

Pupil premium strategy statement – St Martin’s C of E Primary Academy

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
Number of pupils in school	88 (exc 9 Nursery child)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	27 (31%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Sally Moorman / Claire Noonan
Pupil premium lead	Emma Byers
Governor / Trustee lead	Vicky Thornton

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£42,370
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£42,370

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Martins Church of England Primary Academy, we believe that by having the highest expectations and aspirations for all our learners, the highest possible standards will be achieved. We whole-heartedly believe that no child should be left behind and that excellence can be achieved for all through equity. A core focus of our Pupil Premium Strategy is to support our disadvantaged pupils, which in turn supports all pupils to achieve their goals no matter their starting point, including progress for those who are already high attainers. Central to this commitment is improving attendance and reducing persistent absenteeism, recognising that regular school attendance is fundamental to pupils' academic success, wellbeing and long-term life chances.

Alongside disadvantaged pupils, we recognise the challenges faced by children who are considered vulnerable, those with a social worker and those who are young carers. These children are included in this plan alongside all pupils. We understand that academic barriers are often intertwined with social, emotional and pastoral needs, including patterns of poor or irregular attendance, and we therefore commit to providing timely, targeted pastoral support and intervention to ensure pupils are ready to learn, attend regularly and are able to thrive.

We seek to ensure that all children can be the best they can be, and to equip them with the academic achievements, life skills and personal attributes to lead happy, safe, successful lives. We are inclusive. We believe that every child can be successful regardless of background or ability. We value and promote love, hope, resilience, wisdom, courage and respect. Our strong pastoral ethos underpins these values; we aim to remove barriers by supporting wellbeing, fostering positive relationships and creating a safe environment where every child feels known, supported and cared for. This ethos is central to our approach to improving attendance, particularly for pupils at risk of persistent absenteeism, through positive relationships, early support and close partnership with families. We make decisions based on what is right for our children and their life chances. The activity outlined in this statement is also intended to support pupils' needs regardless of whether they are disadvantaged, including access to pastoral provision that promotes emotional resilience, positive mental health and sustained engagement with school.

The school receives additional funding in the form of Pupil Premium for children entitled to free school meals in the last six years, children in care and children of parents in the armed forces. This funding is used strategically to address both academic and non-academic barriers to success, including targeted action to reduce persistent absenteeism and improve overall attendance for disadvantaged pupils.

Our approaches are informed by identified barriers and individual needs, drawn from diagnostic assessment, attendance analysis and pastoral monitoring, rather than assumptions about disadvantage. To ensure all children can excel, we focus on ensuring work is appropriately challenging; acting early to intervene; and regularly reviewing performance and next steps. This includes the early identification of attendance concerns, particularly persistent absenteeism, followed by personalised attendance support, pastoral intervention and close collaboration with parents and carers to re-engage pupils positively with school and learning.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and benefits non-disadvantaged pupils across the 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. However, we recognise that high-quality teaching can only have maximum impact when pupils attend school regularly. Therefore, pastoral intervention and attendance support are embedded within our whole-school approach, working alongside teaching to ensure that barriers linked to wellbeing, confidence, emotional regulation and attendance do not prevent children from accessing learning and achieving their potential.

The school's aims in spending the funding, along with the policies and procedures for ensuring these aims are met and monitored, are detailed in the Pupil Premium Policy. This should be read alongside the proposed spending document and the impact document of previous spending, available on the academy website. Together, these documents demonstrate our commitment to a holistic approach that integrates academic excellence with strong pastoral care and a sustained focus on improving attendance and reducing persistent absenteeism, ensuring that children's emotional, social and academic needs are supported with equal rigour.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Many disadvantaged pupils face challenges with emotional regulation, which can lead to difficulties managing stress, frustration and unexpected changes. These barriers can reduce their engagement in learning and impact their readiness to participate fully in classroom activities.

2	Some pupils display behaviours arising from unmet emotional needs, including withdrawal or dysregulated behaviour. These behaviours can interrupt learning, reduce focus and limit progress.
3	Our assessments, observations and professional discussions indicate that a number of PP pupils are on the SEND register. In some cases, their emotional needs and behaviour can affect their attainment and progress. As a result a 'catch up' is required.
4	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils suggest disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with phonics and early reading than their peers. This negatively impacts their development as readers and writers.
5	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills 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.
6	Internal and external (where available) assessments indicate that writing attainment among disadvantaged pupils is well below that of non-disadvantaged pupils. 39% of pupil premium eligible pupils achieved the expected standard or above for their year group, compared with 70% of non-pupil premium eligible pupils. Reading and maths attainment among disadvantaged pupils is below that of non-disadvantaged pupils. 43% of pupil premium children achieved the expected standard for reading and 32% achieved the expected standard in maths for their year group.
7	Regular, punctual attendance is a challenge for a small minority of our disadvantaged pupils. 9 out of 27 (33%) pupil premium eligible pupils were persistent absentees in the academic year 2024-2025.

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
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qualitative data from student voice, parent surveys and teacher observations. - Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs being supported by pastoral lead role.

<p>Children have access to high quality pastoral support based on individual needs to aid them in overcoming barriers to learning.</p>	<p>Children will demonstrate good behaviour for learning There will be targeted support for those children who find engagement difficult. Leaders support class teachers in monitoring and evaluating behaviour</p>
<p>Improved phonological knowledge and therefore early reading skills.</p>	<p>Ongoing summative assessments demonstrate pupils improving early reading through phonics; Regular phonics assessments demonstrate that pupils (including disadvantaged pupils) are making progress. The attainment gap between disadvantaged and all pupils will be minimal and will not exceed the national average gaps in reading. Reading attainment for disadvantaged pupils will be in line with national standards.</p>
<p>Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.</p>
<p>Improved attainment from starting points (progress) in reading, writing and maths among disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Standardised tests across the multi-academy trust (moved to NFER) and assessment calendar, are able to measure and demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantaged pupils make progress from their starting points, meeting individual targets. - The number of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in each year group increases over time. <p>This data can be compared with other schools within the trust and schools nationally.</p> <p>Strengthened moderation networks across a larger number of trust schools, led by external moderator.</p>
<p>To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Sustained high attendance and punctuality demonstrated by:</p>

	- The percentage of all pupils who are persistently absent being below 10% and the figure among disadvantaged pupils being no more than 5% higher than their peers.
--	---

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: £7,370

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments.</p> <p>Time allocated and further training for staff to ensure assessments are administered, interpreted and recorded correctly.</p>	<p>Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction (see EEF).</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/assessing-and-monitoring-pupil-progress/testing/standardised-tests/</p>	5, 6
<p>Ensure all staff are fully trained in the implementation of a DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics programme to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils.</p> <p>Purchase of resources, including development days, to support the implementation of systematic synthetic phonics programme. (Read, Write, Inc.)</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils:</p> <p>Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p> <p>Being a partner school with the Witham St Hughs English Hub and enabling staff to access high quality CPD, as well as the Reading Leader receiving regular support days</p>	4, 5, 6
<p>Continued re-development and implementation of our</p>	<p>DFE Writing Framework - The writing framework - GOV.UK</p>	5, 6

writing curriculum, including a focus to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Staff CPD to ensure high-quality teaching in writing is embedded across the school.	High-quality staff CPD is essential to follow EEF principles and to ensure Quality First Teaching is meeting the needs of all pupils. 1. High-quality teaching EEF	
Implementation and embedment of new reading curriculum in order to promote high outcomes for all pupils, including a focus on disadvantaged pupils. New, age and stage appropriate reading materials purchased to complement the new curriculum.	High-quality staff CPD is essential to follow EEF principles and to ensure Quality First Teaching is meeting the needs of all pupils.	5, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £15,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Investment in training Teaching assistants to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics systematic synthetic programme • Precision teaching • Social, Emotional and Mental Health based activities 	<p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistant-interventions</p> <p>The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) shows that oral language interventions have a ‘positive impact’ on learning at a very low cost. Closing the Attainment Gap report highlighted the importance of the Early Years (nursery) and closing the gap before children start school. EEF: Pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive similar or slightly greater benefit from phonics interventions and approaches. This is likely to be due to the explicit nature of the instruction and the intensive support provided. Early literacy approaches have been consistently found to</p>	3, 4, 5, 6

	have a positive effect on early learning outcomes, with the most effective approaches improving learning by as much as six months.	
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support, utilising a one-to-one approach. Release time for teaching assistant to lead the one-to-one interventions. Release time for Reading Leader to monitor and train staff in delivery of phonics and track phonics data to identify pupils for additional support.	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 daily sessions Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	4, 5, 6
To actively encourage regular practise of key recall facts to support broader understanding in Maths and support parents in understanding how to support learning at home. (TT Rockstars/Purple Mash)	EEF Guidance Report – Improving Mathematics in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 alongside the DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics. The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3 - Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3 EEF EEF Guidance Report - Improving Mathematics in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 - Improving Mathematics in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 EEF	6

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

Budgeted cost: £20,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Deployment of a dedicated Pastoral Lead to provide targeted emotional,	Thrive Approach The Thrive Approach is an evidence-informed programme designed to support children's social and emotional	1, 2

<p>social and behavioural support for disadvantaged pupils, including early identification of SEMH needs, delivery of bespoke interventions, and coordination of multi-agency support. The Pastoral Lead will also work closely with teachers to remove barriers to attendance, engagement and learning.</p>	<p>development, using developmental and brain-based principles. Research and evaluations indicate that Thrive interventions:</p> <p>Improve children’s emotional regulation, resilience, and self-awareness. Help children manage anxiety, stress, and trauma-related behaviours. Support positive peer and adult relationships, fostering a sense of safety and belonging in school.</p> <p>EEF – Social and Emotional Learning The EEF identifies social and emotional learning approaches. These approaches include targeted support to develop emotional regulation, resilience and social skills—core elements of a Pastoral Lead’s work. - Social and emotional learning EEF</p> <p>EEF – Behaviour Interventions Behaviour interventions, including mentoring, targeted pastoral work and relationship-based support, are most impactful when linked to early identification of need and coordinated support systems. A dedicated Pastoral Lead provides precisely this structure. - Behaviour interventions EEF</p> <p>DfE Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (Guidance) - Mental health and behaviour in schools - GOV.UK</p> <p>The DfE states that early, targeted pastoral support is crucial in addressing SEMH needs that act as barriers to learning. - DfE Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (Guidance)</p>	
<p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE’s ‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance’ guidance. Attendance officer to monitor and challenge</p>	<p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63049617e90e0729e63d3953/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf</p>	<p>7</p>

attendance of PP children.		
Provide parental workshops in phonics and maths.	Some parents are unsure as to how best support their child with their learning. To help with this we have planned a series of maths/phonics information events for parents.	3, 4, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost: £42,370

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 2024/25 academic year using key stage 1 and 2 performance data, phonics check results and our own internal assessments.

To help us gauge the performance of our disadvantaged pupils we compared our results to those for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at a national, regional and school level.

Data from tests and assessments suggest that the progress and attainment of the school's disadvantaged pupils in 2024/25 was below our expectations, particularly in maths and writing.

Our Phonics Screening check results showed that 100% of disadvantaged children passed the screening check.

Our observations and assessments demonstrated that challenges in relation to wellbeing and mental health still remain for some pupils. We have recognised that more needs to be done in order to support children's behaviour and mental health. Therefore, a focus on social, emotional and mental health, particularly relating to disadvantaged pupils, remains an intended outcome for 2025/26.

Attendance remains high priority as persistent absenteeism remains in line with previous academic years.

Although improvements have been made, we are continuing to make progress and achieve the outcomes that we set out to achieve by the end of the 2024/25 academic year. We have reviewed our strategy plan and made changes to intended outcomes and also how we intend to use our budget this academic year, as set out in the 'Activity in This Academic Year' section above.

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
Numbots/Times Tables Rockstars	TT Rockstars (Maths Circle)
Read, Write, Inc	Ruth Miskin Read, Write, Inc
White Rose Maths	White Rose Maths

Standardised tests	NFER
--------------------	------

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<p><i>For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year</i></p>
<p>The support we provide for Service Children mirrors the strategy for PP children.</p>
<p>The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils</p>
<p>1 Service Pupil completed the academic year at the expected standard or above for their year group in reading, writing and maths, as well as passing the Phonics Screening Check, and had 98% attendance.</p>