

Pupil premium strategy statement St Martha's 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 the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	403
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	8.47% (34 pupils)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	June 2026
Statement authorised by	Rachel Edwards
Pupil premium lead	Phillippa Shine
Governor / Trustee lead	

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£63,330
Pupil premium (and recovery premium*) funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£63,330

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of Intent

At St Martha's Primary School we have high expectations and ambitions for all of our pupils. We strive to encourage pupils to 'Be the best they can be'. Our vision is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas.

The focus of our Pupil Premium Strategy is to remove barriers to learning and to enable pupils to achieve. We recognise the challenges faced by some of our vulnerable pupils for example those who are young carers, have a social worker, have an EHAP or additional need. We place the whole child at the centre and work to support the child and work with our families.

A combination of whole school strategies such as high quality teaching and specialised interventions are at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. These approaches are proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- Ensure disadvantaged pupils are personally challenged in the work that they are set.
- Act early to intervene at the point that needs are identified.
- Adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of 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	SEND, Social Emotional and Behaviour

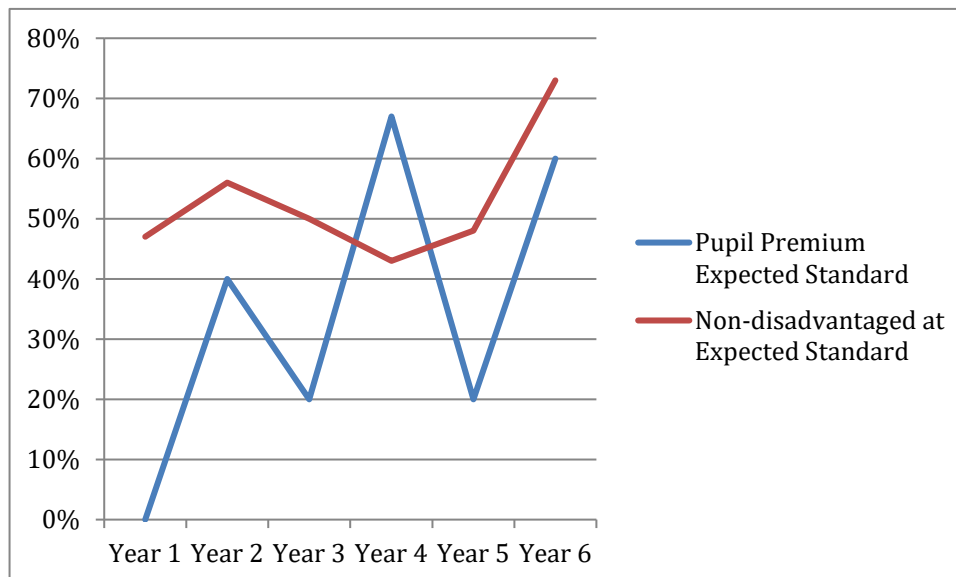
Across our school there has been a pattern for several years that the number of pupils with SEND has been increasing. Part of this is Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), which has also increased to become our second largest area of need. Through assessments, observations and discussions with pupils, teaching staff and families, we have identified social and emotional issues for many of our disadvantaged pupils. These challenges particularly affect their attainment and behaviour at home and in school. Looking at our data around 40% of pupils whom are disadvantaged also present with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and benefit from extra support with this from trained professionals to support them socially and emotionally.

2

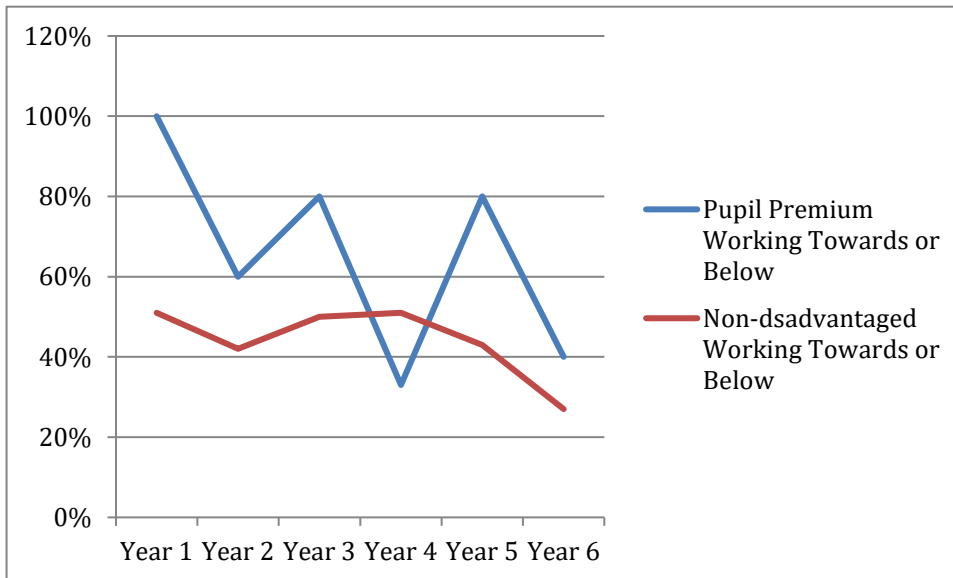
Attainment

Assessments show that disadvantaged pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 are not attaining as highly as their peers particularly in writing. This is a reoccurring trend and is also reflected in Government research. In some year groups this difference is significant between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils. Looking at the data, for years 1-6 almost all year groups show fewer percentage of pupils working at the expected standard for writing with the exception being Year 4 where a larger percentage of pupil premium learners achieved the expected standard.

Attainment in Writing at Expected Standard



Attainment in Writing Working Towards or Below



3

Phonics and Reading

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, especially in the areas of fluency and stamina and can have an impact as children continue their learning journey throughout school. For Year 1 pupils a larger percentage of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading who were not disadvantaged; in contrast to pupil premium pupil. Furthermore there was a higher percentage of pupil premium pupils working below the expected standard particularly for reading. This pattern is further reflected in KS2 with a 17% difference in pupils achieving the expected standard in reading SATs for Year 6 pupils in contrast to pupil premium with only 30% achieving this for the academic year 2024 – 2025. In both highlighted data sets below disadvantaged pupils show a higher percentage of pupils working below or working towards the expected standard. Looking at data from last academic year, pupils in year 2 who were disadvantaged showed the same percentage of pupils achieving expected standard in reading as non-disadvantaged peers.

	<p><u>Percentage of Pupils Reaching Expected Standard and Working Towards/Below for Reading</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="502 197 1303 730"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Expected</th> <th>Below/Working Towards</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Year 1</td> <td>58%</td> <td>37%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 1 Pupil Premium</td> <td>50%</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 2</td> <td>60%</td> <td>23%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 2 Pupil Premium</td> <td>60%</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 6</td> <td>47%</td> <td>22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 6 Pupil Premium</td> <td>30%</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Expected	Below/Working Towards	Year 1	58%	37%	Year 1 Pupil Premium	50%	50%	Year 2	60%	23%	Year 2 Pupil Premium	60%	20%	Year 6	47%	22%	Year 6 Pupil Premium	30%	40%
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4	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Our attendance data this academic year indicates that 14% of our pupil premium children have attendance rates that are lower than 90% and 17% of pupil premium pupils who are absent for more than 5% of school sessions. We as a school are aware of the impact attendance can have particularly on attainment, wellbeing and mental health especially on disadvantaged pupils. Any time spent out of school for disadvantaged pupils could have a significant impact on their attainment and progress.</p>																					
5	<p>Embed High Quality Teaching and Learning</p> <p>Over the last few years we have had a large focus on embedding high quality teaching strategies and adaptive teaching across school. This continues to be a focus this academic year 2025 – 2026 particularly as we approach the final year for this three year strategy. In school we have had several new teachers join over the last few years, through CPD we will continue to revisit training and fundamentals of quality teaching; essential for ensuring pupils achieve their goals.</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
Improved phonics attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	Year 1 phonics screening outcomes in 2025/26 show that disadvantaged pupils' attainment is similar to the rest of the cohort.

Improved writing attainment among disadvantaged pupils.	End of Key Stage 2 writing outcomes in 2025/26 show that disadvantaged pupils' attainment is similar to the rest of the cohort. This will be shown by end of key stage assessments carried out and data gathered in school through teacher assessment and pupil progress meetings.
Achieve and sustain improved wellbeing and mental health for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing by 2025/26 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. • A significant reduction in low-level disruption in classrooms. • A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.
Achieve and sustain improved engagement with parents, particularly of our disadvantaged pupils, in order to improve standards as well as attendance.	Sustained high attendance by 2025/26 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall unauthorised absence rate for all pupils being no more than 4% and the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers being reduced by 0.5%.

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £30,520.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Specific School staff will be selected to undertake training in mental health and wellbeing (Drawing and Talking Therapy) to support the emerging needs of children across the school in individual and group sessions.	Targeted interventions have the greatest impact in contrast to a whole class or school wide social and emotional learning package. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	1, 5

<p>Professional development and subscriptions to support the implementation of a DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics programmes.</p>	<p>The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence:</p> <p>Phonics Improving Literacy in Key Stages 1 and 2</p>	<p>3, 2</p>
<p>Enhancement of our writing teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE and EEF guidance. We will fund teacher release time to embed key elements of guidance in school and to access resources and CPD. Whole school training on Colourful Semantics to improve outcomes in writing for disadvantaged pupils. Due to new teachers joining our team colourful semantics training needs to be refreshed this academic year.</p>	<p>The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of English, drawing on evidence-based approaches:</p> <p>English guidance KS 1 and 2.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Studies have shown that the colourful semantics approach is a useful approach when working with children (Bolderson, Dosanjh, Milligan, Pring & Chiat, 2011).</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Providing cover for teachers to attend training which will improve their knowledge of adaptive teaching strategies.</p>	<p>Offering effective professional development are key to retaining great teachers, which, in turn, is crucial to maintaining a high standard of teaching and learning. Ensuring teaching is high quality is key to supporting all pupils alongside pupils with SEND.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-the-five-a-day-approach-how-the-eef-can-support</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>To enhance our provision in EYFS staff will attend training focusing on outdoor learning and the learning environment.</p>	<p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/the-shrec-approach-four-evidence-informed-strategies-to-promote-high-quality-interactions-with-young-children</p>	<p>4, 2, 1</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £15,137.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Due increased numbers of pupils with SEND we plan to invest in our intervention rooms; resources and spaces to ensure interventions are able to be run effectively.</p>	<p>Small group and one to one interventions can be a powerful tool for supporting these pupils when they are used carefully.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/school-planning-support/2-targeted-academic-support</p>	<p>1, 3, 2</p>
<p>Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support. This will be delivered by our intervention team.</p>	<p>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:</p> <p>Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	<p>3, 2</p>
<p>Additional therapies from PIXL targeted at disadvantaged pupils who have scored low on the school tests, and have just missed out on their targets.</p>	<p>There is a strong and consistent body of evidence demonstrating the benefit of structured interventions for pupils who are struggling with their learning. The first step should be to accurately diagnose capabilities and difficulties in order to match pupils to appropriate, evidence informed interventions that target specific areas of difficulty</p> <p>EEF Improving Literacy in KS2</p>	<p>2</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £17,673.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole staff training on behaviour management and with the aim of developing our school ethos and improving behaviour across school.	Both targeted interventions and universal approaches can have positive overall effects: Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1
Provide mental health and wellbeing support for both parents and pupils attending St Martha's. This may be scheduled times to meet with parents about specific concerns or 'ad hoc worries' which arise where parents or pupils need extra support. As a school we are well placed to provide support or in some instances provide signposting and advice to other local services who also provide assistance.	Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties are more likely to be excluded from school (Parry-Langdon, 2008). Children with higher levels of wellbeing generally achieve better academically (Gutman and Vorhaus, 2012). https://my.chartered.college/impact_article/promoting-positive-mental-health-and-wellbeing-in-primary-schools .	1, 5
Introduce a scheme of work to help support the teaching of emotional literacy across the school.	Although whole class social and emotional learning has less of an impact when compared to targeted small group interventions, they continue to have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school.	1
Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's Working together to Improve School Attendance guidance. As a school we have budgeted for a member of staff to help track attendance and meet with parents and families to support them in ensuring attendance improves. As part of this role our member of staff will help set up EHAPs and apply for Young Careers. As a school we are	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools. It is evident from Government data that pupils with higher attainment at the end of key stage 2 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among	1, 5

<p>aware how important attendance at school is for attainment, wellbeing and life changes.</p>	<p>those meeting the expected standard. The impact poor attendance has on wellbeing and mental health is significant as it is also one of the best ways of safeguarding vulnerable pupils; allowing the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance</p>	
<p>Contingency fund for acute issues.</p>	<p>Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, 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>	<p>All</p>
<p>Extracurricular activities, including sports, outdoor activities, and arts and culture - for example, music lessons and school trips.</p>	<p>Extracurricular activities are an important part of education in their own right. These approaches may increase engagement in learning:</p> <p>EEF: Arts participation EEF: Physical activity</p>	<p>All</p>

Total budgeted cost: £63,330

Part B: Review of the previous academic years outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Since January 2025 to the present date (September 2025), a number of initiatives have been implemented to help support our disadvantaged pupils at St Martha's following our Pupil Premium Strategy for 2023 - 2026. These initiatives and evidence base are detailed above in the main body of our report. A majority of our initiatives are based on Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance. Below is a review of our progress, to date, against these aims and areas of development for the next academic year with pupil premium, to support our disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.

At present 8.3% of the pupils who attend St Martha's access our pupil premium funding. This change at the time of publishing our initial report is due to a change in pupils transitioning to secondary schools and new reception starters and the overall number of pupils on role at St Martha's. This change in figures means a reduction in our pupil premium funding which means projected costs have been adjusted accordingly for this academic year.

One of the biggest differences in predicted expenditure for 2024 – 2025 and actual costing was in 'Targeted academic support'. The budgeted cost was £34,899.00 however actual expenditure was only £17,762.26; this is a difference of £17,136.74. It is important to look at what activities have been completed from our original plan from December 2024 with regards to targeted academic support and how we will continue this avenue in the coming academic year.

One aspect of budgeting was for phonics interventions to support pupils requiring additional support. Across KS1 we began running several phonics interventions during the academic year 2024 – 2025 to ensure early interventions were in place from reception starters up to Year 2. Looking at our phonics screening results for the academic year 2024 – 2025 pupils achieved 79%. National average was 80%. As an action this will continue across for the coming academic year to ensure this progress continues. As a school we are also looking into additional phonics training for all teaching assistants to help support these interventions continuing to have maximum impact. As an area of focus this overlaps with spending in 1:1 support where there has been an over spend last academic year. In conjunction to this we are in the process this academic year of changing our phonics scheme used across school. At present we utilise Phonics Bug Club but through monitoring and feedback from external agencies we have begun looking at other schemes to use across school that will further support our pupils.

Reading and the differences between disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils is significant. As a school we have begun addressing this through targeted PiXL interventions and CPD in adaptations to help support pupils who find reading a struggle by altering font size, type face used and coloured backgrounds alongside the use of

widgits to support understanding of vocabulary. As a school we are committed to exploring this aspect of our strategy robustly this academic year by also looking at the range of texts available for our pupils who struggle with reading by looking at accessible books children can use and loan from our library area.

In our plan we had budgeted for PiXL therapies to help target pupils who are disadvantaged. Last academic year we began this but have chosen to continue to focus on this throughout this academic year more heavily. Recently we have given all teaching staff training in the use of PiXL therapies. These are 'mini' teaching sessions that target a particular skill or knowledge for pupils. They can be run by a teacher or TA and are designed to close gaps in knowledge and skills with minimal resourcing, making them quick to set up and implement. Looking at for our disadvantaged pupils there is a difference in end of year outcomes, by using highly targeted interventions such as PiXL gaps in learning for specific skills and knowledge will be addressed helping pupils to attain at a higher level with structured intervention support.

With high costs of living for disadvantaged families a portion of pupil premium funding has been spent on trip and outings for pupils. This includes wellbeing, residential trips, music tuition and after school club resources. This expenditure totalled £17,105.59. This expenditure has stayed consistent for the last two years. When planning for pupil premium expenditure going forward for next academic year we will take this in to account when budgeting. From feedback from pupils and parents Rocksteady has been tremendously popular with pupils. This has given pupils who perhaps would have this musical opportunity otherwise to access tuition but also the enjoyment of performing and creating music as a group. By utilising pupil premium funding in this way we have also been able to enable pupils to enjoy life experiences they perhaps would not have been able to attend otherwise; adding to their opportunities to have shared experiences with their peers.

Central to our Pupil Premium Strategy and linked to the development of behaviour at St Martha's is the focus on mental health and pupils with social and emotional needs. This element of our strategy accounts for £30,689.09. This is an overspend of £3,441.09.

Behaviour remains a key priority which has run through school. Last academic year we began to introduce our new behaviour and relationships policy. Throughout 2024 – 2025 we have continued to embed this by holding regular staff CPD sessions focusing on developing routines and movement breaks incorporated into lessons. Teaching staff and support staff attended CPD sessions where we shared training in Norfolk Steps behaviour approach. Following this we also then had several sessions where all staff attended sessions on adaptive teaching and making lessons active for pupils to ensure movement opportunities are built into lessons. These sessions really benefitted all staff as they have been able to implement this knowledge and all pupils are benefiting from this daily. Behaviour and wellbeing will continue to be a thread running through our pupil

premium strategy next academic year.

In conjunction with this we have secured training for one of our support staff to undertake qualifications in Drawing and Talking Therapy during the academic year 2024 - 2025. This has been recommended by the Council as an approach to use and is a recognised therapeutic intervention with positive results for pupils accessing this. Drawing and Talking gives children an opportunity to share their feelings with a trusted adult through drawing sessions. This academic year we will continue this intervention across the school. This coming year we have scheduled these sessions for individuals and as part of a group. As part of this intervention regular CPD sessions will be needed for the member of the St Martha's team in undertaking this intervention.

During the academic year 2023 – 2024, we began our journey to implement colourful semantics as an intervention and support across the school. This academic year we continued on this path by holding a block of CPD for teachers. One of these sessions were held by an outside agency who gave teachers teaching strategies and ways they could add colourful semantics to their teaching toolkit or adaptive teaching. Following this teachers were then given time to weave this into their planning thinking of specific pupils this may benefit. This academic year we are following this approach and encouraging the use of this in KS1 and especially in intervention groups as writing remains an area of focus for the school. Already this year through observations and monitoring pupils across the school are benefiting from the use of colourful semantics. To further embed this additional training will be given to TAs across school for a CPD session focused on running colourful semantics as an intervention.

As we begin a new school year we will continue to analyse our previous pupil premium initiative and consult with both staff and pupils across the school to explore how we can best support our pupils and continue to reduce gaps for disadvantaged pupils in the year to come.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium (or recovery premium) to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
Reading Intervention	Catch Up
The Write Stuff	Jane Considine
Pixl therapies	PIXL
Bug Club Phonics	Pearson Education
Colourful Semantics	

