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 (e.g., CPD, recruitment, and retention)

Budgeted cost: £51,600

Activity:

- **Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments**
 - These assessments will identify areas where pupils need further support, particularly in literacy, and help tailor our approach to addressing these gaps, especially for disadvantaged pupils who may not have access to the same resources outside of school.
 - **Evidence:** Diagnostic assessments are proven to identify specific areas for improvement, which is crucial for targeted interventions and supporting pupils with gaps in literacy or numeracy.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 1, 2, 3

- **Training staff to embed dialogic activities across the curriculum**
 - This will include ongoing training in how to use high-quality discussions in all subjects to extend pupils' vocabulary and thinking (Walk Thrus). Through our Read Write Inc phonics programme, these conversations will strengthen pupils' reading and language comprehension.
 - **Evidence:** Oral language interventions significantly boost reading skills, especially for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 3

- **Enhanced phonics teaching with the DfE-validated Read Write Inc programme**
 - The structured phonics approach through Read Write Inc will ensure all pupils, particularly disadvantaged learners, have access to high-quality phonics instruction that improves their reading fluency.
 - **Evidence:** Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base showing a positive impact on pupils' word reading, especially for those who are disadvantaged.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 1,3

- **Professional development in line with DfE and EEF maths guidance**
 - Teachers will be trained to implement evidence-based approaches to maths, ensuring all pupils, including disadvantaged ones, receive consistent, high-quality maths instruction.
 - **Evidence:** Evidence-based guidance on maths teaching from the EEF will improve outcomes in numeracy.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 2

- **Social and emotional learning support**

- To support disadvantaged pupils, especially those facing external challenges, we will embed practices to boost emotional resilience and enhance academic focus. This will be through the Happy Mind programme, external counsellor, Family support worker (Fr Hudsons)
 - **Evidence:** support as above been linked to better academic outcomes and improved behaviour.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 3
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Targeted Academic Support

Budgeted cost: £50,000

Activity:

- **One-to-one and small group tuition for pupils**

- In addition to regular lessons, pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, will receive targeted tuition to fill knowledge gaps in reading and maths.
- **Evidence:** Research shows that targeted one-to-one tuition and small-group interventions are effective in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- **Challenge addressed:** 1, 2, 3

- **Additional phonics sessions for disadvantaged pupils**

- Extra phonics intervention will be provided to pupils who need additional support, ensuring that every pupil masters the skills needed for fluent reading.
- **Evidence:** Phonics interventions have been proven to significantly help disadvantaged pupils catch up in reading.
- **Challenge addressed:** 3

- **Listening, narrative, and vocabulary development programme**

- We will introduce a structured programme to improve the spoken language and vocabulary of disadvantaged pupils, providing extra support where needed.
 - **Evidence:** Oral language interventions show positive impacts on language development, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 3
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Wider Strategies

Budgeted cost: £2,000

Activity:

- **Whole staff training on behaviour management and anti-bullying**

- Training will focus on supporting the emotional and behavioural needs of disadvantaged pupils, fostering a positive school ethos and improving behaviour across the school (via a new behaviour policy in school)

- **Evidence:** Both universal and targeted behaviour interventions have been shown to improve classroom climate and outcomes.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 4
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- **Improving school attendance and engagement**
 - We will invest in strategies to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, including employing support staff to engage with families and monitor attendance closely (use support first from BCC, MAC attendance group and clubs before school to attract disadvantaged pupils)
 - **Evidence:** DfE guidance on improving attendance demonstrates that strong systems and support for families can reduce persistent absence.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 5
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- **Extra-curricular opportunities with Birmingham City Football Club**
 - The school will prioritise sports and physical activities, providing opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to engage in team sports, improving both their physical and social development.
 - **Evidence:** Engaging pupils in physical activity and team sports fosters teamwork, resilience, and improves self-esteem.
 - **Challenge addressed:** 4/5
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- **Contingency fund**
 - A small amount of funding will be reserved to respond quickly to any emerging issues or needs that may arise during the year, ensuring we can provide support without delay.
 - **Challenge addressed:** All

Total budgeted cost: £103,600

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 2023-2024 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 2022-2023 to summer 2024). This was especially evident in literacy and numeracy, 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.

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.

- **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.

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.
- **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 academic gap. However, we acknowledge that there are still gaps in attendance and behavioural engagement 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 attendance gap and supporting the wellbeing of disadvantaged pupils to ensure they continue to thrive academically and socially.