

Pupil premium strategy statement – St Joseph’s Catholic Voluntary Academy

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	385
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	20%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2023 - 2026
Date this statement was published	December 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2025
Statement authorised by	T Churchill
Pupil premium lead	T Churchill
Governor / Trustee lead	S. Hinchcliff

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£110, 000
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years <i>(enter £0 if not applicable)</i>	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£110, 000

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Joseph's we believe all children are a gift from God. This inspires us to offer a wide range of opportunities for all pupils no matter what their situation may be.

As school leaders we know that the most effective way to raise pupil's attainment is through quality first teaching. The pedagogical content of our curriculum ensures that children have the correct structures in place, along with getting targeted feedback in a wide range of ways to develop the confidence and skills of the learner.

Our strategy for addressing educational disadvantage is tiered and holistic, ensuring that all pupils, regardless of background, can achieve equally. We recognise that socio-economic disadvantage disproportionately impacts learning. Through targeted support and interventions tailored to individual needs, we aim to narrow the gap and ensure that every child, regardless of their socio-economic background, has the opportunity to succeed academically and personally.

Oracy is a key principle within this strategy. Research shows that developing oracy skills has a high impact on children. This deepening of the ability to communicate also increases the confidence levels of children as they become better readers and find that they can articulate their understanding of new learning in class with their peers.

As we know, reading is a clear gateway into education. Building this into the methods of support for our most vulnerable is a priority for us. It is important to implement strategies that foster both their foundational reading skills and a love of reading.

Provision to support the emotional development of our children is also a key priority in our strategy.

This approach shows a commitment to a comprehensive strategy, acknowledging the complex nature of disadvantage, while striving for equity in educational outcomes for all pupils.

This strategy has been developed through following the latest education endowment research in order to support disadvantaged children to overcome barriers and to reach their full potential.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p><i>Language development is significantly low on entry to school.</i></p> <p><i>Currently, over 20% of the children in early years demonstrated issues with communication and language on entry with only 50% reaching the baseline expectations for Literacy.</i></p> <p><i>Experts have provided significant evidence to show how gaps in vocabulary for pre-school children continue to widen as they go through school. Marc Rowland emphasises this point through his research, stating ‘the language gap is the disadvantaged gap’.</i></p> <p><i>Data on entry for 2022 shows 60% below expectations in communications and language. This trend continues to highlight the need to support children in this essential developmental area.</i></p> <p><i>Entry data for 2024 shows 50% of disadvantaged children are below the expected standards in communication. Assessments have changed over time for Foundation Stage, but this still shows a need in this area.</i></p> <p>In order for this issue to be addressed successfully, it is imperative that there is an approach that runs through the whole school supporting the entire curriculum.</p> <p>School data indicates that this issue is also having a negative impact on children’s ability to write. By the end of KS2, 69% of disadvantaged children achieved the expected standard by the end of KS2, with 0% reaching Greater Depth. Children are unable to say what they would like to write in a way that brings together their knowledge using the correct grammatical expectations. Subject leaders have looked in detail at the vocabulary that should be covered within other subject areas in order to ensure there is a clear depth of understanding.</p> <p>The school approach to the teaching of writing is bringing the use of oracy skills into the core expectations of quality first teaching. This can then be monitored closely by subject leaders and by SLT.</p>
2	<p>Reading – ability to decode/ segment words to support understanding. As children move through school this is having a negative impact on children’s fluency levels.</p> <p>Particular year groups are highlighting this as a greater issue.</p> <p>In 23/24, the end of KS1 Reading assessment data showed a Reading scaled score of 97.4 for FSM children compared to 101.1 for non-FSM children. This particular year group performed very well in Y1 with the Phonics Screening check (90%), but many struggled to then transfer the skill of individual word</p>

	<p>reading in the art of reading for meaning. In this year group, out of the 13 disadvantaged children, 9 also have SEND (69% of this group).</p> <p>Last year showed that by the end of KS2, we were seeing success at the expected standard with 85% of PP children achieving this whereas non-PP children were at 77%. The target now is for PP children to achieve marks that would see them into Greater Depth.</p> <p>FFT tests have been introduced this year and take place at the beginning of each term. This gives the teacher detailed information about any issues a child may have in reading. Children are measured on word count per minute, decoding accuracy and comprehension.</p>
3	<p>Emotional, well-being and mental health support.</p> <p>The need for support in this area of school life is increasing year on year. As there is a lack of external services available to families, we have taken the decision as a school to make this a priority.</p> <p>Helping children manage challenges or difficulties in their lives is essential for their emotional, mental, and social well-being. Activities that encourage emotional intelligence, problem-solving skills, and resilience can be powerful tools.</p> <p>Referrals come through regularly from parents and teachers to support children with issues that are having an impact on their emotional regulation. These issues can be experienced in or out of school. Occasionally, support is received as a direct outcome of a TAF meeting or as part of an EHA.</p>
4	<p>Increasing parental engagement.</p> <p>Currently, we are seeing a trend forming where parents find it challenging to feel part of their child's education. Historically, this would be seen towards the end of KS2 but is now seen from EYFS.</p> <p>It is evident from our own observations that each cohort needs a different approach.</p> <p>Several year groups have had a great response from parents where we have provided the opportunity to come in and learn alongside their child. We are looking at ways that we can be more flexible with this approach.</p> <p>Involving our disadvantaged children in other areas of school life is a continued target for our school. Whether this is through some of the key roles that older children hold or taking part in our extra-curricular activities,</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
Children to be able to articulate their knowledge and opinions with confidence. To respond to adults and others with respect and clarity.	<p>PP children become confident story tellers. PP children can articulate learning that has taken place.</p> <p>Children achieve well in phonics – data tracker shows reduced gaps – progress will be measured through termly FFT reading results.</p> <p>Children access phonically decodable reading material independently</p>
Language developments to have a positive impact on writing outcomes. At least 80% to achieve the expected standard in writing.	<p>Measuring of targeted interventions shows achievement in small steps</p> <p>PP children to make rapid progress within English, with an increased number achieving the expected standard in KS1 and KS2.</p> <p>Evidence from children's books will show developments in children's written work, and an improved level and use of vocab is evident.</p> <p>Lesson observations show engagements and ongoing support mechanisms.</p>
Children to develop the necessary skills to become confident and successful readers. In addition to building technical reading skills, children are to develop a positive relationship with reading through engaging activities and sharing their passion with others.	<p>Children achieve high fluency scores in FFT assessments (SS of 95+).</p> <p>Reading ages are in line with or above actual age.</p> <p>Progress to be measured through termly FFT reading results.</p>
Children can manage challenges / difficulties that they face by utilising tools / resources to help them.	<p>Teachers build ELSA strategies within the daily life of the classroom</p> <p>Well-being support team in place and active</p> <p>Communication route in place for parents to discuss concerns and next steps</p> <p>Children use strategies independently to communicate emotions e.g. feelings / mood chart.</p>

Parents actively engage in the education of their child.	<p>Parents communicate with class teachers around gaps in learning and home support.</p> <p>Parents engage with online sessions to understand class based learning</p> <p>Teachers work with SLT to provide ways to demonstrate learning virtually.</p> <p>Workshops in place for parents to support at home with a range of issues, including behaviour, on-line safety and specific learning areas.</p> <p>Teachers advise parents on quality reading material appropriate for each age group.</p>
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Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 26,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Structured talk opportunities in lessons – e.g. class discussions, Talk partners and class debates.</p> <p>Scaffold speaking activities – Provide sentence starters that are transferrable between subjects.</p> <p>Planned and structured talk activities in EYFS</p> <p>Oracy strategies learned through the Trust project to be shared with all year groups and utilised in English lessons.</p>	<p>Our whole school approach to the teaching of English has proven as a positive impact on children to become story tellers. Strategies, where trialled, have worked well across the curriculum to provide a scaffold to demonstrate understanding.</p> <p>The latest 'Strong foundations in the first years of school' document describes language as 'the bedrock of thinking and learning. Creating structures within the curriculum that allow children to compose their ideas orally needs to take priority.</p>	1, 2

<p>Children have responded well to subject specific sentences frames to add in their thoughts and opinions.</p> <p>EFYS is language rich with constant modelling for all children to learn from.</p>	<p>The EEF outline communication and language approaches as highly effective.</p>	
<p>Examine texts used in EYFS as a starting point for internalising quality vocabulary.</p> <p>Revisit the use of oracy skills in the school pedagogical approach.</p> <p>Scaffolding to provide support for PP children within lessons e.g. word banks / illustrations</p> <p>English teaching framework has been extended to allow more time for drama activities that deepen oracy skills.</p>	<p>We know that 'language provides the foundation of thinking and learning and should be prioritised' (EEF Guidance Report, Improving Literacy in KS1). Therefore, oracy is central to our whole-school development, especially considering the low starting points which many of our children enter with. Ensuring that we swiftly identify and provide support for pupils who require it means that we can address and remove barriers in children's early years.</p>	1,2
<p>Complete training in Sounds Write for all new to KS1</p>	<p>Research shows that improving the confidence levels of children when accessing the written word will support to engage with other subjects. Not being able to read the material in Science, does not mean that the child is not interested in Science as a subject.</p> <p>Our in-house data analysis shows that the fluency rate of many PP children is having a negative impact on their depth of understanding.</p>	2
<p>Purchase further reading material that supports the teaching of Phonics</p> <p>Phonics results show an impact of in school and home support – 89% of Y1 met the expected standard. Of the 8 PP children in this year group 63% met the standard.</p>		2
<p>Revise structured approach to the teaching of reading KS2. Support teachers to source reading links across the curriculum.</p> <p><i>Fluency will be the key focus in Y3. Depth of understanding to be explored through discussion.</i></p> <p><i>Accurate assessments of children as readers using the FFT materials. Identify where the issues are. Do the children struggle with decoding,</i></p>	<p>Research shows that improving the confidence levels of children when accessing the written word will support to engage with other subjects. Not being able to read the material in Science, does not mean that the child is not interested in Science as a subject.</p> <p>Focusing on both the reading ages and fluency rates of our children helped all teachers to focus on exactly what our disadvantaged</p>	2

<p><i>fluency or comprehension? This then determines the type of follow up support given.</i></p> <p><i>FFT assessments are completed periodically for all children.</i></p> <p><i>Interventions are designed from the outcomes.</i></p>	<p>children need to make progress. A clear timeline supports short and purposeful interventions that can be carefully measured and adapted so that the children experience success.</p>	
<p>Create text rich environments.</p> <p><i>Timeline in place to review and enhance the reading materials for all year groups.</i></p>	<p>Ensuring that pupils have access to a variety of books, including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, across different genres and reading levels. A well-stocked classroom library or book corner can inspire children to read more. Involving children in the development of reading material across the school is also proven to have an impact on their willingness to engage.</p>	2
<p>Book talk activities <i>used as part of Reading lessons and other curriculum areas.</i></p> <p><i>Y4 target year group throughout this academic year. Positive outcomes for all with 90% making expected progress and 60% making <u>more</u> than expected progress.</i></p>	<p>Disadvantaged children are encourage to explore vocabulary in the safe environment of discussion and group work. Where possible, teachers will use visuals to support a deeper understanding and promote the independent use of new vocabulary. This dual coding approach has many advocates and is a key part of our pedagogical approach to teaching and learning.</p>	2

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

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Keep up strategy through Sounds Write - daily	In house monitoring has highlighted many positive and effective strategies being used in school. Where the impact was not as strong, this is down to elements of the teaching of English being looked at in	2
1:1 reading for those identified as needing further support. FFT assessments will be used to identify any disadvantaged children with an outcome of below or well below. This		2

will also be in place for any children in Y2/ 3 with low fluency scores.	isolation. In order to have a deeper impact, teachers will be guided in how to make all elements of the subject support each other.	
Repeated Reading: Have pupils read the same text multiple times to improve fluency. This builds their confidence, accuracy. Children echo how the adult models reading techniques.	Reading needs to take 'centre stage' in both the classroom and in any support sessions being provided.	2
		2
Model Fluent Reading: Read aloud to students regularly, demonstrating fluent reading. Emphasize expression, phrasing, and pacing. This models what fluent reading sounds like and helps students hear the rhythm of the language.	Research shows that improving the confidence levels of children when accessing the written word will support to engage with other subjects. Not being able to read the material in Science, does not mean that the child is not interested in Science as a subject.	2
Pre-teach sessions to support the work in whole class reading sessions (KS2). Specific vocabulary that is essential to the understanding of the class texts will be explored for several sessions before the main teaching session.	Mastery learning breaks subject matter and learning content into units with clearly specified objectives which are pursued until they are achieved.	2
Letter formation sessions in target groups x2 per week.	Guiding children to accurately control writing tools has a positive impact on their emotional connection to the work that they produce.	2
Forest school sessions linked into the Science curriculum.	Children have the right to access the outdoors (and in particular the woodland environment); the right to access risk and the vibrant reality of the natural world; and the right to experience a healthy range of emotions, through all the challenges of social interaction, to build a resilience	3
Build a personal toolkit of coping strategies for specific disadvantaged children.	Where children feel part of creating a process, they are more likely to see the purpose of it. Toolkits support independence and allow the child to decide when they need	3

	time away from a specific activity.	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £ 18,700

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Emotional support sessions in school. Children will be assessed and referred to the correct provision e.g. ELSA or External professional.</p> <p>External support has been in place throughout the academic year for children referred.</p>	<p>We are following the guidance from the EEF on supporting children in their social and emotional learning.</p> <p>Three broad categories of SEL interventions can be identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-level approaches to developing a positive school ethos, which also aim to support greater engagement in learning; • Universal programmes which generally take place in the classroom with the whole class; and • More specialised programmes which use elements of SEL and are targeted at students with particular social or emotional needs. 	3
<p>Range of strategies in place in classrooms to support the independent managing of emotional situations e.g. feelings charts, mindfulness and breathing exercises.</p>	<p>Whole class approaches will benefit the confidence of our disadvantaged children. Those who struggle to manage their emotions in the older year groups do not want to stand out. They respond in a more positive way when all children are using the same strategies.</p>	3
<p>Redesign communication methods between school and regular low attenders.</p>	<p>Parental engagement strategies are typically more effective with parents of very young children.</p> <p>Involving parents so that they understand what happens when learning time is lost.</p>	4
<p>Range of Parental Workshops – Workshops outside of learning time / Workshops during the school day with children joining parents after the key input.</p>	<p>Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. The EEF states - The average impact of the Parental engagement approaches is about an</p>	4

<p>Workshops for parents by invitation. Oracy, Maths and Phonics sessions</p> <p>Parent sessions have been well attended. Strategies used will be used for all year groups to start the next academic year.</p>	<p>additional four months' progress over the course of a year. There are also higher impacts for pupils with low prior attainment.</p>	
<p>Invite PP children to specific after school activities</p> <p>Attendance has risen from 13% in Term 1, to 42% in Term 2 during the academic year 2024/25.</p>	<p>There is evidence to support that involvement in extra-curricular sporting activities may increase pupil attendance and retention.</p>	4

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Add something in here about the increase in attendance for the disadvantaged children against the national data.

As a school we have taken the decision to update our challenges from the original 23-26 plan. This is due to the evidence seen from our attendance analysis.

Throughout the 2023-24 academic year, we saw an increase in the attendance rates of our disadvantaged children. Although the overall percentage was lower than for the non-disadvantaged children (D – 93.9% / Non – 95.2%) this was not only an improvement, but in particular year groups, their attendance rates were higher.

E.g. historically, we have always seen low attendance rates for our disadvantaged children, particularly in the younger year groups.

For 23/24 – Foundation and Y1 had higher attendance in our disadvantaged group than our non-disadvantaged. These are also above the national percentages.

For the next two years of this strategy, we will continue to monitor this to ensure that a change to the negative does not occur, but this will not remain as a specific challenge.

For the academic year 2024/25 the focus will be on the current Y5 and Y6 as these are the year groups where there is the greatest gap between our disadvantaged group and our non-disadvantaged – (Gap Y5 – 3.6% / Y6 – 2.3%).