

Pupil premium strategy statement – St. Mark’s Catholic Primary School 2026-27

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	210
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	39.1% (82)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2026-27 2027-28 2028-29
Date this statement was published	30 th September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	30 th September 2027
Statement authorised by	Emma Whittingham (Principal)
Pupil premium lead	Emma Whittingham (Principal)
Governor / Trustee lead	Payal Gordhan

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£127,100
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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>	£127,100

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St. Mark's Catholic Primary School, we want every child to fulfil their God-given potential.

Staff want all children, (irrespective of their background or the challenges they face), to make at least good progress and achieve high attainment across all subject areas within a caring, Catholic environment.

We strive to ensure that the children at St. Mark's not only receive a first-class formal education but also a spiritual, moral, social, vocational and cultural one too to prepare them for the wider world outside of school and to be valuable citizens in today's society.

We recognise and consider the barriers faced by our disadvantaged pupils. We aim to diminish as many barriers as possible so that disadvantaged pupils can achieve at least in line with their peers and have as many opportunities as possible. Once barriers have been identified we use evidence-based approaches to ensure that children receive targeted support so that they can secure strong foundational skills and achieve their full potential.

The proportion of disadvantaged students in the school is increasing each year and is well above the national average (25.7%).

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus securing strong foundational skill in the areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is 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.

The challenges faced by our disadvantaged pupils are varied and pupils do not form one homogeneous group. However, there are a number of common barriers to learning that are relevant to the majority of the disadvantaged pupils at St. Mark's:

- Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN) delays at the point on entry into Reception.
- Lower starting points in Early Reading and Early Writing when compared to their peers who are not disadvantaged.
- Lower levels of parental support.
- Higher levels of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- Poorer levels of attendance and punctuality.

- Complex and challenging familial and socio-economic circumstances.

Our pupil premium strategy is rooted in our aim to secure strong foundational skills for every pupil so that all children in our care receive the very best start in life.

Our planned provision addresses pupil need in all foundational areas: executive function; physical development; communication and language; early reading; early writing- transcription; and early mathematics – and is underpinned by our core objectives:

- To diminish the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
- To enable all disadvantaged pupils to make or exceed nationally expected progress rates.
- To ensure disadvantaged pupils leave our school achieving at least age-related expectations in reading, writing and maths.
- To support the development of children's social, emotional, spiritual, moral and physical health so that they can purposefully and successfully access and engage with a range of educational opportunities at primary school and beyond.
- To ensure disadvantaged pupils reach their full potential and leave primary as well-rounded, independent and confident individuals, who are well prepared for their next steps.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Weak language and communication skills.
2	Low attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas.
3	Poor parental engagement.
4	Attendance and Punctuality issues.
5	Low self-esteem and confidence issues.
6	Increased SEND needs amongst PP pupils
7	Reading fluency - Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with reading than their peers.

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
Improve progress and attainment in the Early Years.	GLD is in-line with or above National Average and all children progress well from their unique starting points.
Improve Phonics scores.	Phonics data is consistently well above National average
Improve progress and attainment in Key Stage 1.	Key Stage 1 data is at least in-line with National average.
Improve progress and attainment in Writing in KS2.	KS2 writing is consistently well above National average.
Improve progress and attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths combined in KS2.	KS2 overall RWM outcomes are consistently well above National average.
Improve attendance and punctuality.	Attendance of disadvantaged pupils is above national for all pupils and less than 1.5% below attendance for all pupils at St Mark's.

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: £65,256

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Pupil Premium Quality First Strategy	The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils (EEF): High Quality Teaching - EEF	1, 2, 5, 6 and 7
High quality Phonics teaching for pupils and CPD for all relevant staff	There is much evidence to show that teacher CPD can have a strong impact on student outcomes (Cordingley et al 2015 and Darling-Hammond et al 2017),	1, 2, 6 and 7

	with some studies suggesting gains equating to more than two years' progress in one year. These gains have been shown to be even greater for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (William and Timperley et al 2016) thus having the potential to improve the life chances of all students.	
Diagnostic assessment tools	When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups: Diagnostic Assessment - EEF	1, 2, 5, 6 and 7
High quality Personal Development teaching for pupils and CPD for all relevant staff	There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers): Primary SEL - EEF	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

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

Budgeted cost: £40,844

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted interventions and boosters	Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind: One-to-One Tuition - EEF Small Group Tuition - EEF	1, 2, 5, 6 and 7
Additional Phonics sessions	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: Phonics - EEF	1, 2, 5, 6 and 7
Targeted support for pupils with SLCN	On average, oral language approaches have a high impact on pupil outcomes (+6 months' additional progress). (EEF)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7

	Oral language interventions can be an effective approach for disadvantaged pupils. In the research evidence, the higher the proportion of disadvantaged pupils taking part, the more effective the intervention seemed to be. (EEF) Oral Language Interventions - EEF	
The use of standardised screening to support the early identification of learning barriers and additional needs	Targeted teaching approaches lead to significant progress for students with SEND. Students with reading difficulties made strong gains in reading (five months progress), while those with maths difficulties showed even greater improvement (six months progress). (Nuffield Foundation) Outcomes for Pupils with SEN - Nuffield Foundation	1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7
The use of additional resources to support learning at home in Maths and Reading	Independent Review of Dreambox Maths Reading Plus Efficacy Study	1, 3, 5, 6 and 7
Additional support for pupils with SEMH needs, including specialist CPD for relevant staff	The Thrive Approach - Impact Report Thrive Approach is associated with positive patterns in wellbeing, inclusion, engagement, and staff experience. Outcomes appear particularly positive for pupils with additional needs and those at greater risk of disengagement. (ImpactEd Evaluation)	3, 4, 5 and 6

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

Budgeted cost: £21,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
The continued application of an attendance team and associated protocols	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence. Working Together to Improve School Attendance - DfE	3 and 4

Increasing access to extended services	“Positive association exists between academic attainment and physical activity levels of pupils. Giving free access to these clubs for PP pupils has increased attendance of this group by 45%.” (PHE)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
Access to a wide range of educational trips and visits	The breadth of extra-curricular activities, spanning the musical, artistic, social and sporting domains, are widely considered valuable life experiences that should be open to all young people, regardless of background or where they happen to live. Activities such as being a member of a sports team, learning a musical instrument, or attending a local youth group are thought to be enriching life experiences. Apart from their inherent value, it is often claimed that young people can also develop positive tangible outcomes from these experiences of interacting and working with others through organised extra-curricular activities, which could benefit them in later life. Social Mobility Commission - Extra-Curricular Activities and Soft Skills	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7

Total budgeted cost: £127,100

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments.

Overall, the data demonstrates that our disadvantaged pupils have performed well.

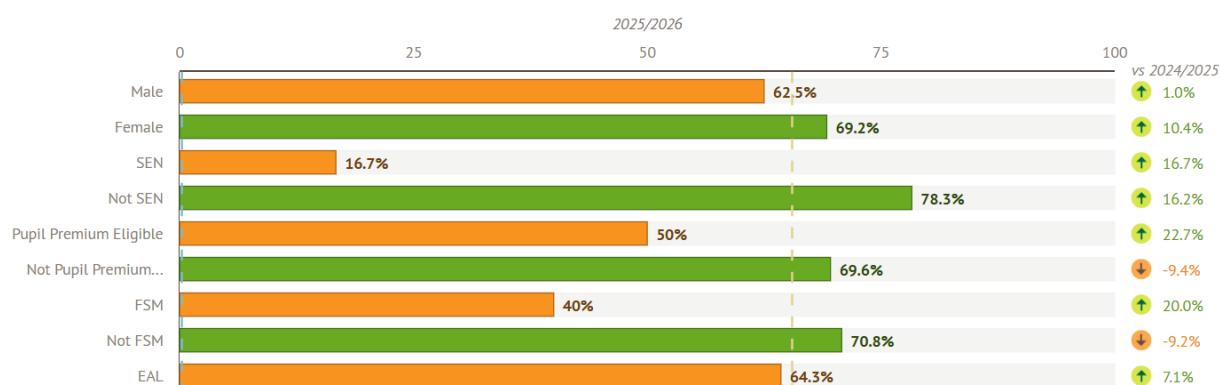
	Versus national average				Versus similar school average ¹			
	2024	2025	2026	3-year average	2024	2025	2026	3-year average
RWM expected standard	Above (non-sig)	Close to av. (non-sig)	Close to av. (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)		Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)
Reading expected standard	Close to av. (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (sig+)	Above (sig+)		Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)
Writing expected standard	Close to av. (non-sig)	Close to av. (non-sig)	Close to av. (non-sig)	Close to av. (non-sig)		Below (non-sig)		
Maths expected standard	Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (sig+)	Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)
EGPS expected standard	Close to av. (non-sig)	Above (sig+)	Above (sig+)	Above (sig+)		Above (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	Above (sig+)

¹ Only "above" and "below" bandings are displayed.

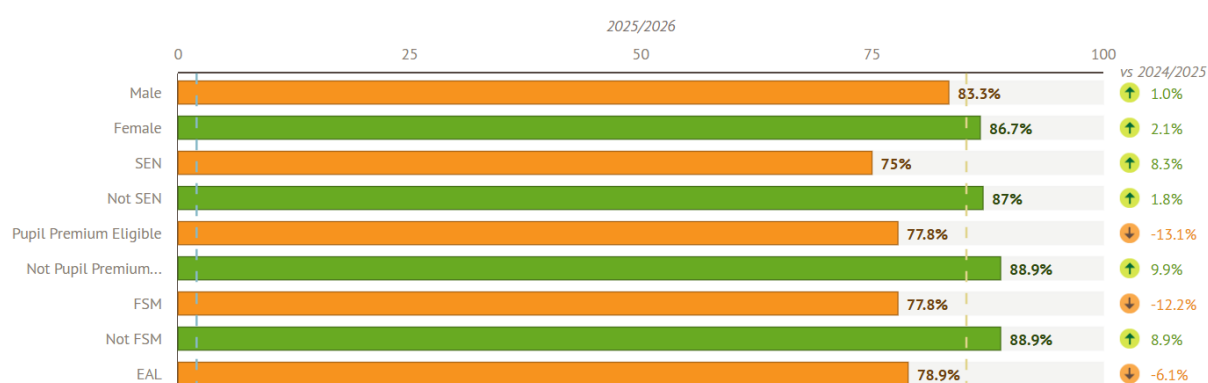
	Versus national average				Versus similar school average ¹			
	2022	2023	2026	3-year average	2022	2023	2026	3-year average
Reading progress	-	Close to av. (non-sig)	Above (sig+)	-	-		Above (non-sig)	-
Writing progress	-	Close to av. (non-sig)	Close to av. (non-sig)	-	-			-
Maths progress	-	Close to av. (non-sig)	Above (sig+)	-	-	Below (non-sig)	Above (non-sig)	-

¹ Only "above" and "below" bandings are displayed.

Benchmark:  stmarkrc (65.5%)  Arbor National Average: Achieving a Good Level of Development (0.2%)



Benchmark:  stmarkrc (85.2%)  Arbor National Average: Year 1 Phonics Screening Check: Meeting Expected Standard (2.0%)



These were the specific targets from last year's plan.

Intended Outcome	Success Criteria	Comments
Improve progress in the Early Years	GLD is in-line with or above National Average and all children progress well from their unique starting points	65.5% of all pupils reached GLD (an increase of 5.5%). 50% of pupils with PP achieved GLD (an increase of 22.7%).
Improve Phonics scores	Phonics data is consistently well above National average	85.5% of all pupils passed the PC (an increase of 2.5%). However, only 77.8% of pupils with PP passed the PSC (a decrease of 13.1%).
Improve progress and attainment in Key Stage 1	Key Stage 1 data is at least in-line with National average	Internal assessment data indicates that attainment, including for pupils with

		PP, is broadly in line with that of pupils nationally.
Improve progress and attainment in Writing in KS2	KS2 writing is consistently well above National average	66.7% of all pupils achieved ARE or above in Writing (National 73.1%). 68.4% of pupils with PP achieved ARE or above in Writing (an increase of 10.1%).
Improve progress and attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths combined in KS2	KS2 overall RWM outcomes are consistently well above National average	56.7% of pupils achieved ARE or above in R, W and M. 63.2% of pupils with PP achieved ARE or above in R, W and M.
Attendance	Attendance of disadvantaged pupils is above national for all pupils and less than 1.5% below attendance for all pupils at St Mark's.	Attendance for all pupils is above national. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils is above national.

Based on the information above, the performance of disadvantaged pupils met some but not all expectations.

The new leadership team continues to review, amend and embed the strategies in the 3-year strategic plan.

Externally provided programmes

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

Programme	Provider
Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS)	TT Rockstars
Phonics	Read Write Inc
Behaviour	City of Birmingham Behaviour Support (COBS)
Mental Health Support	COMPASS
Personal Development	'Ten:Ten, Life to the Full Plus Primary' Thrive
Reading and Maths	Reading Plus and Dreambox Maths

